

Article



Collective intentionality or documentality?

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Abstract

In this article I defend two theses. The first is that the centrality of recording in the social world is manifested through the production of documents, a phenomenon which has been present since the earliest phases of society and which has undergone an exponential growth through the technological developments of the last decades (computers, tablets, smartphones). The second is that the centrality of documents leads to a view of normativity according to which human beings are primarily passive receptors of rules manifested through documents. We are not intentional producers of values. The latter, as I shall suggest in my conclusion, should be viewed as being ‘socially dependent’ rather than ‘socially constructed’.

Keywords

Documentality, intentionality, normativity, social ontology, the Web

Documents – paradigmatically, documents issued by bureaucrats – have for several centuries now been most revealing of the role of recording in the construction of social reality. I think it is quite interesting to note that, for all its massive effects, this factor has often been underestimated in social ontology as well as in the analysis of mass media. The latter has seen not only (as I have mentioned elsewhere) the prophecy of the death of writing, but also the absurd postmodern hypothesis that the social would be, step by step, absorbed by the media which are themselves ‘constructing reality’,¹ so that reality itself is becoming indistinguishable from fiction.

What in fact happened is, of course, quite the opposite: the world of media is now just one part of social reality in general. As regards social ontology, it is worth noting that bureaucracy has been regarded as a subordinated (if not marginal) phenomenon

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compared with others (political will, collective intentionality, class consciousness and so forth). In fact, the prevailing hypothesis about the constitution of social reality is that collective intentionality precedes and constitutes – in the social sphere – individual intentionality.² The thesis I now wish to defend is that, on the contrary, documentality constitutes both collective and individual intentionality.

I shall begin by demonstrating that documentality is the condition of the possibility of intentionality. The more general thesis is that any system for emancipation is at the same time a system for control. Machines emancipate people from physical fatigue but deliver them up to industrial work. The Internet appeared at its outset as a liberation from the world of work and as a new countervailing power; in reality, however, it introduced a new layer of work and a new sort of power. This takes nothing away from the merits of the Internet, just as the assembly line takes nothing away from the merits of the machines it uses. But still it is an element that cannot be underestimated. This is the dark and deep side of the Web, which we need to make explicit.

The Web is today identical in scale with the whole of the human social world. Through all the screens of all the computers, tablets and smartphones that we have before our eyes, the Web talks constantly about itself, and yet we do not know what it really is. If we think about it, the answer comes from the name spontaneously taken by the objects that populate our digital archives and the desktops of our computers: *files, folders, image collections*. The Web is a document-producing *device*: it is not passive; it is not a fabric but a weaver. This is the big difference as compared with classical media such as television or radio, whose main function is to convey information about events generated somewhere else. The Web is a performative rather than a descriptive system; and this explains why it has changed our lives much more than the old media of mass communication to which it is improperly considered to be the heir.

Documentality is the sphere in which social objects are generated. Such objects do not exist in the absence of human beings, but they are not docile instruments at our disposal either. Hence ‘mobilization’. Now, many philosophers have noted that it is wrong to interpret the promise as a manifestation of the will, since then the will would somehow have to appear as bound to the promise (which then, whether it is kept or not, could not be able to be canceled by an act of will). No philosopher (at least to my knowledge) has observed how, from this circumstance, another fact naturally derives: namely that not only does documentality constrain will, but it can also prescind from it (as when we sign a document while ignoring some of its clauses, despite their being fully constraining). Society pre-exists us: we find it good and ready, defined in every detail. It is from within this pre-existent structure, made up of education, language, values, norms, that our individual intentionality originates. In a very concrete way, without a highly detailed and defined social structure not only would the sphere of rights and obligations be inconceivable, but so would that of our intentions and aspirations. It is fairly obvious that, outside a society, expressions like ‘one must pay tax’ or ‘no one can be arrested without a reason’ would be senseless. But what is rarely noticed is that, without a society, sentences such as ‘I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*’, ‘I take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife’ and ‘I shall die some day and leave you my watch’³ would have no meaning either. As much as such sentences seem to manifest a non-derived intentionality, the condition of their possibility lies in a social structure that makes acts like naming, marrying and bequeathing conceivable.

The surprises that many documents hold for us, the power they wield over us, the possibility – immanent in every form of writing – that they initiate processes that are beyond the control of those who created them, are a clear manifestation of the unpredictability of entities that depend on the social world for their genesis – as in the case of artifacts – or for their very existence – as in the case of social objects such as debts or online reputations. One thing is certain in light of what we have said so far. The postmodern hypothesis of a so-called ‘liquid modernity’,⁴ which defines contemporary society as characterized by great instability, mobility, but also tolerance, is countered precisely by the fixation and stabilization brought about by the enormous growth of records. That we have never had a less liquid society is well known to all those who, after recklessly posting some inappropriate comments on a social network, see their lives and careers destroyed. There was definitely more tolerance, and greater room for fluidity, at the courts of Versailles or Constantinople.

The constitutive law of social objects is object = recorded act.⁵ That is to say, a social object is the result of (1) a social act (which means, an act that involves at least two people, or a machine and a person) that is (2) characterized by being recorded on a piece of paper, a computer file, or even only in the minds of the people involved. Social objects are divided into documents in the strong sense, as inscriptions of acts, and documents in the weak sense, as recordings of facts. A strong document is one that has some kind of power (such documents are, for example, banknotes, tickets, contracts), while a weak document is one that merely keeps track of what has taken place, such as, for example, expired tickets or contracts that are no longer valid. The latter have a simple informative power, and not a normative one, although they can regain some such power in a new sort of context – as when in a judicial context an expired train ticket counts as an alibi for the defendant. The social object is dependent on minds for its beginning to exist, but once it has been recorded it acquires an independent existence, comparable in some ways with what holds in the case of physical artifacts, with the only important difference that a physical artifact can offer its affordance even in the absence of minds (a table can also be a shelter for an animal), while a document, typically, cannot.

For social objects to exist, it is necessary that there are at least two minds, though of course in complex social phenomena many more may be involved. In such cases many of those who are involved do not think in any way about the social object in the bringing into being of which they are involved while still somehow managing to influence the process. At the same time there may be many others who do think about it, and yet are unable to exert such influence (think of a financial crisis, or a war). Apparently, we are dealing with a puzzle: social objects, as we have seen, are dependent on minds, but they are independent of knowledge (and even of consciousness): there may be a recession even though no one suspects it.

How is this possible? Does this not mean that social objects are both dependent on and independent of the mind? No, it does not. The contradiction would present itself only if ‘mind dependence’ were understood as dependence on one mind, as if any single person could determine the course of the social world. But a single mind does not make the laws, nor does it set the prices. Moreover, there are circumstances where our own mind seems to act independently of itself, as when we develop obsessive thoughts that we rather would not have.

If we no longer have a contradiction between ‘dependence on the mind’ and ‘independence from knowledge’, we still have to explain how social objects can persist even when we do not have consciousness or knowledge of them. That is why I argue that the foundation of the social world is documentality. In fact, when dealing with social objects we do not deal with a series of intentional acts that consciously keep the pertinent object alive, so to speak, as if we all thought at the same time about (say) the Constitution of the Republic of Italy. It is not so: the constitution is written and ratified, and from that point on it is valid even if no one thinks about it (which in fact happens all too often).

In addition to helping us solve the puzzle of mind-dependence and -independence, the theory of documentality allows us also to provide a more solid basis for the constitutive rule proposed by the most influential theorist of social objects, John Searle: namely the rule ‘X counts as Y in C’ (physical object X counts as social object Y in context C).⁶ The limit of Searle’s rule is twofold. On the one hand, it does not seem able to account for complex social objects (such as corporations) or entities lacking a physical foundation (such as debts). On the other hand, it makes the entirety of social reality depend on the action of an entity that is (in contrast to documents) completely mysterious, namely ‘collective intentionality’, which is, in Searle’s account, responsible for transforming the physical into the social.

According to the version that I propose, on the contrary, it is very easy to account for the totality of social objects, from informal promises to businesses and even entirely non-physical entities such as debts and rights. In all these cases there is a minimal structure, which is guaranteed by

1. the presence of at least two people who commit some act (which may consist of a gesture, an utterance, or an act of writing) that
2. has the essential characteristic of being recorded on some support, even if this be only human memory.

That recording alone is not enough is proved by the fact that I may very well have memories of events that affect only me, and therefore have a purely psychological significance – this has already been noted by Thomas Reid, who insisted on the specificity of ‘social operations’.⁷ But – and this, to my knowledge, has not been noticed by anyone before – that the act essentially requires recording for a social object to be constituted is proved by the fact that, in the absence of recording, the object simply disappears. Without recordings (that is, without shared memories and documents) objects such as kingdoms and taxes, marriages and prison sentences simply would not exist. This is the real and decisive difference between natural objects – that exist in space and time independently of recordings – and social objects, which exist in space and time (as opposed to ideal objects) but derive their existence from the recordings of acts.

Deleting every document will never stop a hurricane, but we can be sure that the complete deletion of recordings (shared memories and documents) in a giant collective amnesia would make the financial crisis disappear. Obviously no one would wish for a remedy of this kind: it would be worse than the disease, because it would take the whole of social reality away along with it. I think this example is sufficient to show the centrality of recording in the construction of the social world. Recording, in fact, ensures

the *permanence* that allows the passage from a speech act theory to a social ontology of the sort Searle had in mind.

Searle has decided to ensure permanence through the use of a variety of physical objects X that are called to act as a support to a variety of social objects Y, falling not only into the difficulties mentioned above, but also into a further problem of indeterminacy. The same physical object 'John Searle', in fact, corresponds to several different social objects: a husband, an employee of the state of California, the holder of a driving licence, the owner of a credit card, and so on (the owner of a house, the author of 30 books, a lecturer at the Collège de France, the winner of the 2006 'Mind and Brain' prize, etc.).

There is a kind of magic involved in Searle's view of the process that transforms a physical object into a social object – something that makes one think of Duchamp, or of Piero Manzoni's 'Artist's Shit', in which a natural object is transformed into a work of art. But there is a heuristically attractive alternative, which is precisely to recognize that permanence is not guaranteed by some transfiguration of a physical object,⁸ but rather by the recording of the relevant act. Not only is this able to account for debts and similar cases (which exist in virtue of the fact that they are recorded); it also avoids the concentration of too many social objects in a single physical object. Typically, it is not Searle's body that makes him a professor, a husband, an employee of the State of California and the holder of a driver's licence – it is a series of documents.

In addition to accounting for the physical basis of the social object – which is not an X available for the action of collective intentionality, but a recording that has been created in multiple ways – the rule that I propose (and which I call the 'rule of documentality' as opposed to the 'rule of intentionality') has the advantage of not making social reality depend on anything like collective intentionality. In fact, such an appeal comes dangerously close to depending on something purely mental: this led Searle to make a statement that is anything but realistic, namely that the economic crisis is largely the result of imagination: 'It is, for example, a mistake to treat money and other such instruments as if they were natural phenomena like the phenomena studied in physics, chemistry, and biology. The recent economic crisis makes it clear that they are products of massive fantasy.'⁹ From my perspective, on the contrary, being a form of documentality, money is anything but imaginary. This circumstance allows us to draw a distinction between the social (that which involves some recording of the acts of at least two people, even if in the minds of those people and not on external documents) and the mental (which can also take place only in the mind of a single person).

The idea proposed by Searle (and earlier by Tuomela) is that underlying the construction of the social world there is a primitive and natural element that is expressed – in a number of different sorts of situations – through the 'we' instead of the 'I'. Searle presents us with the prototype of collective intentionality through the drawing of two heads saying 'we intend'. Of course, we can imagine situations in which this 'we intend' is realized in just this fashion; but those would still be exceptions compared with most social circumstances, which may range from disagreement to the radical subordination of an individual intentionality to other intentionalities, as in all situations involving coercion, to simple cases where employees work, semi-reluctantly, for pay. The social nature of Searlean collective intentionality, in contrast, seems to be confined to the sort of playful

and disinterested cooperation that is involved, for example, in dancing, or rearranging furniture,¹⁰ and most importantly, it lacks one element essential to any social ontology, which is the ability to account for conflict.

This is a crucial point. Just as a theory of knowledge is not a good theory of knowledge if it does not know how to explain error, so a theory of society is not a good theory of society if it does not know how to explain conflict. And Searle's theory fails in this regard. If there is collective intentionality, how can you talk about conflict? And conversely, if there is conflict, how can you call it 'collective intentionality'? How, on the basis of this theory, can we distinguish the fact that

1. I (whether rightly or wrongly) do not share the beliefs of my community from the fact that
2. I violate the law?

What distinguishes

1. a belief that I share with my community (and which is not binding *per se*) from
2. a rule that I follow?

How can we reconcile the fact that

1. I and everyone else I know is skeptical of the use being made of the taxes we pay with the fact that
2. we are not exempt from paying taxes?

Following a line of reasoning not too different from that of Searle, Margaret Gilbert has located in 'walking together'¹¹ the paradigm of being together as a community, and thus as the model of collective intentionality. When a couple is taking a walk, their action can undoubtedly be the expression of a shared intentionality. But let us picture now soldiers marching in goose-step. Is that, too, a case of collective intentionality? Or imagine a group of soldiers who are prisoners-of-war, marching at the command of their captors. Do we have here a case of what we might call 'marching together'? That there is an analogy between this last case and the other two is at least questionable. And do not forget that, without falling into an excessive pessimism, the way in which we normally interact in a society is in some ways like that of prisoners – certainly not under the threat of a gun pointed at our heads, but still within the boundaries set by laws, street signs, fees, prohibitions.

Paraphrasing Clausewitz, for Searle politics is a continuation of the barbecue by different means. If what I have said so far is true, then the proposed idea of collective intentionality appears as a neutering of politics, since it is unable to account for a fundamental political category: the polarity of friend and foe. It is a neutering of politics because, as Searle sees matters,¹² there is something fundamentally similar between a pack of hyenas attacking its prey and the Senate of the United States approving a law. As witty and psychologically plausible as this analogy may seem, it forgets that while the hyenas' activity produces no consequences beyond itself, that of the senators has effects – mediated through documents – explicitly conceived

as transcending and outlasting the acts that generated them. The document, in fact, is the most obvious manifestation of the need – which is at the center of social reality – to fix something that would otherwise enjoy only a fleeting existence.¹³ A pyramid and a receipt, a triumphal arch and a restaurant bill – conceptually these have something in common: namely the fact of being the objectified and outward manifestation of a social reality.

Documentality – which emphasizes the inherently political nature of every social act – first of all makes possible what Shapiro¹⁴ has called ‘massively planned social agency’. This is a point that should not be underestimated. The sort of agency that is illustrated by the day-to-day workings of a large corporation is not a matter of myriad plans in the minds of individual subjects coordinated through some collective intentionality. Rather, it is a matter of the separate intentionalities of myriad individuals whose collective effect is made possible through a gigantic network of documents, which is itself evolving from one day to the next. Such networks of documents are involved in every case of massive social agency, often escaping any form of control (as shown, for example, by the often uncontrolled mechanisms that lead to economic crises or wars). In all such cases we are dealing once again with the confusing interplay of individual intentionalities guided by a fragmented and diffuse documentality – that is, by a set of orders – whose primary feature is not to be ‘understood’, but rather to be performed, with a competence that precedes understanding (we will soon see the implications of this fact). In this sense, documentality can be considered as a branch of the philosophy of action, given that for documents of many types their primary purpose is to enable corresponding types of document acts.¹⁵ Obviously, every document can remain in the dead letter form and be a mere (effectless) recording, but we are then dealing with a degraded kind of document (what I have referred to as a ‘weak document’ in the above).

It is also problematic, though intuitively more tempting, to argue that normativity derives from collective intentionality. To say that ‘the discontent of the people led to the French Revolution’ explains much; but it would be difficult to claim that ‘the discontent of the people’ as such is a source of normativity. Normativity begins to become recognizable rather in the Convention Nationale – the self-constituted court that, with 707 votes out of 718, sentenced Louis XVI to death on 15 January 1793 for ‘conspiracy against public freedom and the general safety of the state’.¹⁶ This example seems rather to demonstrate that normativity comes from documentality. What is even more obvious is the role of documentality in the construction of economic values (which, in agreement with Adam Smith and contrary to Kant, are no different in their origin from moral values). Hernando de Soto¹⁷ has convincingly demonstrated that the mere creation of documents of ownership can increase the value of real estate. It is worth mentioning that this circumstance is the basis of the system of stock market values, where the value is *explicitly* the result of documentality, i.e. the issue of bonds.

Documents – constitutions, codices, regulations – do not mobilize alone; there has to be some intentionality: the Italian constitution applies even if nobody thinks about it, but it ceases to have any significance if there is no one who is able to read it and to follow its dictates. The validity of what is written in a document remains dependent on systems of practices that make the content of the document normative. Otherwise, it would be

impossible to distinguish between a binding constitution and a constitution that is no longer in force, since both are written down somewhere. The theory of documentality, if taken to an extreme, could risk our not being able to explain this fundamental distinction. At this point, however, it is worth pointing out that the social cannot be merely 'that which records acts involving at least two people'. It must also include the practices that support this recording and make it valid and normative. That is precisely what I now propose to illustrate through the thesis of the emergence of intentionality and normativity from documentality.

The problem arises as follows: strictly speaking, an inscription is semantically inert and assumes meaning only if interpreted by some subject endowed with intentionality. To solve this problem, Récanati has proposed the idea of 'mental files'¹⁸ – mental documents that, unlike paper documents, are intrinsically intentional – in echo of Brentano's doctrine that the defining character of the mental is its intentionality. There is an underlying mythology behind such doctrines of rational understanding, a mythology that claims a unique and superior quality that characterizes our (western, analytical) consciousness. When, for example, Searle (making an assumption consistent with his later theory of collective intentionality¹⁹) argues that the simple manipulation of signs is not thought, he does not seem to take into account the phenomenon of competence without understanding²⁰ (I use the computer without knowing exactly how it works). Yet the acceptance and application of non-understood rules is probably the most characteristic trait of normativity. Whether we perfectly know the rules of finance or we ignore them altogether, banknotes exert the same regulatory power over our actions. Such power seems to depend in an essential way on the visual aspect of banknotes, as demonstrated by the experiments that study the reaction of people before the destruction of banknotes, which is significantly different from the destruction of simple sheets of paper.²¹ In this case, the subjects' behavior is in some respects comparable with the behavior of a bar code reader: given a visual stimulus, a reaction follows.

As we said, documents do not mobilize alone. Documental recording sustains normativity only against the background of some normative social practice. Banknotes become just so much waste paper if there is no institutional background to support them, and this background will involve some intentionality, however rudimentary. Thus I am not arguing that documents 'read themselves', so to speak (though we are now so far along that the bar code on your boarding pass in European airports now makes the doors open that allow you to embark on the plane). What I propose, rather, is a change of perspective. The use of intentionality in order to explain the construction of social reality, and of normativity, presupposes that we are conscious constructors, that it is we who are creating and maintaining the norms. But *we relate to social reality not in the manner of the legislator, but in the manner of the subject*, and this applies even to the legislator as a concrete historical individual. The notion of 'norm' – contrary to the Kantian view, which turns every moral subject into a legislator – is essentially something given from the outside, rather than something constructed. It is conceivable that, for example, the power relations in a social group derive in some sense from relations of dominance in animal life prior to hominization. But if this is so, then the expression 'normativity is socially constructed' is no more plausible than 'the alpha male is socially constructed'. We can certainly say that normativity is socially dependent (in the absence of a society it would

be difficult to give meaning to the concept of normativity); but this does not justify a view of normativity as the product of a collective (or any other sort of) intentionality.

These considerations can be easily supported by a simple thought experiment. Imagine some Crusoe figure, the first or last man on the face of the earth. Could our Crusoe be devoured by the ambition to become an admiral? A billionaire? A court poet? Certainly not, just as he could not sensibly aspire to follow trends, or to collect baseball cards or still life paintings. And if, say, he tried to fabricate a document, he would be undertaking an impossible task, because to produce a document there must be at least two people, the writer and the reader. In fact, our Crusoe would not even have a language, and one could hardly say that he would 'think' in the usual sense of the term.²² And it would seem difficult to argue that he was proud, arrogant, or in love, for roughly the same reason why it would be absurd to pretend that he had friends or enemies.

This example is meant to show that we are not constructors of meaning. At most, we are receptors of meaning. And if we move from the generic abstraction 'man' to the multitude of human beings, and especially to the vast number of social objects (and now also of electronic devices) that we incessantly produce, we will see how little truth there lies in Vico's dictum that society is transparent because it is the product of man. On the contrary, Vico was much closer to the truth when he asserted that *homo non intelligendo fit omnia*. For on almost all occasions, far from negotiating or offering consensus, we follow norms without thinking about them, or questioning them, or even – and this is very common, as well as being presupposed by the law – without agreeing on (or to) them. We follow the rules 'blindly'.²³ Here is the distinctive feature of our relation with the world. Just as nobody needs to know the functioning of a lift in order to use one, so very few people need to know the norms they adhere to. The norms are instilled by education and habit and live on behind the scenes. In all but the most exceptional circumstances (such as revolutions), social reality is, far from being actively constructed, passively undergone. It is this which lies at the basis of our ordinary assumption that money has an intrinsic value, that the police have the right in certain circumstances to confiscate one's driving licence.

If it were not possible to keep traces, there would be no mind, no thought and no intention. But without the possibility of inscription there would not even be social objects, starting from the fundamental case of the promise. And, if this is so, then perhaps we should translate Aristotle's sentence that man is a *zoon logon echon* as: man is an animal endowed with inscriptions, or rather (since one of the meanings of *logos* in Greek is precisely 'promise', 'given word') as: 'man is an animal that promises'.

Which brings us back to mobilization – or total responsabilization. As I said at the beginning of this article, the Internet is an empire on which the sun never sets: at any time we can receive a request for work to be done, and at all times we are responsible for responding to such requests, in a process that extends indefinitely the duration of work and the dominion of responsibility (... because all the requests are recorded). Imagine life with an old type of phone, the kind without a memory. If it rang when we were not at home, we would remain blissfully unaware of the call that we had missed. We lived on, happily and obligation-free. Today each 'missed call' is recorded on our phone, and generates an obligation to respond, raising the pang of guilt in what we call 'soul'. The very fact of recording makes us responsible: a promise made between people

without memories would not be a promise; it would be a series of empty words. This is why the world is filled with paper, files, archives and registries. Moral responsibility, at its core, is just this: inscription and recording. It is not by chance that divine omniscience is represented as the holding aloft of a book, in which everything is written and nothing is forgotten.

Notes

Parts of this article appeared in my essay 'Total Mobilization', *The Monist* (97)2 (2014): 200–21.

1. See the first chapter of my *Manifesto of New Realism* (New York: SUNY Press, 2014). For a development of the concept of 'documentality', see my *Documentality. Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).
2. R. Tuomela, *The Importance of Us: A Philosophical Study of Basic Social Notions*, Stanford Series in Philosophy (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).
3. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962).
4. See Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).
5. In the early formulations of this law I wrote 'object = inscribed act'. I decided to replace 'inscribed' with 'recorded' because I found that the term 'inscription' (which for me is a technical term indicating any recording accessible to at least two people) can be misleading, in particular because – if you take 'inscription' in the ordinary sense of the term – it does not apply to societies without writing.
6. J. R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: the Free Press, 1995).
7. See K. Schuhmann and B. Smith, 'Elements of Speech Act Theory in the Work of Thomas Reid', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 7(1) (January 1990): 47–66.
8. In this sense, Searle's constitutive theory can be retraced in the seminal article by Arthur C. Danto, 'The Transfiguration of the Commonplace', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 33(2) (Winter 1974): 139–48. The problem, though, is that Searle's rule 'X counts as Y in C' does not seem to hold *also* in the case of ready-mades, but rather *essentially and almost exclusively* in this case.
9. J. R. Searle, *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 201.
10. An important reference here is the theory of 'games of make-believe' proposed in K. L. Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). Amie Thomasson compares this with Searle's social ontology in her 'Foundations for a Social Ontology', *Proto-Sociology* 18–19 (2003): 269–90.
11. M. Gilbert, 'Walking Together: A Paradigmatic Social Phenomenon', *Midwest Studies In Philosophy* 15 (1990): 1–14.
12. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, p. 38.
13. J. Le Goff, 'Documento/Monumento' (Turin: Enciclopedia Einaudi, 1978), vol. V, pp. 38–48.
14. Scott A. Shapiro, 'Massively Shared Agency', in M. Vargas and G. Yaffe (eds) *Rational and Social Agency: Essays on the Philosophy of Michael Bratman* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 257–93. As Smith points out, it is precisely documents that provide for the 'division of intellectual, instructional, and deontic labour' that Shapiro's account requires, and which enable 'plans, orders, and obligations to be enmeshed together in a way that mobilizes

- multiple groups of individuals to coordinated action'. See B. Smith 'Diagrams, Documents, and the Meshing of Plans', in A. Benedek and K. Nyíri (eds) *How To Do Things With Pictures: Skill, Practice, Performance*, Visual Learning series (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013), pp. 165–79.
15. B. Smith, 'Document Acts', in A. Konzelmann-Ziv and H. B. Schmid (eds) *Institutions, Emotions, and Group Agents. Contributions to Social Ontology* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), pp. 19–31.
 16. As one can read in the *Appel nominal sur le jugement de Louis XVI*, supplement to issue 77 of the newspaper *Le Républicain* (9 December 2014), p. 1.
 17. H. de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).
 18. See F. Récanati, *Mental Files* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
 19. J. R. Searle, 'Minds, Brains, and Programs', *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 3(3) (1980): 417–57.
 20. D. C. Dennett, 'Darwin's "Strange Inversion of Reasoning"', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 106(suppl. 1) (16 June 2009): 10061–5.
 21. C. Becchio *et al.*, 'How the Brain Responds to the Destruction of Money', *Journal of Neuroscience, Psychology, and Economics* 4(1) (February 2011): 1–10.
 22. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, paragraphs 243–421; published posthumously 1953; recent edn of German text with Eng.-lang. trans.(Oxford: Blackwell, 2001); 4th edn (London and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).
 23. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, paragraphs 138, 201, 202, 206, 221.