

A translation of Luc Boltanski's “Criticism and democracy: The cause of criticism”

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In June 2012, the French sociologist Luc Boltanski won the first-ever “Petrarch Prize for the Essay” for his book *Énigmes et complots* [Mysteries and Conspiracies] (2012). On this occasion, he gave the inaugural lecture at the 27th “Rencontres Pétrarque” in Montpellier, of which the present text is a Japanese translation. In this lecture, linked not only with his prize-winning book but also with his previous *De la critique* [On Criticism] (2009), Boltanski begins by noting the crisis of contemporary capitalism and of democratic states, and then returns to the question of the historical tensions between democracy and liberalism. He notes that the ambiguity of modern institutions generates a necessary criticism in response. In order to maintain the future of democracy, Boltanski stresses the need to defend the principle of criticism.