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La déficience argumentative de la justification morale dans le débat public

Il y a bien trop d'éthique dans la philosophie contemporaine, et les nietzschéens comme les partisans d'une éthique 'minimale' ne manqueront pas d'ajouter : 'trop de moralisme'. (...) Un jardinier a-t-il besoin d'une *Éthique des jardins*? Cela semble de bon sens, mais s'il y a autant d'hygiènes que de tâches, il y a un risque de perdre le sens général des normes éthiques [...]

Pascal Engel, *Les vices du savoir*

Abstract: The article discusses the possibility of having moral justifications as arguments in public debates. Starting from attempts to circumscribe the concept of *justification* (in Anne Meylan, mostly), such that it would rather have a logical basis (the reason to maintain a belief, to accomplish an action, to manifest a desire or an intention), a definition is retained: justification would be something that "speaks for", and this meets the requirements of logic. Since the positions taken in public debates are part of transcategorality, it seems that the justification of such entities is also a transcategorial property. A clarification is made from the start: the justifications invoked in the public debate are not identical to the concept of *public justification* (from Habermas), just as the moral justification is not the same as the justification analyzed in moral or ethical philosophy. These clarifications are the basis of a construction which logically leads to the conclusion that moral justifications cannot satisfy a condition facilitating the objective of persuasion for which they are called upon. There is still the possibility of the call to ethics and therefore to moral justifications in public debate and at the end of the article we are shown how this is possible while admitting their argumentative deficiency.

Keywords: justification, logic, ethics, public debate, argumentation.