



# "Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904) Logic and Dynamics of the affects"

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## **Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904). Logic and dynamics of the affects.**

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### **Abstract :**

How should we conceive the relations and the actions of one mind upon another mind? How does a spirit impress another spirit? What Tarde called inter-spiritual psychology (rather than social or even collective psychology) implies an inter-mental logic on which the intra-mental logic is modeled on. Within this original logic, the two basic modes of the soul are the two original driving forces composing the practical (individual and social) syllogism *i.e* Belief and Desire, true mental quantities.

**Key words:** Interaction, inter-psychology, rationality, mental quantities, practical syllogism

### **Introduction**

Let me first thank the organizers of this colloquium - for inviting me to talk about the rationality of action. I will talk about an author somewhat forgotten but whose works are starting to attract attention again in France and in the UK: Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904) and more precisely of his logic and his practical syllogism. I am very glad to do this here in front of you, in Russia, in a country in which Tarde had established relations with some of your compatriots: Gumplovitch, Kelles Krauz<sup>1</sup>, Maxime Kovalevsky<sup>2</sup>, Novicow<sup>3</sup>, and Raffalovich<sup>4</sup>. He was Commander of the Russian Waldimir order ! His most well-known book, *The laws of imitation*, was translated in 1892 in Russian (zákony podrazanija, st petersbourg) and was immediately reviewed. May the following presentation fill you with the desire to read or read again G. Tarde!

#### **1. First part : The forces of belief and desire**

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<sup>1</sup> Baron Casimir de Kraus-Kellès (1872-1906). Sociologue polonais, il étudia à Paris et professa à partir de 1896 au Collège libre des Sciences sociales, et plus tard à l'Institut des hautes études à Bruxelles. Il

<sup>2</sup> Maxime Kovalevsky (1851-1916). Historien, anthropologue et sociologue russe, il est professeur de droit public étranger et d'histoire institutionnelle à l'université de Moscou à partir de 1877. Après avoir été renvoyé pour des tendances politiques libérales, il s'installa en France. Il donna alors des cours aux États-Unis, en Europe et en France notamment à l'école russe des Hautes Etudes Sociales au côté de Gabriel Tarde. Ce dernier est membre du Comité de perfectionnement de l'école russe... depuis sa création en 1901, et y donne des conférences : "L'Interpsychologie" en 1901, "Criminalité et lutte sociales" en 1903. Kovalevsky rentra en Russie lors de la révolution de 1905 et organisa le parti libéral de Réformes démocratiques, créa un journal de parti et fut élu à la première Douma en tant que leader de la minorité libérale. En 1907, il est élu au Conseil d'état en tant que représentant universitaire.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Novicow (1849-1912). Sociologue franco-russe, il adhéra aux conceptions organicistes de la société héritées de Spencer qu'il défendit dans ses ouvrages publiés à Paris. Il participa à l'Institut international de Sociologie fondé par le sociologue Ren. Worms et donna des conférences à l'école russe des Hautes Etudes Sociales.

<sup>4</sup> Hermann et Marie Raffalovich. Natifs d'Odessa, ils s'enfuirent à Paris lorsqu'il fut décrété en Russie que tous les Juifs devaient se convertir au christianisme ou quitter le pays. Hermann Raffalovitch s'implanta dans les milieux financiers et de la banque où il fut rapidement reconnu. Marie Raffalovitch tenait salon où elle recevait de nombreuses personnalités. Indépendante d'esprit et très cultivée, elle parlait huit langues dont l'arabe. Leur fils aîné, Arthur Raffalovich, devint un économiste célèbre. Responsable financier du Journal des Débats, conseiller privé et attaché à l'ambassade de Russie à Paris, il contribua à l'engouement des Français pour les emprunts russes en distribuant des subsides aux journaux français sur des fonds venus de Russie pour convaincre les épargnants privés de la solidité des finances de l'Etat russe dans le cadre d'une alliance financière franco-russe.

In order to (make you) understand the logic of Tarde – and the redefinition of the term it implies- the best is to start with the conference entitled : « *Belief and desire ; the possibility of their measure* » .<sup>5</sup>

### 1.1 Mental quantities

Since that first conference, Gabriel Tarde had asserted that belief and desire, which are very difficult to define, (see Hume for example!) are essential to the formation and aggregation of our sensations and are the real elements of the soul, the two *fundamental* categories- the “pure sensation” being their point of application.

Specifically, belief and desire are two forces which allow us to join, disjoin, retain or repel with varying intensity, and explain our mental combinations apparently the most indecomposable. Thus, pleasure is simply the sensation *as desired*; pain, the feeling *as rejected*; applied to the image, desire produces what we actually call “desire”. Belief indeed products perception and discernment of the senses, united with the sensations it combines or separates; when belief is exercised on images, it produces what we call “memory”. Except for these two quantitative forces, everything is, in the soul or spirit, pure *quality*, unable to vary.

Because belief and desire are *quantities*, they can be applied in morals, economics, politics, etc. Tarde underlines that the affirmative belief in an idea (scientific or religious) can grow or decrease and that this belief *is quite another thing than the affirmation and then the negation of that same idea* <sup>6</sup>. Similarly the increase and decrease of our desire for an object is another thing than our desire and our repulsion of the same object. Belief and desire are quantities with positive and negative signs comparable to objective quantities. In short, we affirm, we deny, we desire, we repel, and these oppositions – these “logic and teleologic duels”- are either successive (alternation, rhythm) or simultaneous (shock, struggle and thus loss of strength) for the same purpose. The consciousness of the individual is the theater of inner and single struggles of theses and antitheses of wills and “will-nots”. And as we will shortly see, these oppositions are social if they spread by imitation.<sup>7</sup>

No doubt that, with such a couple, Tarde plays again in his own way the philosophical history of the two faculties traditionally named *judgment* and *will* (which are combinations of desire and belief). Maine de Biran wanted to analyse the thought and believed he had reached the original term with the feeling of effort understood as an internal duality. Tarde, for whom Biran was - with Cournot - the first mentor, thinks he succeeded in reaching that indecomposable or primitive fact, of our “mental chemistry”, under the species of belief and desire.

Biran’s mistake was of considering intelligence a simple case of the will; that of Descartes and Spinoza their making the will a case of intelligence; in reality they are both *irreducible* and the object of desire is, according to Tarde, *certainly*: desire *tends towards* belief (ethics for example will take care of the believing desire); likewise, Schopenhauer could have universalized belief as well as what he called “will”, that should have been truly named – desire!

### 1.2 Genealogy

In his *Social logic* (p. 174 ) Tarde explains that the brain’s cells develop the spiritual during a long phase of nutrition about which we know nothing, and that the *person* begins - -“when, after coming into communication, and passing through

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<sup>5</sup> « La croyance et le désir ; la possibilité de leur mesure », *Revue Philosophique*, Tome X, 1880. All translations are ours.

<sup>6</sup> *Les lois sociales*, volume IV, 1999, p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> *Les lois de l'imitation*, Paris, Alcan, 1921, Préface de la deuxième édition, p. VIII : « le psychologique s’explique par le social, précisément parce que le social naît du psychologique ».

without any doubt a period of struggle, disorder, more or less abbreviated [...]they manifest this overall phenomenon: a belief and desire, all quite commonly involved in a sensation”<sup>8</sup>. This means that the first desire and the first *conscious* belief are finally recognized as the preeminence, not of one cell upon another, but of the *spiritual content* of one cell upon that of others in which it has spread "not - without probably very strong resistances. Belief and desire are therefore the *rest*, probably very small, of inner *subtractions*. But under the same causes that have given rise to it, this rest tends to increase, and I mean by the word *logic* the way by which operates this increase whose ideal term, - often approached by the adult at his peak, but never reached, - would be the harmony without any dissonance, the addition without any subtraction, of the basic quantities of unknown nature produced by all the brain cells. We will say that belief and desire, when they manifest themselves to consciousness, are already the product of a logical coordination of sensational elements, and that the latter [the logical coordination] goes progressing towards the formation of these two great mental functions: the judgment and the will".<sup>9</sup>

We are not very far here from F. Nietzsche's thinking<sup>10</sup>. In Tarde's vitalistic ontology, consciousness and personality are explained in terms of « ruling monads », the « chief elements of the brain » ; all particles are in a dynamic relation (of imitation and opposition) : the hegemony of a particle *ie* the identity of beings and objects, is intrinsically provisional because each particle strives for the « assimilation and domination, for the possession of the particles which surround it »<sup>11</sup> : « Monads can possess one another in thousands of different ways, and each of them has the desire to possess its peers. Hence, their transformations ».<sup>12</sup>

While desire gives rise to passions, wills, and intentions, belief produces what Tarde called before Deleuze – a great reader of Tarde as you may know- *percepts*, but also concepts and institutions. *Desire is the fundamental emotional force, belief the fundamental intellectual force*. The mental energy (belief) and the voluntary energy (desire) express the intellectual and voluntary activity. Desire is an energy of psychic tendency, of mental avidity, and the belief is “the energy of intellectual grasping, of adhesion and mental constriction”.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Gabriel Tarde, *La logique sociale*, volume II, 2003, p. 174.

<sup>9</sup> *La logique sociale*, p. 174-175.

<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche read Ribot's Philosophical Review (*La Revue philosophique*), as well as Ribot's studies on the diseases of the will or personality. In his *Psychologie économique*, Paris, Alcan, 1902, tome 1, p.66, note 2, Tarde refers to Nietzsche : « Toute époque, toute civilisation, d'après Nietzsche - et c'est là une de ses meilleures considérations - a ce qu'il appelle “une *table des valeurs*”. Par exemple, elle estime que « la vérité est supérieure à l'erreur, ou qu'un acte miséricordieux est préférable à un acte de cruauté » (V. Lichtenberger, *Philosophie de Nietzsche*.) Un groupe des jugements comparatifs de ce genre constitue le caractère propre d'une phase de l'humanité. “La détermination de cette table des valeurs, et en particulier la fixation des plus hautes valeurs, est le fait capital de l'histoire universelle, puisque cette hiérarchie des valeurs détermine les actes conscients ou inconscients de tous les individus et motive tous les jugements que nous portons sur leurs actes.” Et l'on sait que, d'après le fameux philosophe, “la table des valeurs actuellement reconnue par les civilisations européennes est mal faite et demande à être révisée”. On ne saurait contester à Nietzsche ni l'existence ni l'importance capitale de cette table des valeurs dont il parle. Mais elle suppose, avant tout, qu'il existe des *quantités* sociales. Car, pour qu'une chose puisse être réputée plus ou moins qu'une autre, ne faut-il pas qu'elles aient une *commune mesure* ? - Il faut donc admettre des *quantités sociales*. »

<sup>11</sup> *Monadologie et sociologie*, volume I, p.93.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93. « To exist is to differ ». (*Monadologie et sociologie*, volume I, p. 72). There are little « ego » everywhere, monads for which the important thing is to have, to possess (and not to be) : « Instead of the famous *cogito ergo sum* , I would willingly say : « I desire, I believe, so I have » (*Ibid*, p. 87).

<sup>13</sup> *Les lois sociales*, p. 56.

Against the associationism of his time (both English and French), Tarde highlighted the affirmative or negative conviction, within a certain degree. Discerning and denying are the first acts of our mental life, and there is no connection, junction or association which is not based on the affirmation and negation, hence, on *belief*. In his *Social logic*, Tarde takes the example of the perception of a mountain that could be a cloud:

"Waking at dawn in a wagon, traveling through a new country, I see, a little above the horizon, a white indentation in the blue sky: I see a mountain. This means that I affirm the attribution to that visual impression of different vague images, visual, tactile, muscular, I have kept in mind of my hiking in the mountains. But then it seems to me I see a slight deformation of this silhouette, and the idea that it might be a cloud represents (to me) another judgment of attribution which is growing next to the other it contradicts. Alternatively, I go from one to the other, I oscillate between the two; but the second continuing to grow, the first ends up being emptied of all affirmative belief that it contained, and then filled with a growing negative belief, and finally resolutely denied. However, during this inner evolution, the visual impression of the white indentation remained associated in my mind with other images I have spoken of, and these are neither weakened nor heightened while their link or relationship weakened, and next strengthened after changing the sign, and went from + (plus) to - (minus)"<sup>14</sup>

We affirm, we deny, we assign, we "unassign" (sic), we alternate continuously between these states, which are like *the two poles of a magnet*, two opposite manifestations of the same force: the same belief at the heart of affirmation and negation; the desire at the heart of any pleasure or pain; whether feelings, percepts and concepts, always the same polarity. Which – asks Tarde- of our attractions or repulsions, of our loves or hatreds will prevail?

In short, in each intellectual act there is a conviction emotionally tinged. As such, our intellectual acts are answers to questions often forgotten as such, "and our mental life- "becomes a questionnaire instead of a continual credo"<sup>15</sup> We need certainty, and nothing more reassuring, more "certifying" than habit: and this would explain misoneism .

People can be divided according to how they believe and desire from which comes their way of feeling (by belief – see *Opposition universelle* - the psychic being acquires and increases; by desire, he externalizes and expends).

### 1.3 Logic and dynamic

It is therefore necessary to redefine Logic by expanding its meaning up to the point – insists Tarde- of including the illogical: "The flow of faith upon which all our ideas draw, overflows in the morning upon awakening, especially on a day of good health, sun, and enlightening journey; it will be lowering the evening, falls below the low water and dries completely during sleep; apart from its organic conditions, it also depends on the extent and clarity of our memory that stores these excitations. Likewise, our flow of desire not only drifts from the variables dispositions of our organs, but also from the chance encounters we make, for example, the sight of a woman in the street, and the liveliness of our imagination that perpetuates in us the effect of this shock. So much for the individual. As for the current no less variable of faith and desire, that waters a society, as it is not only formed by the juxtaposition of

<sup>14</sup> *La logique sociale*, p. 79.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

small individual streams, but being produced by the social action of these individuals on each other, it is under the control of similar causes under other names."<sup>16</sup>

So logic is based on belief, logic *is* the logic of belief and what Tarde calls *teleology* that of desire (logic of action). Against rationalism in a way, Tarde dethrones judgement, reducing it to a special form of belief to which one gives a particular « credence » (croyance).

The task or the object of logic and teleology is our judgments which share the "sum of faith of a man or a people"<sup>17</sup>: Logic studies the distribution of belief and its degrees, and indicates changes to establish agreement; and teleology, faced with the chaos of our tendencies or wishes, deals with the distribution of our desires.

They work with data that are the notions to serve as subjects or predicates asserted or denied in the premises or conclusions, and the modes of satisfaction to be rejected or to be sought, in order to serve our means or purposes. Briefly said, their purpose is "the handling, management and direction of belief and desire"<sup>18</sup>

## **2. Second part: The practical tardian syllogism.**

### **2.1. Natural and practical syllogism: what logicians neglected.**

Tarde develops a theory of natural syllogism formed by the marriage of belief and desire; our life is full of syllogisms, combinations of belief and desire that do not bring closer two affirmations or negations but an assertion and a volition, or a perception and a judgment, a volition and a picture and whose resultant is *new*. For example, I am told, and I believe and affirm that a man was killed not far from me: I go and see a man stained with blood, knife in hand, I conclude that man is necessarily the murderer. Another example: I am ambitious, I seek honours, (major) there is a position of Mayor in my village, (minor) So I run for Mayor (conclusion); etc.

Tarde borrows from Binet the idea that all perception is the conclusion of a syllogism: for example, the hearing of the sound of the bell: I remembered that this sound assigned with a special stamp is a bell sound (major) and I noticed that the sound has a special stamp (minor), therefore I concluded that it was a bell<sup>19</sup>. Let's give a common example taken from linguistics : words or verbal articulations spread by imitation, but especially true notions attached to verbal articulations are transmitted in the same manner: our notions are the repetition and gradual consolidation of former judgments: this is still obvious for the child learning how to speak. A nomination judgment is at the bottom of words and a word is for the child a whole sentence: it involves an act of *faith* that is strengthened by its repetitions, language being no less than - "a sum of acts of faith in the process of growing or diminishing".<sup>20</sup> Language is a social energy of foremost order<sup>21</sup>, and linguists study no more than flows of faith"<sup>22</sup>.

### **2.2 incorrect practical reasoning: the role of belief**

Now, according to Tarde, *the teleological syllogism* has been *neglected* by logicians who were content with ranking the propositions (in universal affirmative, universal negative, particular affirmative, particular negative) and did not go any farther<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 94.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p.96.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*. In this sense, Moralists are teleologists unknowingly.

<sup>19</sup> *La logique sociale*, note p. 105.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89-90.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90 : « "The low Breton has done more to prevent the assimilation of Brittany to France than Christianity helped; and the Arabic language is not a slighter obstacle than Islamism to francization of Algeria".

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

<sup>23</sup> Tarde refers to logicians such as Morgan, Hamilton, Mill, etc.

In short, classical logic analyzed the affirmation and negation but *neglected the degree of conviction*: the logician- "does not seem to doubt that the importance of the universal judgment is proportioned to the degree of confidence we have in the loyalty of our personal memories or sincerity of informations given by others on the basis of which we affirm or deny the remarks they express "<sup>24</sup>. And no matter if it finds its origin in rational abstraction or empirical observation; even the mathematician, says Tarde, can not ignore social communication beliefs: he will be really sure of Euclid's theorem only when his colleagues will be convinced (of it). No socialization without verbalization; the role of repetition is here fundamental: without repetition, there can be no universal judgment.

Now there are two ways to go against logic and teleology:  
- 1) if one draws a conclusion from two premises which is not contained in them, then one is being illogical – this incorrect way of reasoning is what has preoccupied logicians until then. Yet,

2) one can, while concluding rightly, be inconsistent if " from premises posed with some doubt, we deduce a proposition affirmed with full conviction, or vice versa": "An act is in disagreement with itself, sometimes because the means are not suitable to achieve the goal, because sometimes, using appropriate means, we attach them with a zeal disproportionate to the desire we have to see the goal achieved, that is to say: higher or lower than this desire that it should only be the reappearance in another form. "<sup>25</sup>

Likewise, there are two ways to lie: an uncommon one which consists in saying what we do not think, the other much more common (in private and political life especially) which is "to assert vigorously what you are uncertain of"! <sup>26</sup> There is a logic of the podium, a logic of the jury where thousands of syllogisms are asserted on a daily basis. Remove the belief is a denial of reality: *the belief is indeed what is the most formal in logic*: Go and tell a lawyer – says Tarde – (who knew what he was speaking about, being himself a judge-) that it does not matter to convince more or less his judge of the innocence or of his client's rights! Even in parliament, it matters less to reach the conclusion from the premises than to *produce faith or increase faith*. Tarde sums it up as follows:

"In fact, the usefulness of the actual and practical reasoning, does not consist in giving rise to new propositions, induced or inferred (which always present themselves, no one knows how, extra-logically in any case), but to change (modify) our opinion - I add, or the opinions of others principally- that is to say to raise or lower our faith or the faith of others in these propositions, or even to reverse them, affirmative turned negative or vice versa. Actually, the use of syllogism is to discuss more than to meditate; it relates to the operations of the social logic more as to the functions of individual logic; discourse aims to persuade. As a result, dealing with logic separately from belief, means no less than deprive that science of its own being and purpose "<sup>27</sup>

Thus certainty is always a more or less intense conviction. And the individual logical formula addressed to those who want to reason rightly is not: "If you are sure of this, you need to be sure of that," but a more general formula: "If you believe, with

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p.106.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p. 110-111. Likewise, the classification of social actions is made according to two criteria : the logical correspondence of means and ends ; the proportion or disproportion between the energy consumed and the actual desire for the goal.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, note p. 112.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 114.

a given degree of belief, in *this*, and do not want to risk to deviate from truth nor miss the opportunity to come the closest to truth, you have to believe in *that* to the same degree or to such higher or lower degree"<sup>28</sup>. The logical laws are equations or "equivalencies of beliefs under certain conditions"<sup>29</sup>

*Logic and teleology (theoretical and practical reasoning) deal with the direction of belief and not with the revelation of truth.*

So between the intense affirmation and negation, there are unstable states. For example, ordinary logic tells us that a thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time, but –Tarde asks – what could result from this clash? In fact, the survival of a proposition (principle of “excluded middle”) is conceivable only if the amount of faith is *superior* to the other; without the inequality of these two beliefs, the principle of excluded middle is inapplicable (if one thing must be affirmed, it should not be denied and vice versa): one proposition disappears not as a proposition but *as a belief*.

### 2.3. The teleological syllogism

Tarde gives several examples of teleological syllogism: I want to work for my salvation; diet is a way to save oneself; so I must diet. In brief, the aim is an unconscious major that serves in all moral reasoning, and "the deeper and the more hidden is this major, so that the obligation of the deducted action appears more sovereign"<sup>30</sup>. Tarde distinguishes in the judgment-purpose (“I want this”) the two quantities to be considered: the degree of positive or negative desire and the degree of positive or negative belief whose this desire is the object. Referring here to Ribot and his work on the will<sup>31</sup> in which Ribot assimilates judgment and will (as the choice of the target), Tarde objects – if the choice – writes Tarde – is a *practical affirmation*, a judgment, this is true not for the volition itself but for the *teleological judgment annexed to it*, that is to say, for the *minor* of the teleological syllogism and even – in part – for the conclusion; the minor is the choice, the ascribing of the medium; but the election of the purpose is a judgment in so far that it is verbalized; up to then it is not a proposition but a *desire*.<sup>32</sup>

Now my belief in the effectiveness of the means can be more or less important: my belief can grow or decrease while my desire grows.<sup>33</sup> Desire changes into *duty*<sup>34</sup> *not because of a higher intensity, but because of its combination with the belief engaged in the minor proposition*. For example, I want my bronchitis to be cured, I believe that a spa-treatment in Cauterets would do me good and the perspective of such a journey delights me; the conclusion: “Let’s go to Cauterets” is felt as a far less intense duty than if, believing very *strongly* in the power of those waters, I cared little for the spa-treatment or even feared boredom.

The conclusion is felt as a duty because of the compound of desire in the major and faith in the minor, with no regard to its contrary or conform desire – it is felt like a desire composed of two desires. The question therefore is to believe enough to desire/ to desire enough to believe: if, by desiring A I think that B is good, I must desire

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 115.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134-135.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, note p. 135.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135-136.

<sup>33</sup> For example I want my children to get the best instruction. The best schools are only in big cities. So I must emigrate to a big city (*Ibid.*, p. 136).

<sup>34</sup> « Duty is a will which has lost consciousness of its major, of the Desire that moves it...because this Desire superiorly superior to any other[...] is the very bottom of the soul » (*L'Opposition universelle*, volume III, p. 221-222).



What we call truth then is nothing but the group of perfect beliefs attached to immediate judgments of the senses because they have the power to accumulate indefinitely without contradiction, to add their own amount of belief without any subtraction, while for example such dogmatic convictions are not indefinitely accumulative and up to a certain point cannot be merely substituted one for the other. Tarde's logic is no formal logic: logic being nothing but "the art of changing thoughts while we retain, without augmentation or diminution, the distance that separates us from the truth or falsehood"<sup>36</sup>. To conceive is to affirm or deny – it is basically to believe. Quantities serve as links to qualities, whether they are more or less strong, i.e. true.

Sensations differ, but everyone distinguishes between yes and no, between desire and repulsion: thanks to these mental quantities, tradition – the transmission of generations – is made possible: by belief, by desire only we do collaborate, we do fight; thereby only then, we look alike; at the bottom of all human struggles, there is a yes and a no, a velle and a nolle.

### **3. Conclusion: Imitation as contagion of belief and desire. Imitation, suggestion. The transmission of forces.**

What can "consciousness of another consciousness" be? The "*inconcussum quid*" that Descartes sought and that the individual ego could not provide him "<sup>37</sup>? Tarde's answer is: it is the feeling of the feeling thing, the volition (will) of a willing thing, the belief in a believing thing, in a person, in short, where the person perceiving reflects himself and cannot deny it without denying himself".<sup>38</sup> How can one understand the transmission of a mental thing? Tarde answers that what can be transmitted is not the feeling or the emotional state, but only (the forces of) belief and

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<sup>35</sup> *La logique sociale*, p. 140-141. "This desire for the desire B, involved in desire A, is manifested obviously by my belief and is all the more obvious that my belief is stronger. No matter this desire to desire is satisfied or not in advance, and to what extent it is already satisfied or hard to please. It is a duty as long as it is the desire of a desire, and a duty and in proportion to its own intensity, not that of desire which serves as an object. It is the degree of belief with which we affirm the effectiveness of the means, which determines the proportion in which the desire of this means (desire preexisting or not), I do not say must be desired, but *is* desired. When I want to desire B that I reject or am reluctant to desire, there is properly duty, I mean pain, in the usual meaning of this word. When I want to desire B which is indifferent to me, and that is indifferent to desire with the intensity required, there is still duty, but duty is not felt in the absence of previous resistance. When I want I to desire B that I already want a little, but less than I desire to desire it, one can say that there is emerging pleasure, more than duty. Because the simple fact of this agreement, however incomplete it is, provides a satisfaction. When I want to desire B that I already want in an equal or greater degree to the desired desire, this satisfaction becomes perfect or even excessive. But, to have become nice, it was very painful before, duty has not changed in nature; it remained essentially identical to itself." Tarde adds: "Indeed, if I could call duty the conclusion of the teleological syllogism teleological deduced by the individual from his own will taken as the major, it is nonetheless true that in the mouth of everyone this conclusion is properly called will. To will is to propose oneself to do what we do not feel the desire for in general, but for what we want. The desire is the desire mediate. Will is mediate desire. Duty is will too, but in service of another will; it is mediate will". (*Ibid.*, p. 143).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>37</sup> *Les lois sociales*, 55-56.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

desire: "Any social bond consists, directly or indirectly, in the remote reflection of an ego in another ego, by imitation."<sup>39</sup>.

Imitation as you know, is the key concept of Tarde: the energy of desire and belief forms a homogeneous flow which circulates identical and is communicative. And what is imitated is always an idea or a wish, a judgment or a design that expresses a degree of belief and desire. The contagion of the mutual example exerts itself on similar beliefs and desires in order to strengthen them, and on contrary beliefs and desires in order to weaken them.

Societies do function thanks to these plastic forces which form the raw psychological materials of socialization: flowing side by side or evolving against each other in society, these quantities whose subtractions and additions are regulated by social logic, form a kind of social algebra.

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<sup>39</sup> « L'inter-psychologie », *Archives de l'anthropologie criminelle, de criminologie, et de psychologie normale et psychologique*, T. XIX (1904), p. 94.