

ONE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SOME CLASSIC THEMES OF ENGLISH POLITICAL ECONOMY

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Abstract.- The paper seeks to raise awareness of the sheer expansive force of capitalism, a social fact that has completely transformed Western societies in the last 600 years. Although the text draws on the simplest and most sound categories of Marx's labour theory of value, its focus is to show the power and political relationships that take place within enterprises –*a new servitude*. Our analytical method, as well as its empirical validation, builds on Durkheim's concept of 'reaction of punishment'. The paper also explores the historical and structural relations between the advanced sociability of our middle classes and *their* government by representative assemblies elected by them. For this purpose, we draw on the history of English parliamentarianism, from its social origins in the Normand invasion (1066), to its historical eclosion in the North American democracy (1787). Our interpretation is sociological, seeking the *meaning* of those exceptional historical transformations, and finding it – paradoxically- in the contrast between the ideal types of Community and Association established by German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies.

The text also analyses how individualism is originated in capitalist competition, and finishes by pointing out *from where* (within the social structure) such ideology is propagated as the only one that should shape our behaviour.

Keywords: *surplus value.- invisible hand.- English exceptionalism.- Ferdinand Tönnies.- empirical measurement.- Spencer-Brown*

Una aproximación sociológica a algunos temas clásicos de La Economía Política Inglesa

Resumen.- El texto pretende hacernos conscientes de la tremenda fuerza expansiva del capitalismo, un hecho social que ha transformado por completo a las sociedades occidentales en los últimos 600 años. Utiliza las categorías más sencillas y consolidadas de la teoría del valor-trabajo de Marx, pero su objetivo es mostrar a las relaciones que tienen lugar en el interior de las empresas como relaciones de poder, como relaciones políticas, *una nueva servidumbre*. Para ello el método de análisis que aplicamos es muy próximo al concepto de 'reacción penal' de Durkheim -incluso en la propuesta que hacemos para su validación empírica.

El estudio se pregunta además por las relaciones históricas y estructurales entre la sociabilidad avanzada de nuestras clases medias y *su* gobierno por asambleas representativas, que ellas mismas eligen. Para ello recurrimos a la historia del parlamentarismo inglés, desde sus lejanos orígenes sociales, que encontramos en la Invasión Normanda de la isla (1066), hasta su cabal eclosión histórica en la democracia norteamericana (1787). Pero nuestra interpretación es sociológica, busca *el sentido* de esas transformaciones históricas excepcionales, y lo halla (paradójicamente) en el contraste entre los tipos-ideales de Comunidad y Asociación establecidos en su día por el sociólogo alemán Ferdinand Tönnies.

A lo largo del texto analizamos también cómo se origina el individualismo en la competición capitalista, y finaliza señalando *desde dónde* (en el interior de la estructura social) se propaga dicha ideología, como la única considerada de recibo para orientar nuestro comportamiento.

Palabras clave: *plusvalía.- mano invisible.- excepcionalismo inglés.- F. Tönnies.- medición empírica.- Spencer-Brown*

¹ Translated by Stanley E. Miller and Carlos Allones Pérez

“In the office in which I work there are five people of whom I am afraid. Each of these five people is afraid of four people (excluding overlaps), for a total of twenty, and each of these twenty people is afraid of six people, making a total of one hundred and twenty people who are feared by at least one person. Each of these one hundred and twenty people is afraid of the other one hundred and nineteen, and all of these one hundred and forty-five people are afraid of the twelve men at the top who helped found and build the company and now own and direct it.”

Joseph Heller (1995): *Something happened*

INTRODUCTION

There is a story behind all books, and this one is no exception. It was born when I realized years ago that the theory of labour-value of K. Marx was scarcely mentioned in the academic conferences which I, a sociologist, used to attend. If they were Political Science seminars, for example, in which theories of Democracy were argued, it would seem that such theories had nothing to do with the market, which is surprising because our social life is organized more each day both by and around the market. The representative assemblies were discussed as though they were virtuous government systems, in spite of their practical defects, but without consideration of what those assemblies (elected by us) ostensibly do -which is to govern societies which are every day more and more capitalistic. If they were Sociology seminars, we used to pay attention to different interpretations and academic trends (these being always very active in our discipline), but still nobody remembered or put on the table the organization of salaried work, which so obviously conditions all of our contemporary life. Talking about salaried work had perhaps been an academic *mantra* throughout the middle seventies, possibly abandoned by many after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

In one of these discussion groups I broke my silence and spoke in favour of the theory of surplus-value of Marx, presenting it as a likely explanation of the origin of enterprise profits and the rapid (in historical terms) global emergence and expansion of capitalism which we are experiencing. Prudently, I added that I did not believe to be the only possible explanation, nor to be the entire explanation necessary, but rather an indispensable theory to keep in mind and to weigh if one wishes to talk seriously about capitalism -in any case, a useful theory in our consideration of any other social phenomenon, for instance, the global expansion of representative governments with their ideals and accomplishments, or the most

innovative aspects of our societies, which so vibrantly call the attention of the modern schools of Sociology.

But as often occurs in these cases, as a result of suggestions I made during these academic conferences, I was asked to write a paper not only on capitalism in relation to the theory of democracy but also to clarify certain specific, related sociological interpretations. It is thus that this book was born requiring me to meet (as best as possible) a challenge that had sought me out without my so wishing.

However, this task was not in fact so difficult to accomplish. In my courses of General Sociology and of Social Structure, I always dedicate several classes to the analysis of capitalism *making use* of the Marxian theory of labour-value. And I say 'making use' because what I do in those courses is not exactly a mere exposition of the very well-known, Marxian concepts, e.g., means of production, labour-force, constant capital, surplus-value, etc. -but rather the employment of those concepts *framed within* a general paradigm, a method of general analysis, which we also apply to the study of any other social fact, as for example, civil service, soccer, and the family.

I will not offer in these pages an explanation of the procedures of the sociological method which for many years I have been practicing, simply because I previously published some works proposing it². Here I will present only the results of its application to the study of capitalism; it is up to the reader to freely judge its worthiness ... Does there exist perhaps a better way to evaluate an analytical method other than by the validity of the results that one obtains from applying it?

That *same* sociological perspective also had led us in those very courses, and also during many past years, to become interested in the representative assemblies by which we, the middle class of advanced capitalism, govern ourselves. It seems true that it helps a great deal to understand a social institution (whatever social institution) by studying it at the time and in the place of its origins. There from arises our interest in the political and cultural history of England, since England was pioneer among all western nations not only in the Industrial Revolution, but also much earlier, in being ruled by *Rex in Parlamento*... But, of course, I am not a historian!; this is not the work of a historian in as much as a unique *sociological voice* runs through its pages. Our reference to the past here serves only and exclusively for the purpose of furthering the sociological interpretation which we are attempting.

Due to all of these considerations (and without doubt, due to quite a few others now unconscious to me), the case is that this manuscript, which started simply as a reflection on the Marxian theory of value and some ideological aspects related there to, has led me more and more towards themes considered to be classic in the English Political Economy; it occurred to me to configure this work in four parts (plus a final, little addendum) which I would like to present to the reader who is holding it in his hands.

In the first part, called *Das Kapital*, a utilization is made of the most central and simple concepts of the Marxian theory of surplus-value; we conclude this part with

² Carlos Allones Pérez (2005; 2009). Accesible in www.carlosallonesperez.org

an attempt to find a possible reconciliation of the afore-mentioned theory with the concept of 'the invisible hand' of Adam Smith.

In the second part, named *Individuation*, we seek an interpretation of those social changes we think concomitant to the expansion of capitalism, in particular the development among us of middle class sociabilities, whose men and women in order to survive must design for themselves long-term academic and professional curricula, thereby transforming their existence into a sort of one-person enterprise, the self-made-man or the self-made-woman.

In the third part, the so-called *English breakthrough*, we ask if there exists an objective relationship between those middle class sociabilities and their government by means of representative assemblies, which they themselves elect. To answer this question, we have decided to attempt the formulation of a sociological interpretation of the historical development of parliamentarianism in England and its colonies from the Norman invasion of the Island (1066) until the Constitution of the United States (1787).

In the fourth part, titled *Individualism*, we again take up the theme of the second part, individuation, but now, in order to try to comprehend how that individuation (which begins to be a social need, merely a pragmatic, survival tool) rises and unexpectedly transforms itself (as if by magic) into a principle of moral ordination, mutating into enthusiastic individualism, and thus propagating from all the western parliaments and thereby imposing itself upon each of us.

Finally, I find myself obliged to add a small personal reflection and opinion in which I propose to leave capitalism behind by means of the creation and maintenance of *post-capitalist industries* which should have as their objective the provision of durable, quality and technologically advanced goods and services for their customers -rather than the obsessive, endless reinvestment of their surplus-value into their unlimited expansion.

"Compound interest is the most powerful force in the universe."

Attributed to Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

I. DAS KAPITAL

1. Here we analyse capitalism from a sociological point of view by considering it to be a social *game*, a distinct social activity like any other, in the manner in which we would be able to analyse other modes of interaction among individuals, such as in soccer, in automobile traffic, or in military drill.

Customarily in those studies, we sociologists centre our attention on the behaviours and the conversations considered normal or conventional by the members of the group, those processes which the latter accomplish through their reciprocally referred activities, so endowing them with a goal and a meaning -- like in soccer,

where the 11 players of each team coordinate their movements in order to score the maximum number of goals on the opposing net while stopping the rival team from scoring on their own net. Or, like in military drill, where the searched-for objective is *the total* coordination of the physical movements of each individual with the physical movements of all the others. Or, like in traffic, where authorities seek to coordinate the paths of the automobiles in order to guarantee flow and safety to the optimum degree possible.

Nevertheless inevitably, every human, social action also demands a concomitant, repressive behaviour on the part of the members of the group who stand vigil and eventually and spontaneously punish the behaviour of any other member who in whatever way breaks the group's expectations. For us sociologists, that repressive action in which we all play a role, either personally or by delegation through political representation, is inescapable and concomitant to every normative action. If this repressive action were not a given, all normative action would become unviable; all would become impossible. If we were to admit, for example, that the players of a soccer match were allowed to seize the ball with their hands, soccer (as we know it) would disappear or perhaps devolve into something similar to rugby -- from which one historical day it evolved. If we do not penalize the drivers who travel in the wrong lane (the right lane in England, the left lane in Spain) the innumerable traffic accidents would cause chaos on our roadways. If the Sergeant were not to fiercely sanction any out-of-step movement of any given conscript in the close-order drills, training for military parade would not achieve its disciplinary objective, which is precisely its *raison d'être*.

Therefore, in this work we will study capitalism by means of the same sociological method -- attentive always to the prevalent behaviour of the group members, be it either normative or repressive. We refer to a system of social organization of work that already dominates almost absolutely all production in our western societies and which seems to be on the way to resolutely extending itself to every other society of the planet.

In addition, in order to accomplish the main objective of this paper (which is to make ourselves aware, to the degree possible, of *our servitude* to capitalism), it is essential that we study the *objective* relationships between capitalism and governance by representative assemblies. As we have said already, the best way to do that will be to analyse capitalism's historical beginnings, which we situate specifically, but not exclusively, under the political influence of the House of Commons in England. This historical study *ought* to be attempted; it is indispensable, even though we might not accomplish it with the historiographical expertise of a historian, because we are not historians, but rather sociologists.

2. For us the term *capitalism* is synonymous to:

The accumulation of capital through industrial *means*.

Even though there has been, and always will be, the accumulation of wealth by pillage and conquest or through the commerce of exotic or scarce goods (like that which the Phoenicians practiced in Ancient times or the Portuguese with Japan in

the XVI century), within the term capitalism we will stick conceptually to only one type of commerce in particular, namely, *commerce with the work of others*, in whose maturation is produced the incessant invention and utilization of machines which increase profitability.

These continually improving machines, which time and again dazzle the popular imagination, represent one of the most glorious aspects (although not the only one) concomitant with the progress of capitalism, precisely because that imagination holds vivid memories of the tremendous, exhausting, and comparatively unproductive, physical efforts that ancient, traditional agriculture used to require.

For us, the term *capitalism* also signifies

Industrial production for capitalistic *aims*.

As is well known, there was a historical attempt to convert the State into the only capitalistic enterprise and all its inhabitants into civil servants, in this way following an unfortunate Marxist-Leninist prescription. However, as it was once written by Max Weber, a pay-grade is not a salary since the pay-scale measures the rank of a civil servant not the value of his productivity; it is only a millionth of the fiscal income of the State. Perhaps because of that, the Soviet economies were incapable of competing with the tremendous spontaneity and vitality of our genuine capitalism of private enterprise, and therefore collapsed in great part by themselves alone -- leaving only Cuba and North Korea standing precariously as examples not to be followed.

On the other hand, alternative industrial endeavours with different objectives from those of capitalism do not exist in the West; at least, I do not see them around me. I mean industrial endeavours which would not be obsessed by the incessant search for profits destined for future investment and reinvestment. Certainly nobody nor nothing would be able to impede us in creating such endeavours or at least in trying to create them; but beforehand we would have to free ourselves from the enchantment of money and from the enchantment of the power that money supposedly gives one... But why should we talk about something which does not exist?

3. The fundamental question that we ought to ask ourselves is clearly that which was first asked by the English school of Classical Political Economy, and then afterwards by Karl Marx and others throughout the XIX century: *From where do entrepreneurial profits emanate?* What is the source of that enormous quantity of money earned by entrepreneurs? Obviously, the impressive capacity of expansion of the capitalistic system originates, without doubt, from the determined reinvestment of those profits. That system began precariously in some peripheral zones of Western Europe during the XIV century and matured with the application of the steam engine to the textile looms in 1787 (thanks to the Scottish engineer, Watts) so beginning then successive industrial periods, to expand nowadays before our astonished eyes to wherever we look on the planet: China, Brazil, South Korea, India, South Africa, Mexico, etc. etc.

In spite of all that is said to us against Marx, in *this* particular matter of understanding entrepreneurial profit, his response continues to seem valid to us (in fact more valid than ever). The theory of labour-value as explained in his book, *Das Kapital*, departs from the basic supposition (which one can fine-tune all one wants) that the value of any object is dependent on the time of work which, according to social time and custom, is employed in its production, and because of that (generally speaking) nobody likes to trade an ice cream for a bicycle, a bicycle for a car, a car for a house etc. etc.

This simple affirmation, this simple accountability, this concept of value as contained in the work, in the socially necessary work, is the principle, the alpha and the omega, of that controversial theory of Marx, the cornerstone upon which its consistency and presumption of realism absolutely depend. Here we attempt to expose said theory, as best as we know it, reserving the right to limit its application as might be convenient for our analytical method. Since, as we will see, even though we accept this theory as a consolidated truth, it is not for us *the only* relevant truth.

Let's repeat: it is a very simple affirmation and a very simple accounting -- there is nothing in *Das Kapital* which any salaried worker in any business in the world might not comprehend, nor anything that he does not try to ignore in the early morning when he gets up to go to work at 7:00. Well, good Sociology, when Sociology is good, does no more than to make evident by putting on the table that which everyone knows but which no one wants to talk about. Sociology, when good, is a kill-joy; it is inopportune; it is like a child who upon seeing the King enter the throne room naked screams, "The King is naked!", and all the courtesans clear their throats and look at the ceiling pretending that they heard nothing since this would be inconvenient for them if they wish to remain in His presence. In the same way, all the salaried workers in the world realize that they are being exploited; they can even calculate (approximately) to what degree. However, at the same time, they recognize that it is convenient for them to continue to be exploited. Because of this, we have never perceived great future in the moral and political prescriptions which historically and to the present day Marx himself and his followers have sought to erroneously deduce from said theory.³

4. Let us take the most naïve and the most ingenuous glance possible at that capitalist system of production, in particular, at the factory, which is the smallest and most indivisible part which replicates the quintessence of that economic system. If we look up the word 'factor' in the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, we can read among other meanings: '(Math.) any of the quantities which multiplied together produce a given quantity, XVII century' -- perhaps those Englishmen who contemplated the first hour of the serial organization of salaried work and the subsequent explosion of the industrial revolution, were astonished by the capacity of the factories to multiply their production so that finished goods sprang forth incessantly like "fritters".

³ It would be enlightened to contrast this tolerated exploitation with the voluntary servitude which was denounced in the XVI Century by Etienne de La Boetie (1942)

In 1909, history's first assembly line, the invention of Henry Ford, began operation with the capacity to produce one Model T per day. Now, 100 years later, the Citroën factory in Vigo (in the Northwest Spain) produces 2,300 cars per day. Toyota has 300,000 employees and the value of Microsoft is greater than the G.N.P. of Portugal... Capitalism is all about this force! It is about this which we want to speak; it is about this which we want to become hyperconscious, so as to never forget its amazing power, in any social analysis, particularly in regard to those of Political Science! Since the dynamism of capitalism is so great and now we are so accustomed to it, we don't even stop to think about it.

It delights us to define (with a trace of mockery and superiority) the patriarchal systems that organized the family life of our great-grand parents as *Machismo* -- even though that word was unknown to them and unused by them, because it was the precise social ideal to be sought and achieved in everybody's personal life. Likewise, nowadays few speak about *capitalism*, a term which has almost disappeared, hidden beneath the more neutral, alternative categories such as: Economy of Free Enterprise, Free Market, Laissez-Faire Economy etc. etc. The term *Capitalism* is less and less frequently used to the extent that it becomes *the precise social ideal* that we pursue, the ideal we wish to perfect and by which we actually do lead our daily lives. For what purpose do these often-heard, enthusiastic slogans serve other than to call for a more productive economy with necessary investment in R + D, and to promote the benevolence of continuing education and curricular flexibility? As all human society has done in the past and as all future human society will do, we are simply *transferring* the requirements imposed by the continuity of our society into our indisputable social ideals, self-evident truths, and the most accepted principles of our moral superiority. There is nothing new under the sun.

5. The businessman assumes the risk of huge financial commitment for the purpose of beginning operation of his enterprise: the purchase or the rental of a warehouse or some building of functional structure for the provision of services or the production of goods he intends to accomplish; the purchase of modern machinery which permits the serial transformation of costly, raw materials into appropriate finished products or modern machines which provide services to satisfy specific needs -- needs perceived as such by society; the expenditures in energy (generally electric) that will run that machinery firelessly until it is worn out, obsolete or replaced; the investment in transportation vehicles, which will carry the merchandise to its points of storage and sale; the additional payments for publicity which will entice us to purchase his services; the payment of taxes, which will make legal the ownership and commercialization of his products in a particular, territorial environment. Let's call the sum of all these expenditures, and others which will doubtlessly occur, 'constant capital':

c.

Not only these payments but also others of a different nature must be met because now the investor will proceed to make contract with individuals capable of

operating those machines and carrying out the activities that he attempts. He will need to hire the labor of a group of individuals, paying each one a corresponding salary for making his skill available for a certain period of time - let's say 8 hours per day, 11 months per year. Let's call the salary expenses incurred by the entrepreneur to employ his skilled workforce, i.e., to hire the available ability of the work of others, 'variable capital':

v.

Thus, there is established a relationship of dominance on the part of the entrepreneur (since he is the owner of the means of production), and a relationship of subordination on the part of each and every salaried worker (since he brings only his capacity to operate the aforementioned means). Thus is established a relationship of command and obedience, albeit contractual, i.e., an agreement between adults either oral or by means of a written document which specifies the limited responsibilities of each party -- which is to say that they will have to respond according to legislation and the pertinent courts.

For our intent here, it is of no importance whether we are considering a single entrepreneur or a great stock-holder's corporation; what it is relevant is that there would be a *single* voice to dictate the orders that the employee will physically execute.

Here the proprietor of the means of production, the capitalist (K), appears like a Captain of Industry at the command of a team of specialized workers who under his orders apply their skills to the operation of those means of production (which belong to the capitalist) for the purpose of collectively achieving an integrated assemblage of a single product (Σ).⁴

During the time of Marx, in the middle of the XIX century, the industries valued above all the physical force of workers -- from here originated the term, "force of work" (*f. of w.*) -- but, nowadays the machines and processes are very sophisticated, in fact dependent upon direct applications of physical and legal sciences which require highly professional knowledge on the part of their users; consequently, it would be more appropriate to refer to the intellectual capacity of work rather than the physical force of work. Nevertheless, let's again honour the German giant of Sociology by maintaining his nineteenth century expression 'force of work'.

So, let's indicate this relationship of power which we are describing:

$$(K/\Sigma \text{ f. of w.})$$

writing upper case K and lower case *f. of w.* so that we might never forget that this is about a relationship of power, about a political relationship which we as westerners see as so central to our society and as wide-spread as is salaried work --

⁴ We will make use of the mathematical symbol of *summatory*, i.e: Σ , to signal that the activity of each one of the salaried workers has meaning only and precisely to the degree that it reciprocally relates to the activity of every other individual, as for example in an assembly line. All participate in a single and unique action, which is by nature of the group and indivisible therefrom.

which is to say, practically through the whole length and width of our enterprise and in continuous modification toward perfection, discipline and expansion.

And this brings us to the point of questioning ourselves as to whether there is a more salient, a more urgent and a more future-loaded field of study for Political Science than this one of "Capitalism"? By this I mean a true Political Science, one which does not allow itself to be duped by the very social power with which it is contemporaneous. I do not wish to say that it is nor that it has to be the *only* focus of Political Science, but rather that Political Science has to explicitly analyse this contractual, capitalistic relationship in every case because it has become coextensive with every other social relationship.

Whether it deals with computer experts, truck drivers, lawyers, economists, waiters, publicists, engineers, managers, or chemists, it is all the same; to the capitalist it is the same --just salaried workers, a subordinate labour-force. In whatever case, according to the general principle which guides us (that Marxian principle of equivalence between value and work), the salary paid will *tend* to correspond to the workers' academic preparation and above all to their work experience and expertise. Just as when dealing with the cost of any merchandise, the cost of force of work (the salary) will tend to be equal to the market price of the necessary, social time required for the education and current, professional competency of that individual. In exchange, automatically from that moment on, that individual will be transformed into a mere gadget, into a simple subordinate, into a *replicant* of the capitalist whose salary he has accepted. The capitalist could just as well occupy the employee by capriciously saying: "Do you see that chair? Well, sit there and do nothing until I tell you to... Oh! And don't smoke!" And he, or she, will have to obey.

Well, already we have our entrepreneur in legal possession of all the means required to carry out the intended production of goods or provision of services. He has paid for the machinery that will make it possible; he has made contract with the needed individuals ready and able to best utilize that technology; he has managed to organize and discipline them in order to carry out the work he wants, which is none other than the transformation of the raw materials (still not ready for consumption) into merchandise; i.e., into goods and services which eventually will be bought and consumed by those (for whatever reason it may be) who consider them desirable.

This is not about bauxite that we import from an African country, where there is a developing, horrible civil war -- both sides of which we are possibly financing and arming. It's not about the ingot of crude aluminium that comes out of the factory we have on the coast of Lugo (Northwest Spain), the property of an American multinational. It's not about that same ingot already shaped and extruded in the desired colours as it leaves from the factories we have in Padrón and which supply a great part of the national and international aluminium market. All of those goods are still not useful for the end consumer. Rather it is about this sophisticated and versatile *end product*: the exterior, high-technology window that encloses the room in which you are reading this text.

This is not about the multiple stages of production of Nike sneakers in Thailand, their storage, transportation, and distribution, but rather about their final, retail sale in a store on the Gran Vía (Madrid) where I have bought them. It's not about the designing, production, planning, completion, and commercialization of a Disney TV series nor its related, world-wide merchandising, but rather about the access to that new episode which your young daughter is watching in the living room of your home while she snacks and which soon thereafter she enthusiastically discusses with her young friends. It's not about the rooms of a downtown hotel left dirty and messy by previous guests, but rather about those same rooms already prepared and made available for use by the new guests who will arrive this evening and who will rent and pay for such pre-cleaned rooms. Yes, we see everywhere the businessmen hiring salaried workers and afterwards the consumers purchasing the end products of their work; yes, we see capitalism everywhere --that very capitalism which tends to be overlooked by us because of its ubiquity. Consequently, political science fails to pay adequate attention to the merits of capitalism.

In the enterprise, our dedicated corporate leader and his more-or-less enthusiastic employees have transformed the raw materials into merchandise ready for consumption. According to Marx, during the process of production or the provision of goods, the employees' hours of labor input have increased the value of said merchandise.

The businessman is the legal proprietor of this increased value (which he alone has created) in as much as he has risked his own investment capital; consequently, he has all the freedom to ascribe the price which he plans to ask in the market. Clearly, he is not the only entrepreneur who accomplishes the transformation of raw materials into such services and goods. The ultimate success of his business depends on the profitable sale of these services and goods, which is the primary objective, the basic goal, the entire reason behind his investments. Should he wish to do so, he can speculate with the pricing of his merchandise; he can unleash price wars in order to capture his competitors' markets by employing regional or temporal monopolies. And, he will do so. But due to reasons that we will be forced to debate further along, let's suppose *axiomatically* for the time being that he decides to set a price which fluctuates around value --this is to say a price which correlates more or less to the time of work socially necessary (given the organizational and technological resources nowadays available in our society) to accomplish this transformation of raw materials into the merchandise that he has produced. Let's call this quantity of price

t

Now already we have the three prices, the three quantities fundamental to the accounting procedure basic to the theory of value of Marx: the expenditure that the entrepreneur has made for means of production (c), the expense he has paid in salaries (v), and the price (t) that he has decided to charge for the added work in the production process he has fostered.

And how (according to Marx) do the three afore-mentioned quantities interrelate with one another?

He explains to us that there are two distinct sums in play, two sums of different composition: on one hand, there are those prices that the entrepreneur seeks to charge for selling his merchandise; axiomatically, we have decided to represent this quantity here as:

$$c + t.$$

On the other hand, there are those prices which the entrepreneur had in fact to pay in order to produce said merchandise; this *other* quantity is here represented as:

$$c + v.$$

He then subtracts the second sum ($c + v$) from the first sum ($c + t$), i.e., the amount that he charges for his merchandise (at the point of sale) minus that which he has spent in producing it thus leaving him a quantity:

$$t - v,$$

which he calls *surplus-value* (pl.), and which would be (according to Marx) the *primum* or ultimate source of all entrepreneurial profit:

$$pl. = t - v.$$

This is the prodigious nature of the force of work of *others*! This force of work of others is different from merchandise and services, e.g. a car, a gallon of gasoline, or a vacation, in that when one hires, uses and consumes it, this force does not disappear; it does not lose its value; on the contrary, it engenders new value; it adds more value to that which it intrinsically contains! A value which in turn, once sold, can be reinvested again and again in an endless spiral without limit! Bought and sold on the open market like any commodity (which is worn out by continuous use) the work-skill of the individual is like a bottomless well, like the Phoenix that rises day after day from its ashes with exultant power and vigor.⁵

We have said, the force of work of others procreates a value that may be employed in its reinvestment, but in reality, as we will see, we have to be more precise and say that it creates a value which *ought* to be employed again and again in its continuous renovation. Well, even in this regard this unique force of work is also extravagant, alien, strange, peculiar, and never before seen ... The more it is consumed, the more compulsory its consumption becomes! The more it amplifies its scope of domination!

⁵ Moreover, the merchandise will be massively produced and consumed only thanks to the prior widespread utilization and consumption of the force of work.

6. Thus then, the entire *trick* of capitalism is based on technology, which *makes possible* the addition of a greater value to the productive process –as reflected by the price (t)- than the value contained in the force of work of the employees who carry out the production –as reflected by the price (v). Such simplicity of the capitalist system should not surprise us, given that simplicity is an essential characteristic of any social system if it is to pervade the length and width of its host society until it becomes a true ‘social fact’ therein (Durkheim, 1982): the well-founded concepts of a true ‘social fact’ must be quite simple so that very soon and at first glance everyone might understand them with total ease. It also happens just that way with soccer, traffic, military drill, as thus it did happen with the patriarchy in its day... It is true that they need be simple; Moreover, they need to become subconscious in each and every one of us if we wish to survive in society by means of their application... In the case of capitalism, since it completely pervades our economy, what other alternative is there for us? This is a very different question which further ahead we will attempt to resolve and to which we will commit ourselves from this moment on.

As stated previously, the entire *trick* of capitalism is based on technology which *makes possible* the addition of a greater value into the productive process (t) than the value contained in the force of work of the employees who carry out the production (v).

Because clearly, even though only work is the creator of value, not all work creates value equally since the productivity of the jobs depends decisively on the machines utilized⁶. For this reason, entrepreneurs always have been (to a certain point) disposed to finance the most immediately applicable, engineering disciplines, i.e., those which manage to improve the tools that *appear in the hands* of the workers who are synergistically grouped in the productive or service activities that the former foster. In what sense do we mean improvement? In the sense, of course, that improved tools will add more value to the production, and thus give those entrepreneurs an advantage over competitors.

Consequently, the grouping of weavers in factories all through the eighteenth century in England gave rise to the application of the recently-invented steam engine to the operation of looms, by the Scottish engineer Watt. This occurred in 1787, thus inaugurating the so-called Industrial Revolution –and with it, nothing less than a truly *new era for all mankind*. But next, such mechanical breakthrough was applied immediately to railroads and ships, so consolidating the national and international markets and condemning as inefficient the draft animals and sailing ships. Meanwhile the scientists of The Royal Society and their European and American counterparts, feverishly advanced first, with the improved production of high-quality steel, then concrete construction, and then electricity; all of which made possible the rise of cities where the businesses were concentrated. Throughout the nineteenth century, the so-called Century of Progress, the

⁶ The failure to recognize this obvious relationship certainly seems to us to be the primary error of Böhm-Bawerk (2007) in his attempt to frontally attack the Marxian theory of value.

telegraph, the telephone, the stock market, the press, the radio, the automobile, the means of wholesale tourism, the industrial goods of warfare, etc. make their appearance in succession to profoundly impress the popular imagination and to change the lives of millions and millions of people. The Wright brothers, born in Dakota in the USA, and whose father had a bicycle shop and who enjoyed taking his sons to fly kites on Sunday afternoons while they were just a pair of children, subsequently managed to fly a mile in a simple contraption consisting of the combination of a kite and a bicycle, thus laying the basis for that which soon was to develop into factories (in their home town) to produce military and commercial airplanes... After World War II a new impulse in the development of capitalistic technologies took place benefitting from the adaptation of precisely the wartime technological discoveries and applications of both the victors and the vanquished (without distinction). TV originates from the sonar systems of submarine warfare. The atomic bombs that Enrico Fermi developed in Chicago (and which ended that war) opened the way to the civilian use of nuclear energy. The very same German scientists, who designed the V-1 flying bomb and V-2 rocket and who later on launched them to drop on London, headed the post-war space programs of the USA and the Soviet Union. The German and English code-breaking systems became the basis of computer technology. The chemical and bacterial warfare accelerated the development of bio-chemistry and bio-genetics, etc.

How can anyone not be impressed when confronted by such an unfolding of ingenuity and power? What is coming? What comes next? Molecular laptops? Enzymes and neurons? What technology will be commonly used by adolescents at home in the span of 6 or 7 generations --so as not to jump too far into the future? Nobody knows, nobody can know... This has no more than just begun...!

Considering all of this, one will tell us that the new technologies indeed exponentially strengthen the capacity to add value (t). Is it not true that the salaries paid (v) should reflect the value of the skills resultant from the longer time and more costly means of academic education and job training which the operation of such sophisticated technology demands? And so it is -and thus it must be, in the most rigorous, Marxian sense of the law of value which we profess. The salaries actually rise so creating in our societies, in fact, the most ample layers of a highly professional, middle class. However, the productivity rises more, much more, much much more than the salaries rise because, let's say, if the former rises exponentially, the latter will be limited in their rise once and again due to the necessary, historical incorporation into capitalism of all the farmers who are needed, afterwards all the additional needed housewives, and finally all the necessary immigrants... The entrepreneur always manages by these *contingent* means to increase the margin

t – v

which fuels the surplus-value (pl.) in order to reinvest it in the unfettered expansion of his own political dominance.

Further along we will need to return to all of this, especially in order to analyze the aspect of consumption endemic to the capitalist system.

7. However, Marx develops his entire theory of value in an axiomatic way –he starts with the principle that only work creates value and therefore that the price (a mere numerical relationship between quantities of value) *gravitates* towards the value. So how do we reconcile this with the daily evidence that it is the economic players who spontaneously set the prices, taking into account only those factors which at any moment and in any circumstance they subjectively calculate to be in their specific interests? Of course, this crudely speculative behavior –in which the inevitably abstract calculation of the time of work socially necessary as postulated by Marx does not appear to play any role - was rightly pointed out over and over again by the founding fathers of English Political Economy.

In our search for a response to such a puzzling contradiction (which doubtlessly would totally devastate the interpretation of capitalism which here we are attempting), we have found the following reasoning, which like all of our analysis is of a sociological nature and inspired by some paragraphs of Max Weber.⁷

Let's remember that of all the transactions, only the purchase and consumption of the force of work of others engenders true value, i.e., adds new value -- in contrast to the exchange of any other merchandise, which produces a mere transfer of value in which one party loses that which the other party gains since this merchandise (unlike the force of work) is worn out through time and use.

Of course, nobody knows this better than the entrepreneur, who has become a successful businessman precisely because he has hired the force of work of others, a procedure much more profitable than any other –as, for example, is a man working with a machine when compared to one working by hand. His competitive instincts of aggression toward and domination over other corporations -to which he owes his emblematic social identity- accurately leads him to incessantly search for new methods to reinvest all the earned surplus-value in the purchase of ever more force of work, hiring more and more employees, investing again and again *in the serialization of salaried work*, which is for us the specific, distinctive essence of capitalism.

However, it happens that in order to contract more salaried work, it is necessary to produce more; in order to accomplish this, it is necessary to sell more; in order to sell more, it is necessary to adjust the prices, fine tuning them ever more, selling more and more cheaply, *calculating more and more accurately the prices* of the goods or services, so that they might reflect as much as possible the work effectively contained in them, i.e., their value in the Marxian sense.

To a much greater degree than the earlier, nineteenth-century entrepreneur, today's professional, corporate executive finds himself obligated over and over to invade the markets of other entrepreneurs by means of consolidating new productions, services and commercial networks -- all of which brings his enterprise to reach a strategic position and size. Then his prices tend to force an adjustment of his competitors' prices, prices which, to a certain degree, become more and more

⁷ Specifically in the paragraphs 4.3 ('uniformities in the course of social action') and 8.3 ('selection of social relationships') of his *Basic Sociological Terms*. See Max Weber (1968: 30 and 39-40).

evenly set, more and more standardized, more and more regulated... More and more *Marxian*!

In the words of Henry Ford (1863-1947), a visionary pioneer,

“The secret of my success is in paying as though I were generous and in selling as though I were in bankruptcy”.

Since we are not economists, but rather sociologists, it is in this way that we rudimentarily explain the manner in which the most spontaneous, subjective and multitudinous price speculations are produced in the free market -- prices which afterwards that very market tends *probabilistically* (as Weber would say) both to discard in the long term the opportunistic speculations and to select instead the products and services with prices most rigorously fine-tuned to their value. Consequently, in our opinion, the market admits all forms of commerce, but also it *systematically* fosters the success of the purchase and sale of the force of work, more than any other commerce; this is precisely the reason why day by day such a free market merits definition as a *capitalist system*.⁸

8. In order to close this first part, let's end by saying that many of us think that it is urgent to work on a mathematical expression of the Marxian theory of value, so that it might serve as a firm foundation upon which to elevate this theory to a true science (in the manner in which Newton founded Physics when he *mathematized* the astronomical laws of Kepler). We are asking for a genuine economic science, which we maintain must be a branch of Sociology -- and not that inaccurately-named Economy which is taught in the business schools around the entire world, and which is little more than a pragmatic, prescription pad (which lacks scientific validation).

Perhaps the model of Sraffa (1960) could establish the basis of such mathematical quantification, capable of proving or *disproving* the Marxian axiom (in reference to the data pertaining to the events of the real world which the Marxian axiom itself points out). I am proposing the model of Sraffa as the basis for the *accounting elements* of said mathematical formulae, even though I well understand that those

⁸ Thus it is that both Karl Marx and Adam Smith eventually find ground for agreement in their partially-correct theories -- therefore making self-defeating and invalid any attempt to dispense with the capitalistic and free market explanations proposed by the other.

We read in ADAM SMITH (1963: 181): “By directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.”

Because in reality what separates the two authors in their description of the capitalist system is much more a political and moral positioning rather than an analytical positioning.

elements should be necessarily subordinate to the construction of genuinely sociological concepts, the only ones which are uniquely competent to measure capitalism throughout the course of its existence (since capitalism is a social fact like any other, in the sense of Durkheim).⁹

Farther on, at the very end of this work, we will return briefly to this crucial matter, at least to tentatively indicate the manner in which this mathematical Sociology of capitalism could perhaps be attempted.

However, let nobody be deceived or disillusioned! The collective consciousness is the only sovereign (Durkheim); therefore, any eventual, empirical proof of the Marxian theory of value would not signify in any way a political positioning against capitalistic "exploitation". In the same way that we find North Americans who relish the televised Darwinism of the National Geographic documentaries, also among them we frequently find members of the Parents' Association who require that Biblical Genesis be taught in the schools along with the theories of Darwin.

By definition, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It allows us to understand the parts, since the parts have no meaning except in relation to the whole. So, O.K. would this not necessarily be so, at least in some sense, in some way? And, likewise should not the whole --the sacred, explanatory whole-- be in its turn precisely understood by the function of its parts? This is to say, by one of its parts: by the dominant, privileged part, in an internally unbalanced and asymmetrical whole."

Joan F. Mira's prologue to *Antropo-lógicas* (Balandier, 1975) [our translation]

II. INDIVIDUATION

1. Now we need to describe the ideas and interpretations which become generalized among us, we who play a role in these capitalistic organizations of work. Those ideas are present and have *inherently* accompanied all the specific accomplishments of these organizations since their very historical beginnings. However, those ideas also acquire their own *separate* existence and with the passage of time (and more than ever in our own time) transform themselves into true conceptual entities and values which conscientiously *orient* our performance in all fields of social life including those most removed from the *locus* where they germinate day after day, i.e., the purchase and sale of the force of work.

Well, we need to try to understand the historical emergence of those social interpretations (nowadays already considered by us in the West to be an indisputable, moral apriority); therefore, to that end, we need to analytically

⁹ Durkheim (1982)

describe some of the social transformations which have accompanied the expansion of said capitalistic domination during different historical periods (at least in the Western world). I say some because our only interest here is to describe those transformations or social effects of capitalism on that which directly relates to the appearance and generalization of such values.

2. Since the very first moment, capitalism has shown an astounding, never-before-seen potential to enrich those who play a role in it -- of course, it enriches to a greater extent those who participate by purchasing the force of work of others, while (as we will see) it enriches to a lesser extent those who participate by selling their own force of work.

Farm workers, general laborers, craftsmen, artisans and seamen from Holland, England and other European burghs and regions, e.g., northern Italy, Catalonia, Lisbon and some German and French towns, observed, I say, very early on during the XIV and XV centuries that some men rose from their humble, social *status*, to become unexpectedly wealthy in certain productive sectors: colonial trade, ship building, weapons manufacture, mining, printing, cotton and silk weaving, among others.

The most amazing aspect of all, that which most impressed the popular imagination, was that this wealth which did not come from the riches of ancient lineages of nobles and country squires, i.e., the secularly calculated inheritance gained through marriage strategies, but rather from an enigmatic, *new method* of an overwhelming efficiency -- which was none other than that of business which (due to its rapid growth) forced the contracting of salaried work from beyond the intimate circle of families, relatives and neighbours.¹⁰

Due to their commercial occupations, their different preferences and interests --the private reading of the Bible, interior paintings, landscape paintings, scientific curiosity, technological invention, expensive furniture, jewellery, gardens-- at the time when their businesses were growing throughout the XVI and XVII centuries, over and over again these newly wealthy *individuals* intentionally drew themselves further apart from the farmhands, artisans and sailors, who reminded them too vividly of their own origins, while they also rejected the lifestyle of the nobility, which due to lineage, was not within their reach, and which they scorned equally because of its unproductive, leisure status and behaviour.

Nevertheless, these proto-bourgeoisie from the very beginning quickly hit upon the expediency of strategically arranging the marriage of their daughters (in this regard, they seemingly had no scruples about following the general, patriarchal playbook) so that their children would socialize and marry only within their own *class* in marriages which -- due to their greater puritanical discipline -- would quite

¹⁰ Neither the nobles nor the farmers nor the artisans (craftsmen) knew any customary method to acquire patrimony other than from the transmission (from father to eldest son) of the estate and family position, and even that which was passed down was merely *the usufruct* of said estate (or craft), an *usufruct* in which the family *shared*. That familial inheritance was not a property susceptible to being bought or sold, nor was it something considered to be in any sense private, that is: individual.

soon distinguish them from the popular marriage of the peasants. The family inheritance was not that of an impoverished farmhouse, but rather that of a flourishing capitalistic business... and therefore there was much more to lose!

So we recognize, from the first historical moments, this feature which always accompanies the capitalistic method of acquisition of ownership -- a process by which *an individual* always ultimately acquires title to property. Precisely because it is the result of that *method* (the purchase and sale of the force of labour), that appropriation engenders from the outset an *ex novo* sociability; it ceaselessly creates its own, modern sub-society, both within and on the margins of the wider society in which it prospers. The emergent bourgeoisie, which forms *its* own society, does not owe nor does it wish to owe anything to any ancient social status, since the former comes from a different origin and a different method of appropriation. The bourgeoisie class can do nothing else but scorn any sociability that might not be its very own -- a sociability which it itself invents during every historical period. Hubris.

Throughout the XVIII century an ever greater number of better and better organized operators were concentrated in *ex profeso*, rudimentary workshops, where they were better able to carry forward their craft armed with ever-improving, specialized tools, designed for the completion of their capitalistic task. In this way, both by virtue of the invention taking place at the factory level and the subsequent, scientific perfection taking place in the universities, the serialization of the force of work itself is going to invent the technologies and the mechanical, chemical and mathematical knowledge which makes said serialization ever more calculable, profitable and expansive. At this point in 1787, the Industrial Revolution begins in some factories in Manchester and Liverpool where steam power is used for the first time to drive the textile looms; from this point forward, the Industrial Revolution continued its unstoppable Progress. With the passage of time, we have become so accustomed to this Progress that we have lost a once-held perception, that of our great-grand-parents -- a perception which was enthusiastic, but also cautious.

Some family-owned enterprises contract thousands of workers, and in so doing create legendary, bourgeois dynasties throughout Europe and North America, e.g., Thyssen, Rothchild, Phillips, Botin, March, Carnegie, Rockefeller, Ford. In order to acquire the increasingly more sophisticated and tremendously costly technologies, e.g., steel, concrete, electricity, automation, petro-chemical, tourism, printing, (which force the contracting of ever more schooled and productive, salaried workers), the capital investors have no other recourse than to form alliances in an ever more anonymous, abstract and legal manner -- either by virtue of proximity, family connections, or especially the Stock Market.¹¹

Hundreds of thousands, literally millions, of country farmhands abandoned their fields, attracted by the jobs offered to them by factories concentrated in the cities,

¹¹ Ever more schooled, productive and *tractable* salaried workers: "If capital enlists the aid of science, the rebel hand of labour always learns to be tractable." Ure (1830), as cited by Sorel (2012: 141).

abducted by the spiralling reinvestments of the capitalists, who always knew how to set the precise wages which would induce the farmhands to escape from agricultural life. And not only they, but also their wives and children would find work in those factories; the salaries would be administered by their husbands and fathers who also knew when it favoured them to take advantage of the patriarchal system.

Marx emphasized the systematically legislated expropriations by the English House of Commons against the interests of the farmers, this is to say, the rural proletarianization engendered on the Isle by means of the 'enclosures'; this is a given fact. However, nothing of this sort was carried out (at least not so openly) in France, Catalonia, Northern Italy, nor in other regions of Europe; nevertheless, in these places the countryside was also being emptied of people throughout the XIX century.

Therefore, if we wish to thoroughly understand the nature of capitalism with its tremendous attraction and inner strength, we cannot judge it solely in economic terms, i.e., by the appropriation of goods and benefits acquired by those who engage in it -- even though they might do so only by virtue of the value of their mere force of work. This is all so; this is all important -- perhaps also definitive -- but this is not the full story. Because these farmhands who everywhere abandon the country in exchange for the city also perceive a new, emerging and unavoidable social world against which the old agriculture and other ancient crafts can do nothing. Naturally they want to bet on a future that will be the necessarily industrial future of their children for whom they wish to provide the social and *moral* weapons required for life therein:

"On the other hand, the merchant may glimpse the possibility of abstract profit as a real and rational *goal* of economic activity, in a way that goes beyond the actual activity itself. In that sense he is the first reflective and *free* human being to appear in the normal development of social life. He stands isolated as *far as possible* from all constraining connections, duties or prejudices. ("A merchant, it has been said very properly, *is not necessarily the citizen of any particular country*": Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, bk. III, ch. 4; a passage which might be compared with the previous cited statement by the same author, that exchange makes a merchant of every man.) He is free from the ties of community life, and the freer he is, the better it is for him." (Tönnies, 2001: 68) [author's italics]

Yes, Ferdinand Tönnies, *the peasant* Tönnies, (and in general all the most lucid and prescient, sociological minds who concurred with that first hour of industrial capitalism) did not allow themselves to be deceived; as neither did the popular sentiment. They recognized in capitalism a factor of personal and social liberation resultant from the prosperity, albeit perhaps filled with risks and problems, but nevertheless also a historic opportunity that they were not going to allow to escape.

Thus capitalism brings with it from the first moment, for better or worse, a new mode of sociability, a new mode for building society, if one wishes --as Don Julio Camba used to say-- *a new mode of humanity*. Any other description would be too short; it would be incomplete; it would not do justice to this system of capitalism. Clearly, we need a fair and balanced understanding of capitalism because we want to leave it behind.

The accumulation of capital continues its exponential drive as it finds nothing in the wars but opportunities for its modernized re-launching. Following the Second World War, there is an additional acceleration in the accumulation of capital which, this time, makes peaceful use of the technologies invented by both sides, i.e., the winners and the losers of the war. Time and time again, Physical Sciences have guided and perfected the applications of these technologies, as for example, in the TV and its derivatives, in computer technology, in genetics, in nuclear energy, in optics, in space exploration, etc. Therefore, the means of production became so costly that in order to compete effectively in emerging global markets capitalists had to buy materials and technology by trading in stocks through anonymous multinational corporations. And consequently, a prolonged apprenticeship of many years in the corresponding, specialized languages, e.g., mathematics, accounting, law, and engineering, is required of those individuals called upon to employ these super-sophisticated and highly formalized technologies. Thus it is in western countries (as well as in westernized countries) in which the central financial headquarters of those multinational enterprises are established that there appears a very large *middle class*, enriched by the incomes of engineers, lawyers, doctors, publicists, journalists, biochemists, movie producers, athletes, economists, pilots, architects, and designers. Since the salary must re-compensate the social time necessary for the academic and practical preparation of such professionals, there results through the width and depth of those countries a general rise to a hither-to-unknown level of the consumption of goods and services than during any other period of human history -- those salaried workers with university degrees ('privileged skulls', quipped Valle-Inclán) can compose up to 15-20% of the workforce of the affluent countries.

Nearly one half of those specialized jobs would be occupied by women since during the 1950's capitalism already had practically depopulated the countryside leaving hardly enough country workers to carry on the farming which, now mechanized, had been converted into one more sector of the market; consequently, capitalism must proceed forward with the hiring of a massive workforce of women. Women, academically and occupationally as well or better prepared than men, are incorporated into the salaried workforce by the millions under conditions which *tended* to be equal to those of men --because, as usual, capitalism only gradually discards the old social discriminations when they cease to be profitable.

Additionally, when the great majority of citizens of working ages are already employed, so causing a reduction in the levels of unemployment, these national workers become capable of seriously negotiating their salaries in a way that causes the politicians to quickly hear the anguished calls by entrepreneurs who complain about the low salaries paid to the workers by their foreign competitors. As a consequence, those politicians and their administrations then surreptitiously open the national borders to permit the entrance of millions of poor immigrants (likely undocumented) in order to quickly restore salaries to a level conducive to corporate profitability. Between the years 1997 and 2007 --when this book was written-- Spain was thus transformed into a country populated by low-income workers.

3. In this manner, in our societies which are articulated around the market due to the vital priority that we all give to our professionalization, there is contemporaneously produced a very effective tendency toward social equalization resulting from (among other causes) the ever more genuine meritocracy of the educational system in which western women are currently outperforming western men. Their academic achievements advantageously influence their entrance into the private labour market and nearly determine their access to employment in civil service. For the first time in the history of human society (until now ruled by some variety of kinship), women are becoming the owners of the *result* of their work as a consequence of the individual appropriation - which is a novel and defining characteristic of the capitalistic system. In itself a unique, structural trait, and without doubt a definitive accomplishment of capitalism, this change becomes more perfect with its own expansion and remains an indisputable fact. Additionally, that relative equalization taking place in the western societies is what best serves to characterize them (sociologically speaking) - inasmuch as they are being transformed into authentic, *middle class societies*. In these societies, even though men and women who excel in the most technological jobs represent less than 15-20% of the total population, they nevertheless become the paradigms of televised sociability, imitated by the other *social strata* - not only by the most common classes (still dedicated to manual jobs), but also by the most entrepreneurial classes who likewise mimic the middle class tastes and behaviours, although at a *distinctively* more luxurious level of consumption.¹²

¹² We find this long but valuable fragment in the book by Percival and Paul Goodman (1960: 123-4): "Adam Smith said: 'Consumption is the sole end and purpose of production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to only so far as may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it.'

As a general moral maxim, it is certainly false: in this book we shall demonstrate two contrary purposes of production, as a way of life and as a means of freedom. But for a market capitalism or a planned production expanding by the reinvestment of profits - and this is what Smith was thinking of - his maxim is still axiomatic, *if* the economy is to be good for anything at all. For such an economy, matching the planning of production and the efficient use of labour, we have to turn a concept of Veblen's upside down and speak of 'Efficient Consumption'.

When Veblen set up as the opposite poles of economics morality the 'instinct of workmanship' and 'conspicuous waste', he was thinking of an economy of scarcity. Laboriousness, interest in technique, absence of superstition, and the other virtues of engineers seemed to him necessary to produce plenty, equality, and freedom; whereas combativeness, classical education, and gambling guaranteed insecurity and kept the masses in their place. But the fact is now that for at least three decades it has been no scarcity of production, but the weakness of the consumption attitudes of emulation, ostentation, and sheer wastefulness that has depressed the productivity which is the economist's ideal. Only the instincts unleashed by war have sufficed, under modern conditions, to bring economic salvation.

So our first model is an analysis of how men can be as efficiently wasteful as possible. It is a city founded on the premises of the official economics, whether of Adam Smith or Keynes; yet it seems also to meet the moral demands of the New Yorkers."

In those societies which gradually tend not to value the old social status, there is no alternative manner to manifest social distinction other than that of consumption (something which the true

4. That effective, relative *levelling* of vital, professional opportunities (made available to us who belong to the middle classes created by corporate capitalism) brings implicitly with it a concomitant freedom to choose among a wide range of opportunities which open enormous possibilities for us to design our own social paths. This freedom of choice constitutes another, not so minor, glory of the capitalistic system. While all the social systems concede a certain autonomy to the individuals who participate within them (that which the soccer player has on the field to improvise the movements with which he directs the ball, or that which the driver has to decide when and where to enter and leave the highway, or that which the country women of the past had to a certain degree in selecting a husband), capitalism is extraordinarily diversified and versatile in the matter of individual liberties. Since capitalism incessantly overflows its unique technological frontiers and productive boundaries, it exponentially amplifies the social division of labour (Durkheim, 1997) thus widening the job opportunities available to all subordinates.

I say subordinates, because it deals only with the enjoyment of the system's inherent liberties, those which *depend on the silence of the Law* (Hobbes, 1985: 271), and whose use in no way implies the disappearance of said Law, but rather its fullest observance.

Instead of dedicating themselves to the search for their own particular advantage, it is a pity that those junior, talented executives who fill the ranks of the elite organizations of the present capitalism might not decide to temper their personal, corporate competition and rather to dedicate their recognized, negotiating and technological skills to the creation of novel, alternative endeavours (the production of dependably durable goods, the warranty of said products, the provision of worthy customer service, and the decision to charge whatever seems reasonable), *without wanting merely to enrich themselves...*

But, let's leave off with vain reveries. What is true is that those opportunities provided by capitalism are used by every individual to fulfil his aspirations for social empowerment within the system, whatever they might be -- each one according to his possibilities, inclinations and likes. Consequently, we continue to acquire a great ability to rigorously calculate that which we accept and that which we discard, that which is advantageous and that which is counterproductive, in such a way that constant, vital decisions tailor all of our social, academic, professional and sentimental relationships and result in further personal isolation of the individual:

Another way of looking at life is to run it like a *business*, with the definite purpose of reaching some fancied happy end. Concepts and rules may then be devised as to

entrepreneurs have always despised, considering consumption to be an indication of *moral weakness*).

For the Sociological study of consumption, Veblen (2005) and Simmel (1904) are the classic authors of reference.

the best *method* of pursuing such an end. They can be presented, tried out, and communicated in such a way as to be understood and applied by any person capable of performing a logical sequence of operations –which is what in fact everybody has to do in every activity. The nature of all such *theorising* is seen most clearly in mechanics. Mechanics is simply applied mathematics, and mathematics is simply applied logic. The principle of applied mechanics can be set out in general terms as follows: to obtain the greatest possible efficiency with the least possible expense of energy or labour. The substance of this same principle can be framed to take account of any undertaking directed towards a definite end: to the fullest possible extent the end should be gained by using the easiest and simplest possible means. Or, if this is applied to a business run to make money: the highest possible profit with the lowest possible cost, or highest possible net yield! And if applied to life as a business: the maximum of pleasure or happiness with the minimum of pain, effort or trouble; the smallest sacrifice of goods or of vital energy in the form of work. Tönnies (2001: 143-4) [*italics by the author*]

Yes, it is certain. To the degree to which the career paths of each and every individual become ever more rigorous, the serialization of these men and women increases to the point that they become *human commodities*, i.e., standardized, interchangeable individuals, capable of occupying any given, one-dimensional position that the powerful capitalistic and civil service organizations offer them.

5. On the other hand, during times prior to this capitalistic domination, the patriarchal pact of yesteryear ruled all the western societies without exception and forced a concordance of the wills of men and women until it managed to unite them in the upbringing of the first-born son within a system which nowadays is clearly dysfunctional in our professionalized, middle class existence. Well, for what purpose must a man now want an heir to his house and to his position if his work is carried out in a business or in a civil service organization whose continuation depends in no way on the acquisition of such an heir? And, why would a woman want to have a son, now that her social identity does not depend upon her exercise of motherhood, now that such an exercise would be a hindrance to her professional career? It's not that capitalism prohibits said breeding (as Huxley imagined in his 1906 novel, *One Happy World*), but it turns the option merely into a personal choice (in fact at times a counterproductive choice in regard to the social trends), and in so doing it becomes ever more precarious, ever more anomic. Then our dwellings are turned into a mere juxtaposition of individuals, arranged in the most novel configurations.

In summary, we have come to discuss some key, social results to which the expansion of capitalistic businesses brings us: a general individual appropriation, a trend toward an equalization of opportunities, and the freedom to choose among these opportunities. Consequently, I maintain that our western societies are experiencing a strong process of individuation since all of us who live within these societies find ourselves forced to prioritize our professional lives before all else in

order to survive; our entire social life must revolve around the needs of the market. Something really unpleasant!¹³

6. However, that galloping individuation is little more than the personal awareness which necessitates that the individual develop in order to assure his survival -- scarcely more than a pragmatic outlook which intrinsically accompanies the purchase and sale of the force of labor. Let's say that such individuation is little more than the awareness that the individual soon acquires in order to survive in capitalism, i.e., one must evolve into a sort of self-contained, personal enterprise. This ideational movement is unable to take flight so as to turn into a true ideal worthy of social veneration due to the individualistic nature of the labour contract with its inherent, ever-present threat of dismissal.

This step means the conversion of a simple, necessary procedure of social survival into a genuine principle of excellence and moral virtue. This step (which is capable of presenting that obligatory individuation as though it were free, voluntary individualism) requires that those destined to take such a step leap forward to a different, structural position within the society, i.e., the alienation from the world of work, the distancing of themselves from Main Street, the approach and adscription to the world of governance and politics, and particularly to the area of representative assemblies -- those parliaments wherein the general sociability concomitant with capitalism is argued and legislated day after day.

As sociologists we could attempt to describe here that structural position which distinguished the representative assemblies from both productive practices and family relationships (both of which are considered to be private in our western societies). If necessary at some future, timely moment, we may have to so indicate within this very text. However, it seems to us that a more direct and efficacious route would be to study in depth the historical progression of the pioneering experiment at modern governance by an assembly --specifically in relation to the concomitant expansion of capitalistic citizenship. We are referring, of course, to study *the history of English parliamentarianism*.

Thus, we are invading the domain of historians, forgive us our audacity, since we are not schooled in the methodological and historiographical cautions that they have been perfecting for centuries. We are entering into an analysis of past societies, which are not even our own, and we do so provided with only a few, hurried readings of historical accounts and armed with analytical weapons of Sociology, which have been especially fine-tuned for the study of our contemporary social systems. Assuming the risk that it might entail, we recognize the necessity to attempt to clarify the relationship between the historical origins and evolution of parliamentary governance in regard to capitalistic dominance in order to gain a more complete understanding thereof.

¹³ Enthusiastic subjects of that abstract, capitalistic sociability, while linked together only in the single bond of profession (from a structural point of view), we find ourselves compulsively driven to arrange appointments to meet one another and forced to find each other by means of cell phones, video screens, Internet, every kind of gadget and cybernetic implants, all useful inventions in and for the expansion of our ever-more dis-embedded, virtual sociability.

Community [*Gemeinschaft*] is old, Society [*Gesellschaft*] is new, both as an entity and as a term. This has been recognised by an author whose teaching of political theory is otherwise more notable for its broadness of range than for deep penetration. "The entire concept of Society in the social and political sense", states Bluntschli (*Staatswörterbuch*, IV), "has its natural basis in the habits and the outlook of the *third state*. It is not really an idea referring to the whole people, but merely to the concept of the third state... it is the latter's notion of 'Society' that has become the source of collective prejudices and trends, while at the same time becoming the vehicle of their expression... Wherever urban culture flourishes, 'Society' also appears as its indispensable medium. Country people know little of it." Tönnies (2001: 19) [*italics by the author*]

III. ENGLISH BREAKTHROUGH

In order to understand the overwhelming effectiveness of the capitalistic sociability during its emergence and consolidation in the West, we consider it indispensable to be familiar with the role which "Rex in Parlamento" played in the governance and administration of England from Medieval times. While it is certain that European kings convened similar parliaments during the Medieval Era, only the English kings saw themselves *obliged* to incorporate their parliaments -- due to their unique, historical circumstances -- into the customary *procedure* of their governance. At this juncture, I maintain that this unique practice must be held as one of the most direct causes for the success of capitalism --not only in England, but also in its outstanding North American disciple, and even to some degree in the rest of western nations.

Our chief proposal here is to call to the attention of the Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American historians and political scholars the urgency of studying the link (evident to us) between capitalistic sociability and governance by representative assemblies --and to study this link where and when, historically, it was conceived and first carried out in such a perfect and exemplary way so as to serve thereafter as a reference for all other western societies.

We are sociologists, and as such we know that it is not within the reach of our academic expertise to try to study, as it ought to be studied, those English and North American societies of the past -- that is the province of historians. Nor do we master the analytical categories which Political Science builds specifically in order to understand any given governmental institutions or philosophies, including democratic ones. However, even though our *sociological* interpretations may have neither historiographical nor politological value, they are very useful and necessary for the *sociological* goals which we propose to accomplish here. Due to this, we do not envisage those capitalistic sociabilities without the representative assemblies which govern them in their mature state.

Normand England

Following the battle of Hastings (1066), William, the Duke of Normandy, proclaimed himself King of England, under the title of William I, and proceeded to systematically replace the native nobility. He parcelled out 5,000 large, middle and small-sized fiefdoms among his Grandz (barons) and his Chevaliers (knights). Along with the parish priests, he replaced the middle and upper ranks of the Catholic Church in England with their Norman counterparts. He imposed French as the official language of every feudal institution. In order to complement the civil courts (Hallmotes) held by Seigneurs (feudal lords) for the purpose of resolving public and penal problems in the counties, he intentionally created other tribunals (View of Frankpledge) which were convened every 6 months and presided over by sheriffs or itinerant royal judges whom he named. When the young reached the age of majority, those royal courts legally obliged them to become members of groups consisting of 12 people -- to form *tithings* -- so that each individual of the group would be responsible for the criminal behaviour of the other members.¹⁴

With great concern for formality, the View of Frankpledge held court in French and relied upon translators for witness testimony. Neither acting as judge nor playing an active part, the president's role was limited to: 1. the verification of the attendance of the mandatorily summoned people, and 2. the assurance of the procedural steps, i.e., the legitimacy of the parties, and the effective carrying out of the sentence handed down by the jury:

"Great stress was laid upon strict verbal accuracy in pleading: the demandant had to make his plea according to the customary form, and the defendant had to deny the plea word for word... The pleadings were treated as if they were charms which would lose their virtue if changed in the least particular. Even in England in the Middle Ages, before these lowly hallmotes, many a plea was lost because a man did not repeat the formulas correctly. Indeed, in their insistence on strict verbal propriety, the hallmotes were more archaic than the royal courts." Homans (1975, 315-6)

The Normans knew how to make use of some institutions, e.g., the jury, for their own disciplinary goals; perhaps some of these institutions existed prior to their domination of the Isle. The jurors of the View of Frankpledge consisted exclusively of noteworthy Normans, since it was a basic principle of these tribunals that nobody could be judged by someone of lower status.

During the three centuries following the Norman Conquest by Guillaume, the entire Anglo-Norman institutional life from top to bottom (whether secular, ecclesiastical, juridical or courtesan) was carried out exclusively in French or Latin -- the languages in which every one of the Acts (or rolls) at every level of every feudal institution was

¹⁴ "Frankpledge. System by which each member of a tithing was responsible for every other. XV (*fraunciplegge*). --Law Latin *franciplegium*, latinization of Anglo-Norman *frauncplege*, formed on *franc* FRANK + *plege* PLEDGE..." Onions (1985).

The so-named *Law of Englishry*, dictated shortly after the Conquest, established *the presumption of guilt* for the homicide or assassination of any Norman. In addition, if an unidentified person were found dead due to violence, the district court (Hundred) must apply the corresponding sentence to the deceased's neighbors, unless they were able to prove that the victim was of English ancestry.

written. As incredible as it might seem to us at the present time, no Act written in English before the XIV century has been found.

Since schools and universities banished English from their classrooms and cloisters, they used French (not English) to teach Latin. The native language was subdivided into innumerable local dialects; therefore, English was condemned to survive only as the spoken language of peasants and artisans – and among the latter, who were city dwellers, English was further threatened by the prestige of French.

On the other hand, when the Tenentes-in-Chief, the grand barons of the kingdom, would counsel the King in the Curia Regis, the Royal Council, on affairs related to the government or administration, e.g., the declaration of war and peace, the coinage of money, the decisions of the upper judiciary, the establishment and efficient collection of taxes, the delivery of mails, edicts and legislation, etc. etc., they would do so, of course, exclusively in French.¹⁵

Carta Magna

Within a historical perspective, the Norman kings and their successors quite quickly showed a recurrent weakness when confronting their barons, a much greater weakness than that which the other continental kings had encountered when facing their own -- surely because the English feudal structure had been, so to say, *a contrived design*, i.e., imposed at the point of a sword following the Conquest, rather than gestated through centuries of traditional, organic development dating from the ancient Anglo-Saxon vassalage.

In addition to this, in 1204 King John loses the duchy of Normandy, at that time occupied by the King of France; he acquires from that point on the sobriquet of John The Landless, and he directs all his anxieties to the re-conquest of lost possessions. With the King consequently diminished before his barons, and the barons irritated by the loss of their possessions on the Continent due to repeated, military defeats of the King, the latter begin a prolonged conspiracy against John in order to force him to share governance and administration of the Kingdom -- a conspiracy that unleashed a civil war which in June of 1215 forces John to sign a peace treaty with his barons. Today we know this peace treaty as the Magna Carta.

As well as to some ecclesiastical clauses and to various others which refer either to taxation or to legislation within the city of London (clauses that turn the king, to a certain degree, into a *peer among peers* in as much as said clauses subject him also to the laws of the kingdom), our attention is drawn especially to the last clause of said Carta, which states the following:

“61. Since, moreover, we have granted the aforesaid things for God, for the reform of our realm and the better settling of the quarrel which has arisen between us and our barons, and since we wish these things to be enjoyed fully and undisturbed, we give and grant them the following security; namely, that the barons shall choose any

¹⁵ Throughout this and following epigraphs, I am indebted to the excellent book of Professor Iglesias Rábade (1992).

Twenty-Five barons of the realm they wish, who with all their right are to observe and maintain... the peace and liberties which we have granted and confirmed to them by this our present charter; so that if we... offend against anyone in any way or transgress any of the articles of peace, and the offence is indicated to four of the aforesaid twenty-five barons, those four barons shall come to us... and bring it to our notice and ask that we have it redressed without delay. And if we ... do not redress the offence within forty days from the time when it was brought to our notice... the aforesaid four barons should refer the case to the rest of the twenty-five and this twenty-five with the commune of the whole land shall distress and distrain us in every way they can, namely by seizing our castles, lands and possessions... until in their judgement, amends have been made." Jones (1971, 137-8).

This is to say that in the future according to their exclusive, collegial criterion, the barons would be able (if they were to consider it necessary) to *legitimately* resort to the use of force against the king 'with the commune of the whole land', i.e., with all the force and estates at their disposal.

Given the importance which the written letter had in the formalist Norman and Angevin England, it should not surprise us that the king would die never accepting nor complying with the agreement which he had signed, consequently prolonging that very baronial war, or other similar wars, throughout his rule and the long rule of his successor, Henry III (1216-1272), who likewise refused to recognize the validity of said treaty.

The loss of Normandy had produced successive waves of skilled, French immigrants; these craftsmen and merchants established themselves in English ports and cities, particularly in London. This occurred even more following the marriage of Henry III to Eleanor of Provence in 1236. The king then proceeded openly to remove many Anglo-Norman barons from their high, institutional positions, both lay and ecclesiastical, replacing them with important nobles from the south of France. Among those preferred by the king was Simon de Montforte, the crusading knight whom the King would marry to his own sister. One part of the nobility *frenchified* itself even more, while the other part reacted violently against the foreign favoritism of the king, especially after the failed, chivalric adventure in Sicily (1258):

"On the day of St. Hilary a countless multitude of nobles... came to London at Westminster... replies with indignation that they were oppressed on all sides... paying now the twentieth, now the thirtieth and now the fiftieth part of their property, and they declared that it would be unworthy of them, an injurious to them, to allow a king, so easily led away, who had never repelled or even frightened one of the enemies of the kingdom, even the least of them, and who had never increased his territories but rather lessened them, and placed them under foreign yoke, to extort so much money, so often, and by so many arguments, from his natural subjects as if they were slaves of the lowest condition, to their injury and for the benefit of foreigners."¹⁶

¹⁶ Fragment (translated from Latin) from the *Cronica Major*, XIII century, written by Mathew Paris, as cited by Iglesias Rábade (1992: 53).

All of this was leading to a new, baronial conspiracy against the royal authority to which Simon de Montforte added himself (so making himself the enemy of the king who had so favoured him) along some prelates of the Catholic Church, headed by the influential Bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste, and some university professors like Adam de Marsh who taught at Oxford. The common cause which united them was, of course, the recovery of the privileges and charges which had been usurped by the pro-French policies of Henry.

The victory of the barons in Lewes (1264) forced the king, who had been imprisoned along with his son, Edward, during this battle, to accept the famous *Provisions of Oxford*, which handed the effective power to Simon de Montforte. Bishop Grosseteste, the mastermind of the rebellion, encourages Montforte to legitimize his government (which is exercised in the name of the king) by convoking successive “parliaments”, however for the first time, not only are the nobles and clergy convened, but also he requires the attendance of two knights from each county and two burghers elected by the most important cities and towns.

Later, internal dissensions between the rebel barons and the death of Montforte on the field of battle restore Henry to effective power, so nullifying the Provisions of Oxford and leading to the subsequent Dictum of Kenilworth (1266). Although this was a position of greater power, the King *learned* to accept some of the claims of his barons.

Rex in Parlamento

Edward I (1272-1307) seems to comprehend from the beginning that the parliamentary *experiments* of Montforte would probably be useful in his intent to reinforce the battered authority of the Crown. In 1295, when he convokes the Parliament, not only does he call (according to the custom) the members of his Privy Council, on one side, and the Barons and Bishops on the other, but also he writes to the sheriffs asking that they send 2 knights to represent each county as well as 2 townsmen to represent each city and town of importance:

“with full and sufficient authority on behalf of themselves and the community to do whatever shall be ordained by common counsel.”¹⁷

In view of this, very soon the Seigneurs et Prelatz seize the custom of meeting on their own behalf in a separate room leaving the Chevaliers and Burghers to meet in another. Thus was the origin of the so-called Parliamentary Model, inasmuch as its method of convocation and composition would be maintained *for centuries*. The Tenentes-in-Chief, both lay and ecclesiastic, would gather “in their proper persons” in a first chamber (the House of Lords), while the men who “represent” the counties, cities and towns would gather in a second chamber (the House of Commons).

¹⁷ ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA ON-LINE (2010): Article: *The growth of Parliament*

In this way the King eventually obliged himself to deliberate and to negotiate, and in so doing likewise obliges his wayward barons and all the subjects of his kingdom. Now for the first time, each and every one of these men deserve the historical title of *Englishmen*.

Rex in Parlamento is a truly fascinating and astounding political artefact, which seeks and manages to suture the bloody wounds of the precarious, Anglo-Norman, feudal sociability, and to quiet centuries of civil strife. Only because of the accumulated, legal experience which pervades the lives of both the commoners and the noteworthy Anglo-Normans who served as jurists in every county from east to west could this *breakthrough* have been imagined -- let alone accomplished. This experience of thousands upon thousands of jurors gained throughout centuries provided the foundations of this very Parliament. Well, when one even for a moment considers these, tentatively established procedures, he understands immediately the great power that resides precisely in the *exquisite* care which those participants constantly gave (and continue to give!) to the formality and legality of the aforementioned procedures -- procedures which assured the right of every member of Parliament to speak in turn!

We say *procedures* in the plural because beginning in the 14th century they existed in multitudinous forms which, among others, included the following: a regional petition on behalf of a city or a county, even a petition made on behalf of a particular individual --both petitions would be elevated to the Royal Council by some members of the Commons who act as mere emissaries. Likewise, there were petitions on behalf of the King to the entire gathered Parliament in order to levy new taxes, to defray the costs of wars, and to meet the needs of the city of London, etc. Above all, with the passage of time there came into being the "common" petitions, so-named due to their objective, since they sought to benefit and fortify the entire kingdom:

"Ancient Petition in the Public Record Office, n° 3808 (1297-1307 ?), from 'les bones gentz de sa terre', concerns forfeiture of wools in 25 Edward I. In n° E216 (1302) 'se est mustre pur son people' that sheriffs indict men maliciously, with special reference to the sheriff of Salop, and the response takes for granted that the county is the one concerned. N° 5435 (c. 1319) is a protest by 'la Communalte du Roialme Dengleterre' against 'les overoures des Chapeus en Fletestrete de la Cité de Loundres'. N° 3955 (1322 ?) proceeds from 'les Chivalers des Countez et tote la Commune de sa terre' and asks that justices shall be assigned to take fines from the adherents of rebels. In Chanc., Parl. and Council Proc. 8/22 (c. 1324 ?) 'la Comminaulte de sa terre' petitions that executors shall be compelled to render account. And in Chanc., Parl. and Council Proc. 4/20 (c. 1316-24 ?) 'la Comunialte dengleterre' complains that sheriffs and under-sheriffs takes fees, robes, and pensions." Rayner (1941: 198).

These last petitions, the Common Petitions, which will come to embody more accurately the representative character of the Commons, will follow a procedurally different course from the Singular Petitions:

"Totes les peticions einz ces heures mises par la commune en parlement ount este respondues pleinement devant le departir des ditz parlamentz. Et quant a

singulares petitions ore baillez a yee parlement, nostre seigneur le Roi voet qe les auditurs ore assignez pur les trier les *trient et terminent* avant leur departir de mesme le parlement. » Rayner (1941:198) [our italics]

The Commune petitions could be elevated to the Privy Council of the King, who would request on occasion that the Chamber of the Chevaliers and Burghers choose some from among their ranks to meet with the Seigneurs nominated by the King, to the effects of de “Q’ eux s’avisent coment l’amendement se purra faire.” Rayner (1941: 557).

However, in matters of humanity nobody has the last word, nor can anybody foretell the end of a story, and precisely about that time (14th century) there began to arise in England something totally unforeseen, i.e., a new *capitalistic* sociability of astonishing vigor which would go forward brutally nullifying (in historic terms) the old, *feudal* sociability, but only in those aspects and to the degree necessary in order to guarantee its own expansion. The successive imbalances and power adjustments, which will arise throughout the future centuries between both sociabilities in England (the emerging capitalism and the declining feudalism) will provide a rough outline for us, the sociologists, and for our Historical Sociology to analyze the successive imbalances and power adjustments between the *representatives* in the House of Commons and the hierarchy (both noble and ecclesiastical) *present* in the House of Lords within Rex in Parlamento.¹⁸

The transversal spontaneity of the personalities of the members of parliament along with the principle of legal formality accepted by all guaranteed that this political contrivance would not lose at any time in history (well, at almost any time) its condition as a faithful portrait, as a perfect *transsumptus* of English society of its time.¹⁹

Mercantilism

From 1337 until 1453, England found itself engaged in a protracted, intermittent war with its wealthier, French neighbour. One might well ask: Is England a society on a persistent war footing during those Hundred Years, or simply a society forced to

¹⁸ “The reformers were more like the guardians of some venerable cathedral, restoring it stone by stone as it fell into decay, than architects with a new vision, which they wanted to fulfil.” Veitch, 1913, as cited by González García (1927: 166)

¹⁹ On one occasion in Paris, a very young Picasso painted an American millionaire; however, she was displeased with the outcome and complained that the painted image did not resemble her. The painter shrugged his shoulders and told her, “Don’t be concerned, Madam. In time you will look like her!”

The relationship between English society and the English Parliament can also be understood in a similar (although not exactly the same) manner. It has been the Parliament (particularly the House of Commons) which has in fact continued *formatting* English society throughout the centuries until transforming it into what it is today (for better or worse) and in so doing has accomplished its own *prophecy* -- to a certain extent.

All of this will be seen even more clearly in the case of the U.S.A.

face the fiscal demands of interminable bellicosity? Whatever the answer may be, we see this scheme repeated in all the Parliaments of the 14th century –more and more the needs of the King force him to rely on the financial resources of the House of Commons (among others). Because of that, the Commoners rapidly mature in fiscal matters, while they do so much more slowly in their political consciousness. Nevertheless, there are impressive, political episodes, such as the one played out by the so-called Good Parliament of 1376, in which the Commons advance and carry out the *impeachment* of the Chancellor, of the Treasurer and of several other direct counsellors of the King.

In spite of being initially experienced as an era of dynastic, feudal war, these one hundred years undoubtedly brought with them highly diverse, *real-world* developments.

Salient among these developments was the sublimation and accommodation of the still-bloody, Norman, feudal wound *thanks to the use of spoken English* which fostered a new, common identity of an English proto-nation encompassing all the estates and classes present and represented in the Parliament.

War is expensive, very expensive. What resources could our dear, small England mobilize to dispel the sense of danger felt whenever confronted with the possibility of imminent invasions from the large and wealthy France?

At the beginning of the 14th century, in addition to being the only English city with more than 80,000 inhabitants, London had become the busiest port in all of northern and western Europe. Furthermore, other English cities, in particular York, Winchester, Norwich and Bristol, had more than 10,000 inhabitants while another 75 towns and villages (many of them ports of regional importance) surpassed 2,000 inhabitants. In those cities, side by side with the guilds of traditional craftsmen, e.g., blacksmiths, inn keepers, shoe makers, spinners, carpenters, stonemasons, etc., there were guilds of jewellers, cabinetmakers, goldsmiths, furriers, lenders -- all of them employed mainly by the bishops, courtiers and burghers. Alongside these guilds, new and booming economic sectors were surging forth and resorting to the increased use of a hired work force. In first place among these emerging sectors was everything that dealt with either the chartering or the construction of ships (along with the hiring of their crews) needed by *merchants*, in particular those of London, who created trading companies for the importation of wines, grains, oil, salt, luxury goods, Italian clothing, spices, manuscripts, etc. The overland transportation between the aforementioned cities as well as the transportation between these cities and their related, hinterland hamlets (the transport of fruits, bread, vegetables, meat, fish, etc.) created a very great deal of additional employment. However, this employment was surely not equal to that of the fabrication of weapons and the creation of armies of soldiers employed in the continue wars against France. Public works of every kind (civil and defence projects), religious work and private enterprises such as the start-up companies in mining, ceramics, crystal, textiles, silk, leather, soap, manuscripts, cotton, dyes, steel, copper, aluminium, contracted temporary hand labor almost exclusively since it

was much more versatile and adequate (than labor subject to the regulations of the guilds) for their expensive, albeit uncertain, growth.²⁰

For their part, the English tribunals had to resolve innumerable litigations which the expansion of temporary, salaried labor brought with it; in so doing, these tribunals were developing in particular the figure or the legal concept of *juristic entity*, or fictitious *entity*, i.e., a new corporate being.

This corporate organization was capable of accomplishing coherent actions oriented toward a goal, e.g., public works or the search for profit. It was an independent entity recognized by legal statute; consequently --and this was the distinct feature-- its existence was autonomous from the people who at any given moment belonged to it... The corporation, with its goal-oriented activity, did not depend on the personal relationships of its members but rather upon the efficient organization of its offices and positions:

“This new legal form was widely used in England in the fourteenth century, where boroughs gaining charters from the King came into legal personhood. These boroughs paved the way for the great trading companies of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (such as the East India Company) and more generally for the modern corporation and voluntary associations of all varieties. But as the English historian Maitland (1898) showed, this corporate form came into being after a tortuous working-out of the concept of fictitious person by jurists deciding cases involving boroughs chartered by the King. This concept, through the law of *limited liability*, became the vehicle that created the modern corporation.” Coleman (1993: 2). [Our cursives]

In the countryside, there occurred also a significant increase in the utilization of contracted, salaried work. From the 12th century forward, the weakness with which the Norman king faced his barons was replicated in the weakness with which the Norman barons confronted their Anglo-Saxon serfs who stubbornly found a thousand ways to elude the new authority as they continued to long for the *legitimate* dominion which the previous, Anglo-Saxon nobility had exercised over them before Hastings (1066).

Many serfs managed to force their overlords to accept monetary payment (*ad censum*) in lieu of farm work (*ad opus*), a trend which became decisively sharper after the Black Death (1350) due to the scarcity of hand labor which was decimated by the plague. The Commons reacted by supporting successive Statutes of Laborers (1351, 1373-5), which fixed the *maximum, allowed salary* for different tasks as well as the prosecution by the tribunals of those who broke the Law; nevertheless, this was all useless because the tribunals never managed to

²⁰ All of this mercantile diligence was greatly favoured by the remarkable *centrality* of English politics, since all of its cities were equally subordinate to the unique power of the King, and consequently the network between those cities was eventually established as a result of their strict, economic functionality.

For the purpose of comparison and contrast with the city-states of the 14th Century of the north of Italy, one can refer to Britnell (1991).

apply the Law. The Lords themselves used to skip over their own laws and to secretly offer ever higher salaries for ever more scarce and necessary hand labor.

“The most effective way of retaining labour was to pay higher wages, just as the most effective way of retaining tenants was to lower rents and release servile obligations.” Postan (1972: 152).

The transformation of the peasants' state of servile subjugation was due mainly to the possibility that they might acquire title to land -- thus freeing the land and the peasants from all manorial control. As a consequence, the purchase of land became widespread in many counties of Kent and East Anglia. On the other hand, many other peasants, beneficiaries of a system of divisible inheritance, decided to immigrate to the cities, in particular London, with some small savings in search of fortune and desirous to take advantage of the prestigious liberties found there. The countryside became filled with a rich, active and independent population. Therefore, when the famous Peasants' Revolt of 1381 rose in opposition to the first Poll Tax in history (1377), it was precisely the most wealthy and advanced English counties (not the poorest nor the most servile) which played the main role in the most violent and angry disturbances.

Starting with the 14th century forward until today, even though similar or capitalistic-like developments (*with their mysterious efficiency*) were simultaneously occurring in other parts of Europe, there is definitely something distinctive and unique in the English case -- this is nothing other than the fact that in England the Rex in Parlamento is pervading everything, influencing *all the other procedures* of civil life including commercial practices

In regard to the formal aspects of the aforementioned procedure, we are referring to the recognized *fait accompli* that the members of this Assembly, by means of the skilful exercise of their relative and irrefutable powers, will ultimately decide the content and application of the law through a course of deliberation rather than through the adherence of any principle *per se* -- a revolutionary procedure in a Catholic, feudal epoch. Therefore, some parliamentary members may wish to support the formulation of a law, for example, the ratification of a traditional prerogative of the King or the promotion of the sentiment (typically proto-nationalist) of the sacredness of the shores of the British Isle; however, in the eye of the Law, those principles will carry no more weight than that given to them by the participants who are debating the law under question at the moment. *Or, perhaps nothing.*²¹

In regard to the material aspects of the procedure of Rex in Parlamento, it seems that this last, national sentiment was in effect acquiring greater and greater weight in England throughout that 14th century, especially in the hearts of the Commons whenever they met, since (in Weber's opinion) they were very precocious and even pioneers in the concept of economic nationalism, i.e., in that economic expression of nationalism which in time will come to be known as *mercantilism*:

²¹ Is this Rex in Parlamento the original cradle of the renowned English individualism? It seems logical to believe so; nevertheless, curiously not once does the British historian Alan Macfarlane (1978) consider it so in his most interesting book.

"England is distinctively the original home of Mercantilism. The first traces of the application of mercantilistic principles are found there in the year 1381. Under the weak king Richard II, a money stringency arose and Parliament appointed an investigating commission which for the first time dealt with the balance of trade concept in all its essential features. For the time being it produced only emergency measures, including prohibition of importation and stimulation of exportation, but without giving to English policy a truly mercantilistic character. The real turning point is generally dated from 1440. At that time, in one of the numerous Statutes of Employment, which were passed for the correction of alleged abuses, two propositions were laid down which indeed had been applied before, but only in an incidental way. The first was that foreign merchants who brought goods to England must convert all the money which they received into English goods; the second that English merchants who had dealings abroad must bring back to England at least a part of their proceeds in cash. On the basis of these two propositions developed gradually the whole system of mercantilism down to the Navigation Act of 1651, with its elimination of the foreign shipping." Weber (2003: 348-9)

Schism from Rome

When the Venetian diplomat Andrea Trevisano visited England in the year 1500, he admired, among other things, how English families placed their sons and daughters (with the exception of the first-born) in houses other than their own where they would serve as apprentices starting at the age of 7 or 8 and where, from that time on, they would have to earn their own way in life with no hope of inheriting anything from their parents...

"The author perceptively noted that this meritocratic system, so different from a 'domestic mode of production', where the family form one economic unit, leads to insecurity and the desire for constant accumulation. Yet he also conceded that such a system allows very considerable social mobility, describing at great length how apprentices amass a fortune later in their life... This individualistic, self-help, social system was also shown not merely in national character and economics, but also in religion." Macfarlane (1978: 175).

In 1565 Sir Thomas Smith, the English ambassador to France, wrote a book entitled, *The Method of Governace and Politics in England*, which compares this method with those of the Continent and in which he states among other things:

"The yeomanry confess themselves to be no gentlemen, but give the honour to all which be or take upon them to be gentlemen, and yet they have a certain pre-eminence and more estimation than labourers and artificers, and commonly live wealthily, keep good houses, and do their business, and travail to acquire riches; these be (for the most part) farmers unto gentlemen, which with grazing, frequenting of markets, and keeping servants no idle as the gentlemen doth, but sich as get both their own living and part of their masters, by these means do come to such wealth, that they are able and daily do buy the lands of unthirfty gentlemen, and after setting

their son to the school at the Universities, to the law of the Realm, or otherwise leaving them sufficient lands whereon they may live without labour, do make their said sons by those means gentlemen." Macfarlane (1978: 176).

In the testimonies to the era given by both of these distinguished chroniclers (as collected and commented on in the previously cited book by Macfarlane), we see the unstoppable emergence of the entrepreneurial culture and salaried work among those born English -- especially so in London, the counties of East Anglia and in the southern part of the Isle. However, parallel to this emergent, *entrepreneurial citizenry*, a great number of English servants and artisans remained subject to the old *feudal sociability* which was resistant to change and relatively untouched by the passage of time, especially in the most rural counties of the North and the West of their beloved Isle.

Though of course, the transition between the *two* Englands was "completely fluid" (as Max Weber would note), and could eventually be embodied by the actions of a single person:

"The position was, as with freehold land, that a man could allow the custom to dictate the situation, could die without making a sale or alienation of his land, in which case his eldest son would inherit. But very often he chose to do something else - either selling off part, giving it away, making provision for his younger sons or daughters, or in other ways acting in a way that made the custom merely an unrealized possibility." Macfarlane (1978: 108).²²

Of course, those two Englands did not carry equal weight in the eyes of the "King in Parliament". By the year 1430, this political institution decided that only men who owned a property worth at least 40 shillings would be allowed to vote to elect members to the Commons. For their part, those to be elected had to have an annual income greater than 600 pounds in order to represent the counties, and an annual income greater than 300 pounds in order to represent the cities.

On the other hand, all the Tudor Kings, but in particular the first, Henry VII (1485 – 1509), tied their destiny to the growing influence of the mercantile classes, at the expense of the nobility. They sought to influence the local authorities through appointment of loyal sheriffs who in the king's name supervised the county courts, the collection of taxes, the execution of judgments of the justices of the peace, and, above all, the election of candidates to Parliament.

From that epoch, for example, comes the famous *Book of Rates*, which established standard values for English merchandise and in so doing simplified the calculation of taxes. The certainty that resulted from this standardization fostered the expansion of trade and maximized tax revenue for the Kingdom.

From 1527 onward, Henry VIII tenaciously and calculatedly seeks a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Catherine is unable to provide a legitimate, male heir for the English throne. Rome refuses to annul the royal marriage. During a visit to Wiltshire,

²² A most interesting and ambiguous attitude for a person who, when facing two contemporaneous sociabilities, would be able to play with two decks at once; an attitude which perhaps (when *applied to our ends*) would have a great deal to teach us, we western citizens of the third millennium (as will be seen at the conclusion of this text).

by chance the King meets Thomas Cranmer, an obscure scholar committed to Protestantism. Together, he and Thomas Cromwell (at the head of the Royal Council) will find and move forward the only solution they can perceive; i.e., the transformation of the Catholic Church of England into a new, independent Church, which subsequently will authorize a new marriage for the King. An authentic schism takes place. The Parliament supports every one of the successive steps taken by the King. In the first place, the Parliament produces an Act by which Henry is recognized as the Head of the Church of England (1531); in 1532, Thomas Cranmer is accepted as the Archbishop of Canterbury; in 1534, there follows the Act of Submission of the Clergy, as well as another, the famous Act of Supremacy (1534), which deals with ecclesiastical appointments; and, of course, the Act of Succession (1536) which delivers all of the wealthy, monastic properties, approximately one sixth of all English land, into the hands of the King.

Some historians tend to emphasize the support and the feeling of contentment on the part of the grand nobles – as well by the Commons -- with this last measure of the King in Parliament because they saw in it the entrance of the wealthier lands of England into an ever growing and more acquisitive market. Such is the case. However, in reality in this schism by the Church of England, there was much more at play for England itself and for its destiny (as well as for the destiny of the rest of the world) -- as Thomas More and other illustrious and independent minds realized at first glance. For better or worse, this schism symbolically heralded nothing less than the beginning of the end of the feudal England – of servile and artisanal *people*-- which was now beginning to be supplanted by a new capitalistic England of entrepreneurs and a salaried *citizenry*. That England has evolved into the present-day, modern England leaving us with relatively scarce memory of the foregone, feudal England.

In order to try to comprehend the reach of what we are discussing, we are going to apply the concept of *Sovereignty*, as Nicholas Ramiro Rico elaborated it in his day.²³

According to our interpretation of the text of Ramiro Rico, acquiring *Sovereignty* is so defined: the success of any given power to gain the obedience of a given population; this requires that the population *prefer* that power to the exclusion of any other concurrent powers which also seek their obedience. During the Middle Ages there were basically two powers in dispute, the King and the Catholic Church. However, sovereignty was in reality always maintained by Rome, so that when a King (for whatever reason) disobeyed the Church, the latter would ask that King's subjects to rebel passively and even actively against him. Likewise, if the need were to arise, the Church would petition neighbouring kings to attack him.

The undeniable sovereignty of the Church was made clearly manifest by the necessity of the King to be anointed by the Church in a ceremony filled with solemnity and symbolism. Only by virtue of this coronation could the King effectively ascend to the throne and thereafter reign "By the Grace of God". Nevertheless, the Church also needed the King in order to delegate through him

²³ Ramiro Rico (1952). This article can also be found in Ramiro Rico (1980: 119-135).

the daily exercise of direct earthly power, so preserving its own *divine* lineage in the formal narration (in a narration conventionally maintained by all, and which to an equal extent was considered by all to be non-fictional).

For us as modern people (and particularly for us as sociologists) it is not easy to comprehend this *belief*, this medieval, political fiction. Yes, we do understand that throughout long centuries, the Church of Rome *formatted* the peasant and artisanal societies of Western Europe, so creating a *Christian people*, while specifically *formatting* its family sociability as a patriarchal one, through the celebration of the three fundamental rites of human passage: birth, marriage and death. The difficult part for us, modern people, is to comprehend that our medieval counterparts from all walks of life *felt* that these religious rites and ceremonies – baptism, wedding and funeral- were more than mere administrative acts. For them, these rites were true sacraments during which it was possible to bring God *Ille Ipse*, in His Proper Person into a church –since the priest was of the lineage of Peter, the first bishop of Rome who was *personally* named by Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God.

So that when Henry VIII and some of his successors continued to deepen the schism of the Church of England, Rome acted according to its custom: it excommunicated them - and furthermore, it asked their English subjects, both clergy and lay, not to obey their King. This explains why in the *Oath of Allegiance* (which was systematically required by the English kings of their subjects at the moment of their ascendancy to the throne), one could read:

“3. And I do further swear, That I do from my heart abhor, detest and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position, That princes which be excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, may be deposed or murdered by the subjects, or any other whatsoever.”²⁴

The Catholic Church, with complete, medieval coherence, also petitioned Charles V, Emperor of Germany (and by happenstance at that time also, King of Spain and nephew of the former English Queen, Catherine) to take action against England and to return it to Catholic obedience. Finally in 1588 after decades of papal insistence, Philip II (who had lived for two years in London) sent forth his Spanish Armada –only to see the fleet catastrophically shipwrecked on the English coasts (an event which was interpreted by the English and European Protestants to be “A Signal”).

Now Political Science allows us to understand that Spain may well have been able to win military dominance over the Isle with this naval expedition; however, military dominance would never in reality prevail over the deep-rooted, English sense of Sovereignty. So, the principal question still stands: Why did the English Catholics,

²⁴ This third clause belongs to the Oath of Allegiance required by King James I Stuart when he ascended to the throne in 1606. See A. Dures (1983: 99)

both secular and lay, *not disobey their King Henry* when he was excommunicated?²⁵

Well, why should it be otherwise, because for the preceding 250 years the English had relied upon a governmental system unknown to other countries (at least in regard to procedural methods) and which they had come to name Rex in Parlamento – a system which continued vigorously to shape with efficacy an ever more significant part of English society, particularly in London, so promoting salaried employment through the expansion of mercantilism in which fragile, emerging enterprises would enjoy the protection of Rex in Parlamento. As a result, there began to germinate and then to proliferate throughout the Isle a class of happy, diligent, and independent proprietors who were growing ever more sure of their accomplishments and proud of their “ancient rights,” i.e., as *individuals* who were incapable of obeying any power other than that of an elected Assembly, an Assembly in which they would feel themselves to be represented in a more or less perfect manner – but that is another question.

This is to say: The moulding into *citizens* of all of those born to all walks of life in England. Unlike anything happening (as widely and as profoundly) during this period in any other part of the continent or in any other part of the world, we see the rise and proliferation throughout English society of individuals subject to the aforementioned “citizens’ sociability” -- even though these citizens were of different classes, fortunes and roles.

Precisely because that mercantilist sociability in England (and only in England) had *access to representation in the procedure of government*, agreed to by the Monarch in Parliament, without exception all Englishmen were already willingly accepting the aforementioned Rex in Parliament as the only possible depository of English Sovereignty. And that was the case not just for the ever more numerous citizens effectively engaged in the practices of proto-capitalism, but also for the many more humble people from towns and counties, e.g., servants and artisans,

²⁵ Although significant, the *Pilgrimage of Grace* had little historical consequence. This uprising in the year 1536 by peasants and nobles in some counties in York and Lincoln asked for the return of England to Roman Catholicism. Two hundred twenty were executed.

For the immense majority of the English Catholics (who in the time of Henry comprised practically *all* of the English), the schismatic decisions of each successive ‘King in Parliament’ posed a problem of conscience above all else (a grave problem of religious conscience), but much more rarely a call to *political disobedience*.

Let’s see for example the intelligent defence presented by one Cecily Stonor (without doubt a member of the gentry, and possibly even a member of the nobility), during her trial in Oxford in 1581 for refusing to reject her Catholicism:

“I was born in such a time when holy mass was in great reverence, and brought up in the same faith. In King Edward’s time this reverence was neglected and reproved by such as governed. In Queen Mary’s time, it was restored with much applause; and now in this time it pleaseth the state to question them, as now they would do me, who continue in this Catholic profession. The state would have these several changes, which I have seen with mine eyes, good and laudable. Whether it can be so, I refer it to your Lordships’ consideration. I hold me still to that wherein I was born and bred; and find nothing taught in it but great virtue and sanctification; and so by the grace of God I will live and die in it.”

Testimony collected in the cited book of Dures (1983: 94).

who were still feudal, and in general any other social categories which might have existed *in between* at the middle of the XVI century. For all of them, Rex in Parlamento was a sovereignty acknowledged to be internally fractured, but which by that time (in regard to procedure) was admittedly not open to appeal.

Respect for Parliamentary authority is so profound that when in 1555 Queen Mary, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, attempts to execute Thomas Cranmer, the first protestant Archbishop of the New Church, she needs to convoke the Parliament so that it might formally reject the Acts of Henry VIII and Edward VI in order to reinstitute the laws which permitted secular powers to burn heretics. And so it is that Cranmer himself accepts with dignity the death of a heretic burned at the stake: he makes this clear in writing, given that the Queen, reunited with Parliament, has restored the Catholic Faith in England by law.

The point is that if Ramiro Rico is correct about his generic concept of Sovereignty -- understanding it to be the result of the demonstrated preference of a given people to obey one of several concurrent powers -- then in this genial, English *inventio*, i.e., the resorting to the representation by their peers to form their Government, we find something which transcends its function in the unique history of the English people, something which is one of those rare cultural products which surpasses the importance of its own birth in a specific society and serves as a paradigm capable of benefiting other countries around the world; in this sense, Governance by elected Assemblies is something genuinely human, anthropological, and potentially *universal*.

Indeed, Rex in Parlamento was born because of the weakness of the Norman King when confronting his barons. Likewise, it is also clear that The Commons was consolidated historically (such as we know it today) thanks to the emergence of capitalism in England. But in any case, if sovereignty rests in the preference of the people for one power over several concurrent powers, as we and Rico believe, then there is something authentic, something exemplary, and something *indisputable* in the peoples' election of *representatives* in order to submit themselves to the rule of a government thus formed.²⁶

Returning to our troubled Isle, the separation of the Anglican Church completely dynamited *de facto* (beyond all the verbiage that was to accompany it) the medieval, institutional framework, especially in its strategically legitimating narrative -- since the New Church, which could not affiliate itself with Peter, could not claim to be divine, and the King, upon becoming the Head of the Church, could not be anointed "by the grace of God" in as much as he was self-anointed. If Henry and Cranmer believed that they were building a solid future for the Royal House and the Church respectively, soon (speaking in historical terms) it would be seen that other powers *within* Rex in Parlamento, e.g. The Commons, were destined to be called upon to lead the fervour of the citizenry and to win Sovereignty for themselves.

Of course these other powers will need to develop their own sanctity, their own ceremonial rituals and their own religions, since

²⁶ Regarding the very ancient origin of the concepts of "person" and "representation," refer to the introduction of Carlos Moya to the Spanish edition of Hobbes (1979), in particular to pp. 93-104.

"It is an historical error of many to believe that the secularizing process in the West has consisted in a profanation of what is sacred, without looking at the parallel process that divinizes the mundane." Rico (1980: 120) [our translation]

With the passing of time, nationalisms will be called upon to be the strongest of these mundane, triumphant "religions".

The King is beheaded

Between 1500 and 1650, London's population multiplied by a factor of 8. Starting in 1607, to London's panoptic function with the Atlantic ports of Germany, Holland, the northern Iberian peninsula and the Baltic countries, there is added the vibrant, pivotal traffic of raw materials and manufactured goods between this great, city port and its colonies along the Atlantic coast of North America. The faster a social change occurs, the more difficult it becomes for the people to *collectively* understand that change; precisely because of its abstract nature for those who foster its expansion, there is nothing more difficult than grasping the concepts of capitalism:

"Historically speaking, the institution of wage-labour is a sophisticated latecomer. The very idea of wage-labour requires two difficult conceptual steps. First, it requires the abstraction of a man's labour from both his person and the product of his work. When one purchases an object from an independent craftsman, whether he is free or a slave with a peculium, one has not bought his labour but the object, which he had produced in his own time and under his own conditions of work. But when one hires labour, one purchases an abstraction, labour-power, which the purchaser then uses at a time and under conditions which he, the purchaser, not the 'owner' of the labour-power, determines (and for which he normally pays after he has consumed it). Second, the wage-labour system requires the establishment of a method of measuring the labour one had purchased, for purposes of payment, commonly by introducing a second abstraction, namely, labour-time.

We should not underestimate the magnitude, speaking socially rather than intellectually, of these conceptual steps; even the Roman jurists found them difficult." (Finley, 1973: 65-66)

Such is Capitalism (including that capitalism *without smokestacks*, prior to mechanization) -- that employment of wage-labor, *that cultivation* of the power of the work of others, that consumption of the labor force of others (which generates more value than its costs, and because of the incessant invention of machines, it generates ever more value, each day much greater value than that which it costs)... I maintain that the transformative progress of this *labour-culture*²⁷ in societies is analogous to a fire beneath a pot of water: it ends up altering the state of the water by making it boil and so turning liquid into gas.

As is well known: the stronger the spirit of capitalism the "more revolutionary" our ideologies become given our relentless search for social and individual aspirations

²⁷ Compare to agri-culture or to aqua-culture.

(often frustrating and beyond our enactment) which characterize all of us -- the modern us.²⁸

Through all corners of England – as also through all the regions of Europe which were undergoing an enthusiastic capitalization – there extends among all the proto-bourgeois the custom of reading the Bible in private, seeking in so doing to make themselves feel especially important by distinguishing themselves simultaneously from both the country peasants (whom they branded as primitive, savage and superstitious since they lived *with* animals and *like* animals, and they *mistreated* animals), and also seeking to distinguish themselves (except, of course, in the case of marrying their daughters) from the ancient nobles who always disdained reading.

Likewise, among the most rural, humble people (those just recently incorporated into the knowledge of *the trick* of accumulating capital, but no less anxious to deny, subjectively speaking, their own condition of peasant in which however, objectively speaking, *almost all of them* remained), I maintain that Protestantism acquires profound, mystical characters, as the one who became so famous in the rural district of Grindleton, near York city, where in 1587, owners and sharecroppers had reached an agreement *to cloister* and to divide up the lands held in common, and 30 years later whose pastor Roger Brearly was brought before the court charged with professing (among other things) that:

“(1) a motion rising from the spirit is more to be rested in than the Word itself; (2) it is a sin to believe the Word... without a motion of the spirit; (3) the child of God in the power of grace does perform every duty so well, that to ask pardon for failing in matter or manner is a sin; (7) the Christian assured can never commit a gross sin; (14) a soul sanctified must so aim at God's glory, as he must never think of salvation; (33) a man having the spirit may read, pray or preach without any other calling whatsoever; (38) neither the preacher nor they pray for the King... They know not whether he be elected or not; (46) they cannot have more joy in heaven that they have in this life by the spirit.” Hill (1972: 83).

So that on one side during that period, we find the faith and the discipline which the middle classes would incorporate into their particular businesses and into their private lives, where their exemplary behavior caused them to be perceived as *true saints* in the eyes of the more disadvantaged, while managing to make evident, without so wishing, the corruption of the gentlemen of the Court.

On the other side we find the confessions of de Ranters, Levellers, True Levellers, Seekers, Diggers, Quakers and other humble ones, who intended on occasion to put into practice their reformed, utopian faith, which became more dangerous to the degree that their excesses gained acceptance among the soldiers.

Consequently, there resulted those violent practices against the *papists*, not only by the local Church and State authorities, but rather especially by those *true believers*, more or less Calvinists, more or less republicans (in spite of being English), who saw in Catholicism (and in this matter they were not deceiving themselves) the truest foundation of the aristocratic prejudices which they hated so much.

²⁸ Cf. Oakeshott (1948/1949)

Such was the epoch when, on the 23rd of June of 1625, the first parliament convened by Charles I Stuart opened, and immediately Sir Robert Cotton rose and spoke the following:

"We do not ask of the king to put away bad counselors, as parliament did under Henry the Fourth and Henry the Sixth. We do not wish to interfere in their choice, as was done under Edward the Second, Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Sixth; nor that those whom the king shall have chosen should be obliged to take oath before parliament, as was done under Richard the Second and Edward the Second; nor that parliament should prescribe to them before hand their mode of conduct, as it thought fit to do under Henry the Third and Henry the Fourth; nor even that his majesty should promise, as Henry the Third did, that he would do all things with the consent of parliament, and nothing without it. We only presume to make known, like faithful subjects, our moderate requests." Guizot (1838: 19).

The King dissolved the Chambers.

But, what happened here? How is it that those docile Parliaments of the Tudors and the first Stuarts had been transformed into this rebellious parliament of King Charles? Or, was it that those Parliaments were not as *docile* as they had appeared to be? Or, had they simply *allowed* the King to do what suited them?

In order to answer these and other questions, we need no more than to observe who was seated on the benches of the House of Commons: on one side was a majority of the gentry, who were basically loyal to the English tradition of Rex in Parliament, now however permeated by the pointedly political ambitions of the London middle-class, whose universal logic, based on the abstract spirit of the market, demanded to actively intervene in all of the most substantial aspects of governance, including that of royal prerogative: freedom from arrest (*habeas corpus*), property rights, religious tolerance, monopolies, the establishment of colonies, the appointment of royal counsels, the composition of taxation, the military conscription, the use of the naval force, etc. Again and again and in all directions, the maturation of the bourgeoisie as a class overflowed the limits of its own former medieval estate, at times consciously and at other times with scarce awareness.

Additionally, there had arrived from the counties quite a few elected *roundheads*, or Puritans, who constituted a more-or-less convinced and doctrinaire (if not radical) minority who noisily and angrily spoke against the monarchy as *an institution* with an audacious language unknown in the House before that time. Among these roundheads there gained prominence a representative of Cambridge, one young Oliver Cromwell (nephew great grand-nephew of the Chancellor of Henry VIII).

The King will not reconvene the Parliament until 1640, and then he will do so only begrudgingly, forced to do so only because of a lack of treasure -money he will need to face an armed invasion from Scotland. That Parliament, called the Long Parliament, will not dissolve until 1653 and will be rather more dominated by Puritanical sentiments and policies especially, but not only, among the representatives elected to the House of Commons, and which will continue to transform itself very rapidly (through successive purges of *cavaliers*) into a

revolutionary Corps, one disposed to confront the King. The fact is that from 1625 to 1640, those resentful of Charles due to the dissolution of the Houses of Parliament (not only a few English commoners but also some of their representatives in the House), were searching for and formulating a new narrative which was at a minimum the reformation of the weak, official, Anglican version -- even a narrative inspired by Calvinism or any new doctrines capable of serving as tools to justify the assault on the King's powers, whenever the latter (for whatever reason) had no choice other than to reconvene the Parliament.

Don't believe, however, that the King lacked support. Not at all! He always counted on the loyal followers of the venerated customs and traditions of English politics, as is demonstrated in the voting that took place on the first of December of 1641 in the House of Commons, to push forward the so-called *Grand Remonstrance*, a vote which was approved by only 159 in favour and 148 in opposition, as a consequence of which the King would need Parliamentary approval for the appointment of his counsellors.

We have as testimony the words of Sir Edward Dering when he expressed his precise opposition:

When I first heard of a Remonstrance... I thought to represent unto the King the wicked Counsels of pernicious Counsellors... I did not dream that we should remonstrate *downward*, tell stories to the *People*, and talk of the King as of a third Person. (Morgan, 1988: 36) [*italics in text*]²⁹

It's that, in effect, the Ministers in the House of Commons were spending the entire day *talking about the people*. Some parliamentarians did so because the old habit of developing abstract laws applicable to the *whole realm* was now reinterpreted as though the members represented the whole realm and no longer only their particular towns and counties, but rather the totality of the native-born English, of all English by birth. These members were transformed overnight, as if by magic, into representatives of the entire nation – something which had never been so before, something never prescribed by their traditional, official roles. Some of these transformed parliamentarians preferred to support their opinions with specific writings of Calvin which made 'subordinate judges' and even 'private men' responsible for being vigilant over the *virtue* of government.

Consequently, when speaking of the term, "The People", from the perspective of the First Person Plural (WE), these parliamentarians were *inventing it*; they were inventing a concept of humanity laden *with rights* – which were nothing more than the everyday liberties already enjoyed by the wealthy citizens – a concept of humanity capable of opposing the concept of royal divinity, thus making all men equal.

Of course, the decisive strategy of the parliamentarians, the key, was either to declare war against the King or to force the King to declare war so as to promote affronts against Charles, e.g., the detention and execution of his friends and

²⁹ The reciprocal position of individuals in any political situation plays a role in the choice of personal pronouns used to refer to them (especially the forms of the Third Person). See García Calvo (1979: 349 and beyond).

favorites, Laud and Stratford; the imposition of the obligatory convocation of Parliament every three years; the declaration of illegality of certain royal taxes; and the petition that the King renounce (without further ado) his command of the Military; etc. etc.

Humiliated by Parliament, the King leaves London. Shortly thereafter, in January of 1642, the accord proposed by the Chambers arrives in York -- a proposal which removed all hope from the most moderates. The Chambers asked for the complete dissolution of the royal prerogative and the granting of absolute power. When all is said and done, from this point onward everything would have to be submitted for the formal consent of Parliament, e.g., the creation of new peers; the naming and revocation of high officials of every type; the education and marriage of the children of the king; military, civil and religious affairs. . .

“When the king read these proposals, his eye flashed with anger, and his countenance became suffused with a deep crimson; ‘Should I grant these demands’, he said, ‘I may be waited on bear-headed; I may have my hand kissed, the title of ‘majesty’ may be continued to me; and ‘the king’s authority, signified by both houses’, may still be the style of your commands; I may have swords and maces carried before me, and please myself with the sight of a crown and sceptre (though even these twigs would not long flourish, when the stock upon which they grew was dead): but as regards any true and real power, I should no longer be more than the image, but the mere shadow of a king.’ He broke off all further negotiation.” (Guizot, 1838: 256-257)

Both factions prepare for war. Here the military genius of Oliver Cromwell (a genius certainly superior to his doctrinaire condition) takes stage to invent *modern warfare* with the creation of the New Army:

“And he accordingly went through the eastern counties, recruiting young men, of whom the greater part were known to him, and he to them; all freeholders or the sons of freeholders, to whom pay was not an object, nor idleness a pleasure; but all fierce and hardy enthusiasts, who engaged in the war for conscience’s sake, and under Cromwell from the confidence they placed in him. ‘I will not deceive you”, said he, ‘nor make you believe, as my commission expresses it, that you are going to fight for the king and parliament: if the king were before me I would as soon shoot him as another; and if your conscience not allow you to do the same, go and serve elsewhere’. Generally they showed not the slightest hesitation, and were not sooner enlisted, than every indulgence to which they had been accustomed at home, as well as licence of the camp, were alike forbidden them; they were trained to the most severe discipline, tending their horses, carefully cleaning their arms and accoutrements, often sleeping in the open air, passing without relaxation from the duties of military service to exercises of piety; their commander obliged them to apply themselves to their respective callings, as well as to the duties of the service, fully determined that the free energy of the fanaticism should be united to the prompt firmness of the soldier. When the second campaign opened, fourteen squadrons of these volunteers, forming a body of about a thousand men, served under Cromwell.” (Guizot, 1838: 298-300)

In any case, although the parliamentarians predominated in the East, in the Midlands and the Southeast; on the other hand, the king had the advantage in the North, the West and in the Southwest.

For us, the sociologists, the reasons are obvious: the capitalistic sociability was much more interwoven and much more extensive in and around the city of London, whose middle classes formed the literate citizenry and tended to feel themselves politically closer to the *representative* part of the Parliament, i.e., the House of Commons (closer even to the diverse groups of radical, Puritan representatives therein). While on the contrary, in the counties farthest from London's influence, the nobles and farmers continued to constitute the majority of the nation and remained subjected to the feudal sociability while practicing the Anglican religion (when not secretly the Catholic faith), hating the Puritans -- whom they found to be, at least, verbose and conflictive (*libido dominandi*) -- and, in general, preferring the body of Parliament comprised of the non-elected, seated members, i.e., where we find *present* the Bishops, the Lords, and, of course, the King:

"Notwithstanding the fall of the feudal system, the feelings it had engendered still animated a great many of the gentry. They lived inactive in their country seats, and were but little given to reflection or accustomed to debate. They despised those talkative and cavilling citizens whose rigid creed forbade the use of wine, games, and all the pleasures of old England; and who assumed to govern the king though their fathers had not even had the honor to serve him. Exalted by the recollection of their own independence, they cared little about the new wants of public liberty. With the people they had murmured against tyranny; but after so many concessions from the king, their loyalty and improvidence rendered them indignant at the insolence and obstinacy of the innovators." (Guizot, 1838: 200-201).³⁰

It is important to understand that "The People", that inclusive *WE*, filled the rhetoric of some radical Puritans, members of the House of Commons -- a Chamber every day smaller and more deserted due to continuous defections toward the royal camp, accusations of treason, violent deaths, religious and political purges of every sort, etc. However, I maintain that "The People", was *actually the citizenry* which had elected those members and to which those members themselves belonged -- rather *than the peasantry* which was nevertheless still the majority in the England of 1640. In part due to this, the Parliament became known as "The Long Parliament" because for 13 years nobody risked tempting fate by convoking another which could easily have turned out to be royalist.

Over and over in this work, we have highlighted the contradiction between capitalist sociabilities and feudal sociabilities in the English society -- a disparity between individuals of the literate, proprietary citizenry on one side and the peasant households of the villages on the other side. This contradiction was majestically expressed by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, as a contrast -- if one admits -- between analytical categories. Thus for a moment, we enter into the *locus of Sociology*, the land of the ideal-types so leaving behind the warnings

³⁰ "And, perhaps one such Thomas Nicholson, from the county of York, spoke for many in 1615 when, while throwing a snowball at the people who were leaving from a sermon, he said: 'it was never a good world since there were so many sermons.'" Cited in Dures (1983).

and cautions of Max Weber about the gradual and fluid conditions which social phenomena of historical and empirical societies always present:

“Community [*Gemeinschaft*] is old, Society [*Gesellschaft*] is new, both as an entity and as a term. This has been recognised by an author whose teaching of political theory is otherwise more notable for its broadness of range than for deep penetration. “The entire concept of Society in the social and political sense”, states Bluntschli (*Staatswörterbuch*, IV), “has its natural basis in the habits and the outlook of the third estate. *It is not really an idea referring to the whole people, but merely to the concept of the third estate . . . it is the latter’s notion of ‘Society’ that has become the source of collective prejudices and trends, while at the same time becoming the vehicle of their expression. . . . Wherever urban culture flourishes, ‘Society’ also appears as its indispensable medium. Country people know little of it.*” Tönnies (2001: 19) [our italics]

Anyway, Cromwell won the war and captured King Charles who was later judged before what remained of the Parliament (after Cromwell sent his son-in-law, Ireton, to purge it once again) and was condemned to death; Charles was decapitated in London on the 30th of January of 1649. It would be exactly 144 years (and a day) before the French king would face the same fate.

However, the Cromwell who takes all these truly historical and calculated steps is no longer the fanatical Puritan of his youth nor simply the most brilliant, military leader who wages and wins war, but rather, and above all, a statesman, a true connoisseur of the vices and virtues of his beloved England.

Shortly after the head of King Charles falls, Cromwell himself in person, together with his military mentor, Fairfax, takes charge of making a clean break of all dominion of the radical sectors within the Army, defeating the Levellers, True Levellers, Seekers, Ranters, *and other bedfellows*, who questioned the political and ideological dominance of the Revolution by the proprietor classes. This armed confrontation takes place as soon as May of 1649 in Burford.³¹

Then in 1651, under the personal guarantee of Oliver Cromwell, Thomas Hobbes returned from his exile on the Continent to his beloved, studied England, and in London he decided to publish his *Leviathan* in which one can read:

“Seeing then all Lawes, written, and unwritten, have their Authority, and force, from the Will of the Common-wealth; that is to say, from the Will of the Representative; which in a Monarchy is the Monarch, and in other Common-wealths the Sovereign Assembly; a man may wonder from whence proceed such opinions, as are found in the Books of Lawyers of eminence in severall Common-wealths, directly, or by consequence making the Legislative Power depend on private men, or subordinate Judges. As for example, *That the Common Law, hath no Controuler but the Parliament; which is true onely where a Parliament has the Sovereign Power, and*

³¹ Because of that, in order to elect the Commons before 1832, there were 366,000 people with the vote in England and Wales (one of every 8 adult men) as opposed to only 4,500 voters in Scotland (one of every 125 adult men) due to the high, economic franchise legally required to participate in the suffrage. Cf. Robbins (1989).

cannot be assembled, nor dissolved, but by their own discretion. For if there be a right in any else to dissolve them, there is a right also to controule them, and consequently to controule their controulings. And if there be no such right, then the Controuler of Lawes is not *Parlamentum*, but *Rex in Parlamento*. And where a Parliament is Sovereign, if it should assemble never so many, or so wise men, from the Countries subject to them, for whatsoever cause; yet there is no man will believe, that such an Assembly hath thereby acquired to themselves a Legislative Power. *Item*, that the two arms of a Common-wealth, are *Force, and Justice; the first whereof is in the King; the other deposited in the hands of the Parliament*. As if a Common-wealth could consist, where the Force where in any hand, which Justice has not the Authority to command and govern." Hobbes (1985, 316) [italics in text]³²

A new England

However, others among the Puritans of the early 17th century England did not have the patience to wait to see the historical outcome of their struggles with the Anglican Church and the rule of the King. Residents of the small hamlet of Scooby, near to the city of York, had already gone into exile in 1607 to Delft-Haven (Holland) in order to be able to live according to the tenets of their religion. Dedicated to the textile industry, they prospered economically, and they were not impeded in their worship, but the problem was that their sons and daughters "lost the purity of their customs" when they intermarried with the Dutch.

They understood then what was happening: *simply put*, it is that they were unable to endure a society which (whatever the eventual outcome of the religious-political wars might be) would continue to be *an overwhelmingly peasant society*, and consequently from their point of view, an intrinsically rudimentary and backward society.

At this point, they decided to emigrate to America where they would create a completely new society, a society built from beginning to end and which would make a *clean sweep* of all the various aspects of feudal serfdom endured until that time – a society with the vision of a "City of Saints", a "City on a Hill".

They contracted a ship, the Mayflower, and 87 Pilgrims (plus 14 servants) sailed into Plymouth Bay in December of 1620:

"Gentle Reader,—I have for some length of time looked upon it as a duty incumbent, especially on the immediate successors of those that have had so large experience of those many memorable and signal demonstrations of God's goodness, viz., the first beginners of this Plantation in New England, to commit to writing his gracious dispensations on that behalf; having so many inducements

³² Penguin charges C.B. MacPherson to write an introduction for its new edition of *Leviathan* (1985) in which MacPherson argues over and over that Hobbes in his book always takes for granted and considers morally acceptable the capitalist sociability: "Hobbes not only accepted market determination of value as a fact, he accepted it as a right, in the sense that he could not see other moral basis for establishing the value of anything." Hobbes (1985: 50).

thereunto, not onely otherwise but so plentifully in the Sacred Scriptures: that so, what we have seen, and what our fathers have told us (Psalm lxxviii. 3, 4), we may not hide from our children, showing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord; that especially the seed of Abraham his servant, and the children of Jacob his chosen (Psalm cv. 5, 6), may remember his marvellous works in the beginning and progress of the planting of New England, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth; how that God brought a vine into this wilderness; that he cast out the heathen, and planted it; that he made room for it and caused it to take deep root; and it filled the land (Psalm lxxx. 8, 9). And not onely so, but also that he hath guided his people by his strength to his holy habitation and planted them in the mountain of his inheritance in respect of precious Gospel enjoyments: and that as especially God may have the glory of all unto whom it is most due; so also some rays of glory may reach the names of those blessed Saints that were the main instruments and the beginning of this happy enterprise."³³

The author, Nathaniel Morton, historian of the first years spent in New England, continues on to describe the departure of the first pilgrims in this way:

"So they left that goodly and pleasant city of Leyden, which had been their resting-place for above eleven years; but they knew that they were pilgrims and strangers here below, and looked not much on these things, but lifted up their eyes to Heaven, their dearest country, where God hath prepared for them a city (Heb. xi. 16), and therein quieted their spirits. When they came to Delfs-Haven they found the ship..."

Tocqueville, who visited the United States between 1835 and 1840, tells us: "It is impossible to read this opening paragraph without an involuntary feeling of religious awe; it breathes the very savour of Gospel antiquity. The sincerity of the author heightens his power of language. The band which to his eyes was a mere party of adventurers gone forth to seek their fortune beyond seas, appears to the reader as the germ of a great nation wafted by Providence to a predestined shore."

Those very first colonizers of New England were not only the result of a selection carried out by the most fanatical Calvinists of the English middle class, but also by English of every walk of life who had direct experience in the revolutionary, political struggle which (without known, historical precedents) was being waged in England during that century.

From the beginning, the foundation of the cities of New England would follow this model: a specific, *separate*, religious congregation would acquire from the native population by means of a formalized, written document a square of land six miles on each side. The lands were distributed equally *among the brothers* whose customs were of proven sanctity while common properties were reserved for use in public governance. They continued then to institutionalize a genuine, *municipal democracy*, i.e., the voting in the Assembly on any public matter; the election to yearly, governmental offices and to *ad hoc* jury duty; the assessment of taxes; the

³³ All following quotes from: Alexis de Tocqueville (2006: vol. I, cap. 2, part i).

spending policies; the selection of armed officers; the obligatory education of children; etc.³⁴

When demographic growth or immigration demanded it, or theological quarrels promoted it, a new congregation, a new *swarm*, founded a new colony *toward the West* replicating (with greater perfection) the entire process.

In our opinion, it is highly important to our present thesis to understand, to accept and to give to the *following concept* all the enormous (decisive) weight that it merits: the fact that in those English colonial societies as well as in the North American societies which branched out from them, *there were never peasants*; there was never present nor put into practice a feudal sociability, that sociability of nobility and servants which had developed for centuries in all the other western societies (including in England, although badly, due to the impact of the Norman Conquest). This concept is important, I maintain, not only in regard to our current consideration of the formative years of the English, colonial societies, but also to the entire understanding of this work, in each and all of its sociological and historiographical aspects. It is *that singularity*, that uniqueness of the North American societies for not having had a feudal past, a unique and exclusive structural trait, which justifies that among the societies of the Western World it is the North American societies alone which merit the designation of *modern*. Because, while any of the other societies on the planet can become modernized, as in fact they are modernizing, *only those of the United States are genuinely modern* due to having been so from their very beginning, from their very foundation.

It is not we who state this, but rather the Catholic-aristocratic insights of Alexis de Tocqueville who from the moment of his arrival easily perceived that so particular, North American *exception*:

"The Americans never use the word "peasant," because they have no idea of the peculiar class which that term denotes; the ignorance of more remote ages, the simplicity of rural life, and the rusticity of the villager have not been preserved amongst them; and they are alike unacquainted with the virtues, the vices, the coarse habits, and the simple graces of an early stage of civilization. At the extreme borders of the Confederate States, upon the confines of society and of the

³⁴ "But it is by the attention it pays to Public Education that the original character of American civilization is at once placed in the clearest light:

'It being,' says the law, 'one chief project of Satan to keep men from the knowledge of the Scripture by persuading from the use of tongues, to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers, in church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors. . . .'

Here follow clauses establishing schools in every township, and obliging the inhabitants, under pain of heavy fines, to support them. Schools of a superior kind were founded in the same manner in the more populous districts. The municipal authorities were bound to enforce the sending of children to school by their parents; they were empowered to inflict fines upon all who refused compliance; and in case of continued resistance society assumed the place of the parent, took possession of the child, and deprived the father of those natural rights which he used to so bad a purpose. The reader will undoubtedly have remarked the preamble of these enactments: in America religion is the road to knowledge, and the observance of the divine laws leads man to civil freedom." Alexis de Tocqueville (2006: vol. I, cap. 2, part i)

wilderness, a population of bold adventurers have taken up their abode, who pierce the solitudes of the American woods, and seek a country there, in order to escape that poverty which awaited them in their native provinces. As soon as the pioneer arrives upon the spot which is to serve him for a retreat, he fells a few trees and builds a loghouse. Nothing can offer a more miserable aspect than these isolated dwellings. The traveller who approaches one of them towards nightfall, sees the flicker of the hearth-flame through the chinks in the walls; and at night, if the wind rises, he hears the roof of boughs shake to and fro in the midst of the great forest trees. Who would not suppose that this poor hut is the asylum of rudeness and ignorance? Yet no sort of comparison can be drawn between the pioneer and the dwelling which shelters him. Everything about him is primitive and unformed, but he is himself the result of the labor and the experience of eighteen centuries. He wears the dress, and he speaks the language of cities; he is acquainted with the past, curious of the future, and ready for argument upon the present; he is, in short, a highly civilized being, who consents, for a time, to inhabit the backwoods, and who penetrates into the wilds of the New World with the Bible, an axe, and a file of newspapers." Tocqueville (2006: vol. I, cap. 17, part iii)

Naturally, that does not mean to say that there was no agriculture, but rather that (due to evolving means of production of the 17th century) agriculture necessarily became the most common activity among the English colonies. Nevertheless, from the beginning their agriculture was a *commercialized*, mercantile agriculture oriented toward production for sale and based on the contracting of salaried, manual labor (indentured servants) with the land subject from the very beginning to purchase and sale and very soon to urban speculation, etc.³⁵

This explains many things; it has profound and extensive consequences for any present or future sociological study of those North American societies. However, here we are going to mention only three of them, *all interwoven with one another*, and very directly related to our argument. *Firstly*, an overwhelming prosperity and economic bonanza (previously unknown in human history) accompanied and continues to accompany the development of the English colonies and the North American societies from their very foundation until our time.³⁶

Secondly, the Americans were free citizens – we mean ‘free’ in the strict sense of the freedoms of a capitalist sociability, i.e., citizens governed by Assemblies which they themselves elected. I stress that they were uniquely so from the very beginning of their societies. Neither were the colonial governors (named by the King of England) ever capable of impeding the practically plenipotentiary functioning of

³⁵ "It will be found that English political economy and English popular notions are very deeply and extensively pervaded by the assumption that all property has been acquired through an original transaction of purchase. This strange and unique system of highly individual, impartible, property was unknown in the world before the twelfth century. For mysterious reasons it emerged in England alone. The consequences were immense: From very early times landed property changed hands by purchase and sale more frequently in England than elsewhere. Furthermore 'we are indebted to the peculiarly absolute English form of ownership for such an achievement as the cultivation of the soil of North America.'"

Sir Henry Main (1883), as cited by Macfarlane (1978: 187-8).

³⁶ See Potter (1954)

said Colonial Assemblies -- on the contrary, the former had to draw on the latter if they wanted to obtain any effective result with their day-to-day governance; nor could the attempt to limit participation in the Assemblies to the Saints or *True Believers*³⁷ endure beyond the third generation of Puritans without risking the loss of political control of the colonies which they had founded with such great sacrifice -- a political control which was incessantly threatened by the unbridled incorporation of more and more non-Puritan English, Scottish, and Irish as well as by immigrants from all other European countries.

"The most dramatic adjustment the Puritans made in the New World was the adoption in 1662 of the Half-Way Covenant by the Massachusetts Synod, confirming an agreement made by the Ministerial Association in 1657. The Covenant enabled members of the church, after professing a godly life, to have their children baptized, and thus associated with the church. The importance of this concession can only be comprehended if seen against the backdrop of Puritan theology. A proved conversion experience or demonstrated regeneracy entitled a person to membership in the church covenant. Children of church members could be baptized, for they were assumed to be somewhat within the covenant, but baptism did not entitle the new generation of Puritans to full membership unless they, too, enjoyed a conversion experience. Therefore, the question arose, Should the children of these baptized members, in turn, be baptized? Under the terms of the Half-Way Covenant, baptism of these children (third-generation New World Puritans) was permitted, giving them partial membership in the church although they could not receive all the sacraments. This step signified that the Puritan Church, henceforth, would not be composed exclusively of the visible saints, that is, those men and women who, because of a demonstrated conversion experience, has presumably entered into the covenant of grace and thus were the elect, the saved." Ver Steeg (1964: 85).

All new colonists took for granted the need to accept the double, concomitant, model of New England, i.e., private enterprise and government by representative assemblies; therefore, they proceeded to replicate new colonies (more and more perfected) in the direction of the Frontier.

The willingness to accept this new model -- the struggle for which had previously cost so much bloodshed in England -- came quite naturally to the colonists who considered it to be *the starting point*.

Thirdly, it is that "non-mixed", *uniquely* capitalistic sociability, which above all explains (together with some deeply-rooted, historical characteristics of English culture) the distinctive, quintessential trait of the English colonial societies and future, North American estates, namely: its tireless predation and *trespassing* beyond *all* borders.

Let's leave until later the sociological judgment which that Frontier deserves, in our point of view, that *Norman wound in the Anglo heart* (whose profound historical and cultural roots we have only just begun to glimpse in this paper). Let's return for

³⁷ See Hoffer (2002)

the moment to that which occupies our attention now, recognizing frankly (as did the colonists themselves) that in dealing with the westward settlement of that time and with the defense and expansion of the Frontier, the colonists depended totally upon the will and the power of the British Crown. Since only the latter was capable of facing the calculated, military presence of the French who attempted to unite Quebec with New Orleans in a great, land arc of *Continental* dimension, and in so doing in the middle of the 18th century slowed the frenetic, English colonization which was feverously exploring the enormous, fertile valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. It is true that these French settlements were weak in the civil sense; however, they had been strategically founded in order to militarily encircle the British Colonies, especially New England and New York -- the latter through alliance with the powerful Iroquois. However, during their successive confrontations to gain supremacy in Europe throughout the 18th century, France as well Great Britain had come to realize that control of the Center of the North American Continent was not a minor asset, but rather one which could perhaps tip the scale in their favor. So, between 1755 and 1763 there takes place, under the watchful and experienced eyes of the settlers, that which the English call "The Great War for Empire", which is ultimately decided by the taking of Quebec by a fanatical, 33-year old, English officer, James Wolfe, who did not live to retell the story. Following the fall of Montreal in the autumn of 1760, Great Britain dominated the center of the North American continent, and in so doing became the greatest world power.

Electorate ad hoc

Naturally, in the eyes of the colonists, the elimination of the French threat to the West (and along with it, the Iroquois menace) was changing everything. In 1754, before "The Great War for Empire", Franklin had already proposed a "Plan of Union" during a meeting of Colonial representatives in Albany; however, the response was indifferent, if not hostile (Ver Steeg, 1964: 300). Now, after the French defeat, there lay to the West an entire Continent waiting for those who would be bold enough to envision it, for those audacious enough to "think continentally" as Hamilton would say, . . . and of conquering it for themselves (by wrestling it away from London).

As Cromwell had already shown, the decisive matter here was to provoke a declaration of war by Great Britain, something not difficult to achieve from the Anglo-Norman, political culture, since one had only to challenge the legitimacy of the Colonial Assemblies (which were elected by the colonists) with the legitimacy of the House of Commons (that political body which had ruled the British Empire *de facto* since the Restoration of 1660 and in which the colonists were not represented). On the other hand, that political body, the House of Commons was not at all accustomed to being spoken to on an equal-to-equal basis. It was a prideful, political body which held itself to be not only the tacit, ultimate expression of political morality, but also the professed "part of the maximum, unlimited power of the nation". Consequently, when a significant segment of the colonists refused -- "directly and passionately" -- to pay some commercial taxes in 1765, the British threatened to close Boston Harbor.

But then, in one of the many revolutionary texts and pamphlets that were circulating widely, a colonist came to ask himself:

“(...) when an aspiring member of the House of Commons confidently declares that he has a power to bind our trade, and restrain our manufactures, I should be glad to know whether he derived this power from the honest freemen his constituents... From his constituents he could receive no more power than they *naturally possessed*.”³⁸

The so-called Continental Congress – a gathering of representatives from the Colonial Assemblies – was convened in Philadelphia on the 5th of September of 1774. The convention denounced the taxes approved by London (*no taxation without representation*) as well as the presence (without consent) of British troops in the colonies. That which had become most habitual (and even welcome) was now perceived as a cause for grievance. Patrick Henry, George Washington, John and Samuel Adams, John Jay, John Dickenson, all names destined to become world famous, were among the plaintive signatories. Following the outbreak of armed conflict on April 15th of 1775, the Second Continental Congress convened in Pennsylvania in May with the additional members of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, et. al., in order to draft the very brief and very celebrated Unanimous Declaration of Independence of the United States of America (proclaimed on July 4, 1776), which with the passage of time would become the unavoidable basis for *The New Narrative* of all modern politics:

“When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to separation.--We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure theses rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them to under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—

³⁸ William Hicks, as quoted [with italics] by Morgan (1988: 242)

Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States."

There follows not only a long list of grievances caused in America by the British and their *tyrannical* King, but also a bitter and heartfelt complaint directed toward "our brothers" (the British people) because "they also have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity", in order to conclude:

"We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to Levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.—And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honour."³⁹

(Well, let's leave this for another moment – for a more sociological moment – for the thoughtful commentary which might be worthy of a so famous and sacred text, i.e., the touchstone against which the rest of the world's democracies are measured. For the present, let's return to the penultimate of our risky historiographical *watercolors*).

Even for the powerful Great Britain of 1775, the waging and the winning of a war 3,000 miles away was no easy feat and much less so when that war was evolving deep inside the Continent far from the coasts. In addition to the overwhelming hostility felt by the colonists toward the Redcoats, France very soon came to the support of the newly-proclaimed nation (especially in the naval war) as did Spain soon thereafter. So it was that General Washington, at the head of The Continental Army -- along with men of action like Arnold, Green and Morgan, at the head of their Militias which enjoyed a perfect knowledge of the terrain -- finally turned back the British armies. According to the Peace of Paris, signed on September 3rd, 1783, London acknowledged the independence of the United States with its western boundary set at the Mississippi River.

However, deprived of the Royal patronage from this point on, the former 13 colonies, which were now united in a weak confederacy, faced an uncertain and turbulent, post-war epoch. There had been great insistence on the part of John Adams and others that an Assembly should: 1. be a small *portrait* of the society in which it legislates, 2. be made up of representatives who "ought to think, feel, reason and act" like the people whom they represent, and 3. be composed of

³⁹ Encyclopaedia Britannica On-line. Article: Declaration of Independence

representatives "from the neighborhood" (Morgan, 2006, 255). In fact, is this exactly what the colonists had done during the years of the revolution and war. They voted; they elected the most common men to seats in their assemblies -not men who spoke the language of the lawyers, the merchants and great landholders, but rather men very similar to themselves who knew how to manage a small farm or to keep the tax collectors at arm's length. Those men turned out to be *overly* representative, as evidenced by the following:

"They passed laws violating the treaty with Great Britain, delaying or scaling down the payment of public and private debts, issuing paper money as legal tender, refusing to pay their states' quotas of national expenses, raising their own salaries and lowering those of other government officers." (Morgan, 1988: 252-3)

Naturally, the giant precursors to the Revolution, Mason, Stuart, Jefferson, the Adams, etc., were sincerely committed to republican values and to the new nation whose manifest destiny (in their eyes) was to authentically embody those values, "so that their example would spread through all humanity". Those victorious giants of the war, I maintain, were partisans to a grand, enchanting rhetoric which leads man's soul away from the First Person Singular (I) toward the First Person Plural (WE) in order to elevate the soul to that magical *locus* where there reside equal rights, the just division of social goods, the elimination of all abuses, and God knows whatever other dreams and aspirations. By the 1780's, those giants, those Heads of the Revolution, were disappointed and anguished by the growing impotence of the Congress to curb the madness and abuses of power of those State Assemblies (dominated by *all-too-common* men) and they grew accustomed to correspond with one another complaining as did the George Mason of Virginia in a letter to a friend:

"(...) Frequent Interferences with private Property and Contracts, retrospective Laws destructive of all public Faith, as well as Confidence between Man and Man, and flagrant Violations of the Constitution must disgust the best and wisest part of the Community, occasion a great Depravity of Manners, bring the Legislature into Contempt, and finally produce Anarchy and public Convulsion." (Morgan, 1988: 253)

Yes, those Provincial Assemblies, lacking an authority *external to themselves*, did not serve to unify citizen action, at least not to the degree demanded by the obvious potential of the New Nation. At least this was the thought of those leaders of the Revolution, those prestigious and powerful men who had guided the Revolution and brought it to a safe harbor. Even though idealists, these North American leaders were first and foremost practical men -Englishmen transplanted to the wilderness of the New World- and such, resolute men who asked themselves only one question: What is to be done? What is to be done so as not to lose in peace all that which had been won in war?

At the Convention gathered in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787 for the purpose of drafting a Constitution or Supreme Law to govern all Americans, Madison led others in proposing that the right of a citizen to vote for his representatives to a State Assembly did not impede his right to vote for representatives to *another*

Assembly, the Federal Assembly, which could be perfectly created on an *ad hoc* basis – in impeccable, democratic procedure.

In summary, this meant to *superimpose* upon the electorate of each individual State the combined electorate of all the states, i.e., the Federal electorate. Thus, the National Assembly would limit the power of each individual State Assembly.

In this way, the 55 delegates of the State Legislatures convened in Philadelphia reached a Great Compromise based on a proposal from the State of Connecticut. Henceforth, each and every citizen of the North American states would participate in unison (*so forming a novel and unique electorate*) for the election of two chambers: 1. The House of Representatives, in which each state would have a variable number of seats based on the size of its free population (to which there would be added also a 3/5 vote for each resident slave), and 2. The Senate, in which each state would have two representatives (Senators) without regard to the size of the state's population.

Once this had been made clear, the text could move forward to define the reciprocal relationships between and among the Legislature (Governance), the President (Executive) and the Judicial (Supreme Court) powers: 1. The enumeration and protection of the powers of the Nation (Federal powers) in relation to each State's reserved powers; 2. The ratification afterwards (in 1791) of the unalienable, *de facto* rights enjoyed by the American citizenry from the beginning, 3. The definition of the procedures for amending the Constitution itself, and 4. The endorsement (with a sage eye toward innumerable, future conflicts) of Judicial Power to review the constitutionality of Federal and State laws etc. Finally, in Article VI the Constitution refers to itself as "the supreme Law of the Land; . . . any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding."

It is thus in the summer of 1787, that those 55 delegates of the representative Assemblies of the States granted decisive powers to a new, previously unthought-of and nonexistent electorate, which they themselves *created by defining it* with able and intentional, juristic rigor. However, that electorate existed. It was nothing but the result of the double substrate common to the English colonists, the double substrate which allowed these former colonists to be considered now a North American electorate: on one hand, all were children of the same political culture, with Anglo-Norman roots (including the pro-slavery southerners), while on the other hand, all were also individuals invested with the same civil, capitalistic sociability which was widely disseminated through even the farthest reaches of the most solitary wilderness. (Tocqueville, 2006).

That such a common and distinctive North American citizenship did in effect exist is confirmed by the fact that within a year, in June of 1788, the State Assemblies had already ratified the Supreme Law which the Constitutional Convention had sent them; at the end of that same year, duly called elections were massively supported and launched the first constitutional government of the United States of North America. The Colossus was set in motion.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ And, what a grand circle! – better said, *What a great Moebius Band!* . . . Relentlessly on the move! . . . In any case, what a prodigious pilgrimage was carried forward by that unique, vigorous Anglo-

Not so wild wild West

One of the most primordial and important things (if not the most) which the Constitution resolved was to legally define *the procedure for the formation of new states to the West*, avoiding that the proud, original states of the East might fight among themselves over the spoils of war (of the war recently concluded with England).

In contradiction to its own narration and to its own, individualistic epic which the North Americans are so pleased to tell one another, the efficient, westward progress was possible only thanks to that most sophisticated, most advanced, and genuinely-American, political-administrative contrivance: the government functions simultaneously on three levels, by means of local, state and federal elections.

I maintain that the rapid, incessant, westward replication of the *founding* capitalistic mercantilism throughout every corner of North America was accomplished, administered and greatly assisted by the loyalty toward the Assemblies which the citizens themselves elected:

“Under the belief that all men going into vacant lands have the right to shape their own political institutions, the riflemen of western Virginia, western Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Tennessee, during the Revolution, protested against the rule of governments east of the mountains, and asserted with manly independence their right to self-government. But it is significant that in making this assertion, they at the same time petitioned congress to admit them to the sisterhood of States. Even when leaders like Wilkinson were attempting to induce Kentucky to act as an independent nation, the national spirit of the people as a whole led them to delay until at last they found themselves a State of the new Union. This recognition of the paramount authority of congress and this demand for self-government under that authority, constitute the foundations of the federal territory system, as expressed in congressional resolutions, worked out tentatively in Jefferson’s Ordinance of 1784, and finally shaped in the Ordinance of 1787.” Turner (1958: 169)

In regard to *the collective conscience* of the citizens of the North American frontier, I maintain that the European, feudal sociabilities (not to mention native, tribal

Norman, political culture for 700 years, starting with the Norman Conquest by William in 1066 until the United States’ Constitution in 1787. Well, it has been capable of transforming a purely feudal, medieval narrative (a narrative which found in God its ultimate source of Sovereignty and whose nearest depository was the Catholic Church, which in turn delegated sovereignty to the King) into the modern narrative of the citizenry in which, at least nominally, God continued to be considered the ultimate source of Sovereignty; however, the distinguishing point now is that this modern narrative considers said Sovereignty to be reliably deposited ‘in the People’, who delegate some of their powers to an Assembly which they themselves elect.

Since it is our own, this contemporaneous narrative of the National Sovereignty seems more credible to us.

Nevertheless, human events follow their tenacious course through History; this narrative need not be the final, political fiction which we humans might invent (even though it will be the last one with which we, the living, will be acquainted). Perhaps, we *may have* to return to all of this at the very end of this work.

sociabilities nor *reconstituted* African sociabilities) never inspired anything but indifference, if not contempt:

“The stubborn American environment is there with its imperious summons to accept its conditions; the inherited ways of doing things are also there; and yet, in spite of environment, and in spite of custom, each frontier did indeed furnish a new field of opportunity, a gate of escape from the bondage of the past; and freshness, and confidence, and scorn of older society, impatience of its restraints and its ideas, and indifference to its lessons, have accompanied the frontier.” Turner (1958: 38).

It's not that the Americans have only 400 years of history, as it is customarily said, but rather that for 400 years *they have been freeing themselves from History*, which is a very different thing. Besides, speaking sociologically, that Conquest of the West is not simply a story of the past, but rather one which continues as energetically nowadays as ever. As once the abundant agricultural production enabled to immigrants to overflow the frontier and move the national border to the Pacific, now the great North American multinationals relentlessly seek and tirelessly manage to move towards the center of the global markets by virtue of their incessant invention of pioneering technologies.

“Moreover, it is understandable that the reaction of punishment is not in every case uniform, since the emotions that determine it are not always the same. In fact they vary in intensity according to the strength of the feeling that had suffered injury, as well as according to the gravity of the offense sustained. A strong state of feeling reacts more than does a weak one, and two states of equal intensity react unequally according to the degree to which they have been violently attacked. Such variations must necessarily occur, and are useful, moreover, for it is important that the strength invoked should be proportionate to the extent of the danger. If too weak, it would be insufficient; if too violent, it would represent a useless dissipation of energy. Since the gravity of the criminal act varies according to the same factors, the proportionality everywhere observed between crime and punishment is therefore established with a kind of mechanical spontaneity, without any necessity to make elaborate computations in order to calculate it. What brings about a gradation in crimes is also what brings about a gradation in punishments; consequently the two measures cannot fail to correspond, and such correspondence, since it is necessary, is at the same time constantly useful.”

Emile Durkheim (1997): *The Division of Labor in Society*

IV. INDIVIDUALISM

1. Let's return to Sociology, specifically to the analysis of that practical individuation which we have already said (vid. supra II) affects all of us as we strive day after day in the market and in its administration. The theoretical objective now is to understand how that *de facto* individuation comes to be portrayed as a moral value and thus to be transformed into an exalted individualism, i.e., into the most celebrated principle of our social organization.

To that end, here we must make explicit the concept of social structure which for years we have been developing and leave the readers to judge for themselves to what degree said concept is plausible. Of the whole set of social relationships that are endemic to the sociability of our middle classes in the Western countries, there exist only three types of relationships within said sociability that touch and embrace each and every member of the middle classes -- be he or she willing or unwilling. Those three social relationships which (I maintain) oblige universal observance are the following: In first place, the private, capitalistic enterprise, in which we work with businesses interwoven one with another in always expanding markets (^); In second place, a diversity of relationships pertaining to sex and child rearing, which we tend to establish more and more 'privately' (externally to our educational and professional organizations) and which have come to be known as the new families; and, in third place, the State institution, the Civil Service, whose bureaucracies administer many areas of our social life such as education, judiciary, legislation, taxation, etc.

Without delving into overly deep theories, let's say that these three types of social relationships compose a Social Structure, i.e., a framework of vested interests reciprocally interwoven and eventually consolidated and even legislated -- interests and privileges upheld and defended by both individuals and institutions therein invested. It might be useful to outline this set of social relations as follows:

Civil Services

new families/capitalist enterprises^

The dynamics among these three types of social relationships are diverse; we will point out only a few that could be indispensable to our reasoning. For the moment, it suffices to say that the impressive individuation (that universal, obligatory, life-long, professional curricula) consubstantial with the advance of capitalism makes possible (in the author's opinion) the advanced liberation of our family relationships. The adults, who establish these relationships guided exclusively by their personal, sentimental inclinations, freely determine the character and longevity of said relationships.

In addition, we should say that only private capitalism, i.e. "free" capitalism, has been historically capable of generating sufficient taxes to sustain *the payrolls* of (literally) millions of civil servants, who in return are *objectively* dedicated to replicate and expand the capitalist sociabilities and to diminish (to the degree possible) the social problems presented by them.

In this diagram, the public agencies appear to be substantially isolated from enterprises and families which, conversely, appear to be more closely united. In a

certain way these public agencies logically presuppose the existence of families (since the civil servants are adults) and similarly presuppose the existence of private enterprise (since the public agencies are financed by taxes); nevertheless, the consolidation of families and private enterprise would have been difficult without a supportive, public administration, *and so forth*.⁴¹

One might also wonder now if there is any endemic, *structural* feature in the expansion of capitalism which favors that the political elite, who direct public servants should be elected by the citizens themselves; or if, on the contrary, that democratization of the heads of the public services is simply a *historical contingency*, a result of the Allied victory in the Second World War.

Perhaps the profound logic of assembly representation and that of capitalistic individuation are reciprocally reinforced through their own maturation, as English history seems too vividly illustrate; or, it perhaps may be that mass societies created by capitalism initially need a bureaucratic State (as Weber argued), a State which will become over time more democratic; or, it simply happens that the citizen taxpayer wants to supervise the collection and spending of the taxes which he has paid. Yet, the question will always remain as to whether such political liberties are nothing other than the fateful and certainly fortunate outcome of History, a History that would be very different if, for example, the Nazis had won the Second World War...

However, perhaps the question asked in this way does not help, and may even confuse, since it would not be the first time, nor necessarily the last, in the evolution of human societies in which a contingent, historical event ends up becoming a structural feature of the social life of those who have experienced it, and even to a greater degree, to their descendants. Furthermore, it is evident that not one of us who today enjoys democratic liberties could even imagine living without them... (In spite of our extensive criticism in this paper of the *bourgeois* liberties, God bless them until we find better options!)

Well OK, it may be that democratic formality adapts better to capitalist expansion, or that other nations had *to replicate it* as the only method of facing the efficient, expansionist politics of England and North America, or because these vibrant nations imposed civil liberties on the countries defeated in World War II, or as a consequence of these causes independently or jointly. The case is that in Western Europe we have all ended up developing an advanced capitalism and, at the same time, democratic political systems, i.e., systems in which high offices of the local and national bureaucracies are occupied by professional, *career* politicians ultimately nominated and approved by assemblies which we, the citizens, elect...

But, how is it that those assemblies have effectively managed to secure for themselves their indisputable sovereignty within our societies? By virtue of what method or formal procedure have they raised themselves to that position of power? And most importantly, what New Narrative has resulted from such a formal procedure? Also, for the purpose of our analysis, to what extent is this New Narrative credible?

⁴¹ The interested reader can see Allones (1999).

2. Of course, during different historical periods of different societies, the social conditions will influence the character of the struggle of those active segments of the citizenry which seek to guarantee that the power of the State will reside in an Assembly which they elect. However, in our opinion, the foremost and most indispensable factor under those various conditions is the strength, centrality and maturity of the citizens' sociability itself, a sociability which *needs and is able* to take a *historic* leap in the expansion of its dominion. Then individuals who belong to all segments of the middle class – but especially civil servants, students, lawyers, journalists, union leaders and an occasional entrepreneur, etc., -- take advantage of the liberties of association, opinion, and publication (liberties which are de facto inherent to their way of life) with the objective of proliferating every type of organized conspiracy against the current holders of power, whom they accuse (not without reason) either of taking control of the State by means of an act of force or of sullyng the traditions, dignity and charm of the nation.

The leaders in control react logically by increasing the level of repression on such conspiratorial organizations (those whom they declare to be either clandestine or outside the law), which produces in their members a feeling of personal empowerment and moral exaltation, a *religious* sensation based on Great Words such as Equality, Freedom, People, Nation, Human Rights, or Democracy... Words which –precisely because they signify nothing in particular- can *signify anything*, since they are perfect abstractions empty of all content due to the fact that they refer to nothing but to Themselves. Therefore, they can be *stuffed* eventually with the wandering daydreams preferred by each individual who hears them for the first time and who from that point forward repeats them over and over as litany, observing the effect of Magical Brotherhood which these key Words produce (to whatever degree) in others.

Finally, the number of such verbose activists continues to reach (by means of decades of persecutions, imprisonments, expropriations and deaths) a sufficient critical mass so as to drag a substantial part of the citizenry into the political debate, while the majority of us still remain cautiously indifferent to politics as we attend to our own business. For their part, the current State holders end up recognizing, reluctantly, their historical obsolescence and begin to contemplate the possible, political advantages that could result from calling for free elections to a Constitutional Assembly -- elections in which incumbents will compete with newly-legalized, *ad hoc* activists who aspire to gain office...

Once these first elections have been convened, the political organizations which have remained clandestine until this time become legitimate, *political parties* which openly compete to gain for themselves the greatest, possible number of votes, with which they will assure proportional representation in the Assembly which will write the Constitution.

What is clear to us, we sociologists, is the importance of the social empowerment led decade after decade by the middle class – a middle class *dignified* by its capitalist expansion and through which it has reached its current economic and

social prestige and prominence. The gravity and social centrality which the middle class has earned day by day in the market, I maintain, has been the key factor which finally has *objectively* forced the convocation of such a Constitutional Assembly. Therefore, the resultant function of that Constitutional Assembly -- in spite of the exalted daydreams of the clandestine activists -- will be to armor the until-then *de facto*, customary sociability of said citizenry with the full weight of the law and the support of the courts.

As a result of this process to democratize the exercise of sovereignty, those political parties (which for decades had sacrificed and whose leaders had exposed themselves to great personal risk and suffered hardships) were perceived by the voters to be *extremists*. Ultimately, these perceptions benefitted the more conservative parties (which struggled less to advance the democratic process) and probably hindered the newly legitimized parties from attaining better election results

On their arrival, these moderate results make a great impression on the few parties who have effectively secured seats in the Assembly and motivate them to agree and to write a new set of Game Rules, the Constitutional Law, which they themselves (or other similar parties) must follow in the future in order to reach the pinnacle of powerful, public offices.⁴²

All of these political parties pride themselves on being superior to the former holders of the power of the State, especially because they agree that the New Law must guarantee that only the electoral results will determine the proportional representation in the Assembly and that *ultimately* that Assembly in turn will wield power --the power to make appointments to the highest levels of governmental offices until the next elections are held.

Accordingly, this foundational Law of *democratic* sovereignty -- democratic because it guarantees that the citizenry will be called periodically to elections -- ascribes the powers and limitations of the elected Legislature and also defines the role of the Executive as well as the composition of the upper and lower Courts, which provide the appropriate legal venue in which any citizen or institution can present future grievances or lawsuits. Consequently the powers of these three Institutions -- the Legislature, the Executive, and the Courts -- remain settled and assured *by one and the same Constitutional Law*, with their reciprocal relationships henceforth armor-clad.

When facing other laws in force, that Constitution will come to be considered the Supreme Law, the decisive law, and it will stringently prescribe the electoral procedures required for amendment or modification.

The Constitution having been drafted, this first Assembly was dissolved -- but not before convoking a public Referendum to electorally decide the Constitution's approval or rejection. In case of approval, there would follow an election of a new

⁴² In the case of the so-called Spanish political transition, and for a strongly sociological point of view, see the book of Carlos Moya (1984). El PAÍS, among other Spanish newspapers, cleverly silenced this indispensable book at the time of its publishing.

Assembly, which (as successive ones) would act subject to the powers and limitations granted by the new Constitution in force.

3. So this New Narrative, which is our contemporary narrative, reads as so: Sovereignty resides in the citizenry, but in as much as the latter (given its number) cannot govern in person, it has delegated daily exercise of sovereignty to successive Assemblies, which the citizenry itself elects every 4 years.

Now, in light of our analysis we must ask ourselves, "What is believable and what is unbelievable in this Narrative?"

Obviously, every four years the electorate -- those citizens duly registered to vote -- exercises effective power over the programs and doctrines of the Parties. In order to accomplish their objectives --to accede to the greatest number of possible positions, and to gain maximum control of State administrations-- these parties must adapt to prevalent, majority trends (both emotional and intellectual) of the voters in an implicitly continuous way rather than just during explicitly electoral periods so as to avoid the worst possible outcome, e.g., the loss of offices currently held. The fear of displeasing the voters of whatever persuasion is a powerful, *centripetal* force which will relentlessly refine the platforms of all parties which give over to the inflexible wish of the middle class to expand its sociability (and in the very first place, of course, the expansion of capitalism itself and of the GDP, which is the fountain of said sociability). Only in this way have such parties managed to become the truly representative parties of the masses, generating think-tanks of bureaucrats and staffers who specialize in electoral calculations and who instinctively reject any program or content they deem to be politically incorrect.

So, when we are told that Sovereignty resides in the citizenry, as we have argued to this point, we ultimately consider this to be true. *In the long run*, the wishes of voters strictly discipline the pronouncements and the policies of the politicians who govern them.

Nevertheless, this previous and perhaps overly drastic affirmation requires some qualification because, while politicians need the voters, it is also true that voters need the politicians (since it is physically impossible for millions of citizens, or possibly even tens or hundreds of millions of citizens, to personally carry out the governance of the State). As a result of this reality, there opens a leeway for decision-making on the part of political parties, which can be tentatively and cautiously explored for eventual, electoral enhancement. This opening provides a relative but certain space for the formulation of public policies which affect some fractures within the social life of the middle class -within the parameters of the well-understood degree to which those public policies do not jeopardize the main goal, i.e., the social expansion of said class.

Then, due to sentimental affinity, electoral calculation or a simultaneous combination of both, it comes to pass that some parties insist more upon maintaining the traditional, family values precisely because other parties insist upon legalizing new variations for the modern family; while some will place much emphasis on the privatization of some heretofore government functions, others will

propose the expansion of the so-called social programs such as those of the Welfare State; and finally, there will be special interests who fan the flames of cultural or linguistic differences among segments of the electorate in order to reserve for themselves access to public office etc. etc.

Also, the so-called *third ways* have been successful recently: these are do-good politicians who boast of wanting to change the social structure to the extent possible (knowing perfectly well that a majority of us have no real wish to do so). Because of this, these politicians like to pretend that they truly would carry out such a change -- as though it were in the hands of the political elite to change our economic model, for instance!

In the end, all is fair in the warfare among parties, provided that it makes possible - without threat to our effective sovereignty - the continuous, electoral outcomes with which we guarantee the expansion of the capitalism upon which we base our society.

For this reason, that centripetal, structural limitation (namely, the calculated trend toward the center of the Bell curve where the political sensitivities of the majority tend to be found) is the very same force which prevents them from going too far when they attempt to differentiate themselves one from the other and which has transformed these parties into true Parties of the masses... As a consequence, the *centrifugal* fights among the professional politicians increasingly become nothing more than inter-party disputes which do not speak to the immense majority of us, who view them with indifferent boredom verging on disgust due to their trivial and nearly ridiculous nature which could be of interest only to these politicians themselves.

Of course, the clear exception to our indifference would manifest itself the moment when the politicians, swept up in the delirium of their own rhetoric, were about to touch upon a matter of substance which could possibly, for example, affect our economic growth. In this case, we would make such politicians pay dearly for taking into their own hands matters which for a long time we have felt to be untouchable.

We complain about the horrible battles that rage among the politicians, but it is we who have made them the horrible figures that they are . . . *as horrible as are we ourselves!*

4. From the new parliaments and especially from the oldest, emblematic parliament (Westminster Hall), from the party doctrines and the preambles of law, and from the images and sounds of the powerful (and partisan) media there is broadcast to us over and over again (with suspicious insistence, arrogant pride and certainty) the repeated and hackneyed, new dogma which proclaims that we live in: "a society of free Individuals", "a free civilization", "a free society", and "a free and truly individualistic system". According to this new dogma, we live in a society

that is based on the “free collaboration of individuals” in which “every man's will shall be as unfettered as possible”.⁴³

Unlike those who work in private enterprise and who are paid according to their productivity, civil servants, politicians, professors and intellectuals, for example, are paid according to their rank in their particular organizations; these entities occupy different positions within the social structure, as diagrammed previously and presented again here:

Civil Services

new families/capitalist enterprises⁴⁴

From the vantage point of our privileged structural position as civil servants and with an eye toward the conspicuous consumption (Veblen, 1899) that is made possible by the incessantly dynamic expansion of the private purchase and sale of merchandise, we ask ourselves the question: “What is it exactly that we see?”

Marx had already asked himself a similar question and subsequently left us his famous written response:

“This sphere that we are deserting [commodity exchange], within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour-power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to, is but the form in which they give legal

⁴³ All the cited quotations have been taken from the excellent article of F.A. Hayek, *Individualism: True and False*, as presented in his book, Hayek (1948: 1-32).

Hayek wrote this article in 1944 during World War II for the purpose of valiantly debating Nazism and Stalinism as well as some consequences of French rationalism, which he deems harmful. This article has been helpful for us, albeit for a different reason: In Hayek's arguments, we find a perfectly intelligent advocacy in support of both capitalism in general and English parliamentarianism in particular.

⁴⁴ This distinct *structural* role of current public officials is quite reminiscent of that of Medieval officials, the Catholic priests who, in order to better administer the patriarchy among the peasants, were *formally* prohibited from participating in that patriarchy -- in the same way that our, current public officials, in order to better administer the expanding capitalism among the citizens, are *formally* prohibited from participating therein. In similar fashion, just as the feudal, Catholic priests habitually ignored the norm of celibacy with impunity and with the acceptance of all the parishioners, our civil servants -- judges, deputies, mayors, law enforcement officials, tax collectors, military personnel, for example -- are repeatedly forgiven their self-serving abuses and betrayals of trust by a cognizant electorate *provided that such infractions cannot be legally proven*. There is nothing new under the sun: the powerful of any human society are distinguished by the impunity with which they commit the same crimes for which they prosecute others. One needs no more than to observe the massive bank embezzlement which originated on Wall Street and which is largely responsible for the current systemic crisis which originated in 2007 and for which neither I, nor anyone else, is willing to name the accused (names easily traceable in the hard drives of their computers) and to bring them to trial but rather to pardon them and to refinance them via taxes we have all paid.

expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself. The only force that brings them together and puts them in relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interests of each. Each looks to himself only, and no one troubles himself about the rest, and just because they do so, do they all, in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an all-shrewd providence, work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal and in the interest of all." (Marx, 2007: 195) [our underlined] ⁴⁵

Thus it is we, the civil servants, who are in particular more intellectualized as the result either of position or vocation, for whom Individualism has become an abstract ideal cut off and isolated from the galloping, social individuation generated in real-world competition and daily practices in factories, in industrial parks, in offices and in stores. Individualism has been elevated; now it has transcended into a new Separate-Entity, which has its own life epitomized in a symbol, a source, and a beacon which *strategically guides* my comportment in society *precisely because* everyone shares this same belief and operates accordingly. In this way, I assure that my actions are understood by all, just as I am sure to understand the actions of others. *Invoking the Great Mantra of Freedom, everyone grows silent* (Woe to him who might not do so!).⁴⁶

Nevertheless, we sociologists, we party spoilers, clearly have the responsibility to examine everything in the most objective way possible in order to determine what is true and what is false (if we really do enjoy as *much* freedom as we are told we do). We are compelled to rise and arm ourselves with the heuristic tools of our profession while keeping our feet firmly on the ground so as not to lose the common

⁴⁵ Furthermore, it is ironic that citizenship laws -- which are characteristic and exclusive to a particular, capitalist sociability -- seek to claim for themselves the title of *natural* human rights, as if human nature had been waiting for this sociability to find fulfilment, or as if it might not have flourished in other previous sociabilities as well as in present and future ones. It is typical of course, that in all social systems there must be a required naturalization of structural relationships necessary for their own reproduction (as Religions of all stripes have done and continue to do). For example, if we take the American middle class of the 1950's and project it 1,000,000 years into the past, we will encounter *The Flintstones!* ... Therein, the lifestyle of this middle class is naturalized and validated. But of course, this naturalization of our freedoms, as the only social freedoms *under nature*, shows us (once again) how narrow and mundane are the epistemological limits of our parliaments.

⁴⁶ "Being directed to the millions, the media must necessarily avoid consideration of subjects which interest only the thousands or the hundreds. This implies a danger to freedom of expression, but not the precise danger against which the guardians of our liberties are usually warning us. They fear that large publishers and advertisers, wielding autocratic power, will ruthlessly suppress minority ideas. The dynamics of the mass market, however, would seem to indicate that freedom of expression has less to fear from the control which large advertisers exercise than from the control which these advertisers permit the mass market to exercise. In the mass media we have little evidence of censorship in the sense of deliberate, planned suppression imposed by moral edict but much evidence of censorship in the sense of operative suppression of a great range of subjects -- a suppression imposed by public indifference or, more precisely, by the belief of those who control the media, that the public would be indifferent." (Potter, 1954: 184)

sense that enables us to make realistic, thoughtful judgments along the way. Particularly, in relation to the matter of the capitalist organization of production, we must ask ourselves two questions above all: 1. What *structural rules* does capitalism impose upon those who work within it? and 2. As members of a capitalistic society, are we truly free *not to work* therein?

5. To answer these questions we must understand that capitalism has all the characteristics required by Emile Durkheim to be recognized as a "social fact", especially that particular feature which most defined this concept, i.e., its repressive and coercive condition -- a mode of behavior *imposed on the individual* with or without his or her willing it. In effect, sooner or later every individual must seek his or her own way in the marketplace (or in the administration of its sociability); no one can do this for you.

Durkheim himself used to make distinctions between social facts. Firstly, he considered those social facts which produce easily perceived penal reactions that are *directly* coercive on the individual -- as occurs in the case of Law, or in the rules of a bureaucratic organization, or with the disapproval of a religious or political sects.

Secondly, Durkheim considered those other social facts which produce a no less effective constraint upon the individual while proceeding to punish him *indirectly* as a mere consequence or result of spontaneous, normative behavior on the part of the other participants:

"I am not free to speak French with my compatriots, nor to use the legal currency, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise. If I tried to escape the necessity, my attempt would fail miserably. As an industrialist nothing prevents me from working with the processes and methods of the previous century, but if I do I will most certainly ruin myself." (Durkheim, 1982: 51)

Of course, every capitalistic enterprise, if it is to survive as such, must make a profit, generate that plus-value, which according to Marxian theory is the goal, the *raison d'être*, of all entrepreneurial activity. Any profitable, private enterprise will need to follow this expression:

$\Sigma f. de w. \Leftrightarrow pl \wedge$.

This is to say that the continuity of a particular work process and consequently the continued employment of the force of work [f. of W.] carried out shift after shift by the individual workers will be possible (\Leftrightarrow) *if, and only if*, said enterprise manages to repeatedly generate an added-value destined always to be reinvested ($pl \wedge$). Such activity is an undivided, social action; it is the result of the synchronization (Σ) of each one of the employees with the rest of the employees involved therein -- employees who are therefore subject to a single, monitoring discipline, under the supervision of the legal proprietor of the business. This discipline governing the human group which conducts business can not be achieved (as in any other group

discipline) but thanks to the eventual, *systematic punishment of individuals* who fail to submit to such discipline -- termination being the preferred sanction among employers, hence the continuing facilitation of the dismissal process which entrepreneurs have been achieving in all societies as capitalism has advanced its dominance in them:

“With unemployment (...) a worker has an incentive not to shirk. For, if he is fired, an individual will not immediately obtain another job. The equilibrium unemployment rate must be sufficiently large that it pays workers to work rather than to take the risk of being caught shirking”.

“The punishment associated with being fired is *endogenous*, as it depends on the equilibrium rate of unemployment”. Shapiro and Stiglitz (1984: 433). [Our italics]⁴⁷

But as we already know (since this is the salient thrust of our paper), the force of labor is not just one more commodity because -- although it is found, bought and sold on the market like any other -- it is unlike a quart of oil, or a car, or a house, which either disappear at the moment of consumption or lose value. Unlike all the other commodities, it is the force of labor of others that offers the exclusive and transformative quality of generating new added value; this added value is greater than the corresponding cost of the force of labor.

⁴⁷ It is in the relationship between infraction (shirking) and sanction (firing), that we can perceive a method to measure capitalism mathematically, something we judged previously (vid. supra I.8) to be urgent.

Indeed, all this time we have maintained that any normative, group action (practiced by all individuals of a group) cannot exist without a concomitant, group oversight which might possibly result in an eventual punitive action (on any individual of the group). Furthermore, as we take a step forward to characterize the specific repressive action, we recognize the settled proportionality that exists between the infractions committed and the applicable sanctions, as was pointed out by Durkheim (1997: 57):

“Since the gravity of the criminal act varies according to the same factors, the proportionality everywhere observed between crime and punishment is therefore established with a kind of mechanical spontaneity, without any necessity to make elaborate computations in order to calculate it.”

(One does not need wise computations to calculate and to apply this proportionality because in reality, from the time of birth, we do nothing else in our social lives than to construct a collective conscience --whatever its content-- with the incessant participation of each and every other member of the group).

However, if we wish to rigorously apply this general hypothesis to our particular, social case study, the study of capitalism, we ought to discard the infractions dealing with personal frictions and conflicts and to restrict ourselves to infractions which have consequences in regard to profitability-- so as to focus on the *endogenous* proportionality of those infractions which result in a *lack of added value* ($t < v$) and their concomitant penalties (*profitability motivated dismissals*).

This proportionality should manifest itself in statistical regularities as the unemployment statistics become available. Therefore, from a scientific point of view there is nothing in principle that might stand in the way of someday expressing such statistical regularities through mathematically defined formulas -- rather than simply by empirical formulas.

Regarding the sociological foundations of all of this, one can see Allones Pérez (2005).

Consequently, the market systematically *selects* the reinvestment of the added value in the purchase and consumption of more and more force of labour, since only this strategy offers the individual employer the opportunity to win in the daily competition with other employers in the same industry. By virtue of his success in expelling competing enterprises from his market, the entrepreneur perceives the measure of success of his own, personal social identity.

For this reason, not only is every business subject to its own accounting which demands that it obtain a capital gain as a result of its activities, but also (as an *a priori* condition of the same accounting) the gain must be at least equal, if not superior, to that of the *average* rate of profit of the other companies competing within the same market:

[Σ f. of w. ⇔ pl. ^]^

Thus the industry standards of the market impose themselves very effectively, albeit in this very indirect way, on the accounting of each of the companies that take part therein -- since the former is in reality a *prius* or condition *sine quae non* of the latter. In this way, every one of the companies finds itself in constant, competitive danger of being absorbed by one or all of the others, should it not be able to maintain its financial profits at the *modern* level of operation as continuously required by the market.

6. Every company is accountable on two levels: first, to assure its internal, financial accountability, and second, to meet the industry standards of the marketplace. This financial exigency fiercely disciplines the consumption of the force of work (wherever and whenever necessary) consequently generating an exponential diffusion and intensification of the purchase and sale of the force of labor, i.e., an incessant expansion of capitalism which lends itself to analysis like a two-sided coin:

On one side, we find an expansion which we may characterize as centrifugal, i.e., outward from the center, by which more and more sectors are incorporated into this capitalist organization of production, either by *ex-novo* creation of cutting-edge technologies, or by transformation of the old, out-moded methods now incapable of competing in terms of production (*as well as* in terms of the generation of social wealth). Thus the old agriculture, the old farmhouse (which constituted the overwhelming majority among the proto-capitalist, European populations) continues, on pain of extinction, to transform itself into agribusiness, so creating another market sector employing salaried labor, mechanization and the use of specialized techniques such as transgene, cloning, and organic farming, et al.

It is important to note here what is already known: that the lands, homes and means of production owned by the peasants-farmers and artisans were all left behind and lost as the latter were incorporated into salaried labor, thus causing

them to enter into absolute dependency upon their employers in order to survive. Consequently, since they no longer had their own means to carry on independent productive activities, *either they worked for others or they had no work*.⁴⁸

In terms of its effects on *our famous liberty*, we should still comment on the obvious consequences of this widespread loss of personal means of production (a loss which inescapably characterizes our population precisely because it has been completely incorporated into the capitalist organization of work).

On the opposite side, we find that the expansion of capitalism could not have occurred without a simultaneous, centripetal, i.e., inward, intensification of consumption of the force of work, which results from the imposition of a terrible, financial discipline upon each of the companies in which that consumption occurs.

Day after day both in the plant and in the office, the invention of highly sophisticated machines, which enable greater levels of profitability, forces workers who aspire to master this high-technology to pursue a long-term academic curriculum and to participate in occupational training programs in order to prepare themselves to optimally operate this machinery.

To survive in these conditions, each person has to become a self-made-man or self-made-woman, still perhaps under the illusion of being the master of his or her own destiny, when in reality he or she is being reduced to the role of a *standardized individual*, i.e., into an entity which is universally interchangeable with others who are equally able to participate in the serial organization of work which the absurd, financial, capitalistic accounting imposes throughout the world. However, we have already mentioned that some individuals (in light of these self-imposed, curricular paths which we must follow in order to better survive within capitalism) seem to be satisfied, and even enthusiastic about this small thing -- believing it to be a genuine exercise of *freedom*. Indeed, these individuals are exercising, albeit to some extent, the freedoms allowed by the capitalistic domination.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Either you work for capitalism, or you don't work at all*. This loss of economic independence compels the state to expand its unemployment security support to protect the millions of people who no longer have their own means of production and cannot find any place to sell their labor and consequently end up falling into joblessness. Those unemployed from every walk of life are invisible in the capitalist system because capitalism acknowledges people to the extent of their productivity and judges non-productive individuals to be *culpable* (as happens in any other social system with those who fail to participate). As a result, in addition to the unemployed, among us there are others (housewives, babies, dependents, the elderly, the sick, etc.) who are viewed in our collective consciousness as veritable pariahs (beyond the customary boundaries of political correctness). Thus the State (at this point a "Welfare State") has to reserve enormous accounts in their budgets to pay *virtual wages* to these and other social groups in an attempt to alleviate whenever possible their desperate and stigmatized existence. However, *structurally and strictly speaking*, the assistance provided by the welfare state is basically a mere transference of wealth through taxation, i.e. a sort of institutionalized charity. This in itself does not mean that we oppose such transference. In this regard, one can refer to Vilas Nogueira (1980).

⁴⁹ Capitalism has undoubtedly made possible a marvellous and never-before-seen progress of professions while simultaneously degrading them in some ways. As never before in human history, we (doctors, architects, philosophers, scientists, teachers, statisticians, engineers, journalists, etc.) have improved dramatically our professions and the tools available to us to serve and to assist

So, in regard to the two questions which we did ask ourselves previously, namely: 1. What structural rules does capitalism impose upon those who work within it, and 2. As members of a capitalistic society, are we truly free to work outside the confines of these rules? We see the first question answered by referring to *that* ubiquitous, double, financial accounting which we defend faithfully:

[Σf. of w. ⇔ pl.Λ] ^

In which every enterprise is forced to compete with every other enterprise within the same market just as each employee must compete with his or her counterpart throughout the wide labor market, in a “*Bellum omnium contra omnes*” (Hobbes), a maddening, endless spiral which we neither like nor can ignore –a spiral which we like less every day. The second question does not refer to the liberties *within* capitalism, i.e., within the capitalistic organization of work, but rather asks whether we are free to attempt to organize work in systems *other* than capitalism. To answer this second question fully -- or rather, to attempt to answer it more fully -- will require that we dedicate a little more time and effort.

“Why a dividend? As I’ve explained, I define a social business as a non-loss, a non-dividend company. Danone was totally agreeable to that proposition, but at the last minute, we added to the Memorandum of Understanding the provision for a token 1 percent dividend as a way of publicly recognizing the ownership of this company and to make it possible for Danone to show a figure in the appropriate line of its balance sheet. (Now, in hindsight and with further thought, I am in favour of removing the dividend clause, making the company dividend free. If Danone agrees, we’ll do that, to make it match with the definition of social business as I have formulated it -a non-loss, non-dividend business.)”

Muhammad Yunus (2007)

Post-capitalist Industries

If we want to win true freedom from capitalism, if we wish to put ourselves in a *structural* position which could liberate us and free us from the reality and the threat

others. However, objectively speaking, we do not dedicate ourselves to that end. In reality we work only for private enterprises which seek to be more and more profitable or for governmental bureaucracies which have grown powerful by serving their own interests. The sacred mission of the professions has been betrayed; “something is rotten” in all of them.

of unemployment, we will need to create and sustain industries which will not be capitalist, but rather post-capitalist.

Post-capitalist industries, let's see, this sounds great and is easily said. However, how shall we create them? How shall we maintain their viability?

In regard to this proposal, the salient aspect is that of "**post**" --since only those people with professional experience within capitalism and who, at the same time, decide to opt out of said capitalism would be the people capable of creating manufacturing and service organizations whose goal would be to provide their customers with durable and technologically advanced goods and services while simultaneously *rejecting* the following objectives: the maximization of benefits, the continuous reinvestment of profit, and growth for the sake of growth.

The most important thing, I repeat, is the disillusion with the capitalist game, with its fetish-like worship of money, as felt by people who have already proven themselves capable of succeeding in capitalistic, labor markets. These are individuals who decide to abandon the benefits and related suffering endemic to the exercise of power in corporate positions.

The term "**post**" implies that act of returning, that "*re-crossing*" (after having once integrated oneself into capitalism only later to "cross back" out of capitalism so as not to depend on it and to free oneself from it).⁵⁰

Well, okay, disenchanted people might discard capitalism. However, will they be able to create post-capitalist organizations? More importantly, how will they be able to maintain these endeavors while competing actively with the omnipresent efficacy and prestige of established and future capitalistic enterprises?

This is neither easy nor impossible. This requires a *double movement*: on one hand, of course, we will have to make a living by working for capitalist enterprises, and even by starting up such enterprises, thus participating in these relationships:

[Σf. of w. ⇔ pl.∧]^∧

-- while on the other hand, we will always proceed so as to align ourselves with other professional men and women for the purpose of creating manufacturing and service organizations disposed to break this formula of capitalistic rule.

Let's take advantage of all the freedoms, all the technologies, all the academic knowledge, and all the ample employment opportunities which capitalism makes available to its subjects, in order to supersede it, to escape from its limitations, and to free ourselves from it, joining the ranks of others who no longer endure continued dependence on capitalism, nor on its blind economic cycles, nor on its inevitable crises.⁵¹

⁵⁰ "re-crossing" in the *strictly* sense that the logic of Spencer-Brown defines it (1979: 1-7)

⁵¹ *Vid supra* note 22 and also the fragment of Macfarlane (1978) to which this note refers.

It is to the extent which we, both men and women, successfully maintain industries which in their daily functioning manage to cancel (Spencer-Brown, 1979: 5) the foundational rule of capitalism:

f. of w. \Leftrightarrow pl.

that we will begin to respect ourselves and one another, as well as to respect our customers whose brand loyalty will serve to immunize us from the economic crises of capitalism and to the risk of unemployment. It will offer us the hope of a more secure, more reconciled and more dignified life. With these post-capitalist organizations, we will seek that which we could never achieve in capitalism: freedom from the fear of unemployment so that we can truly become more independent people who are the masters of our own lives (to the degree allowed by our limited human condition).

However, let us not deceive ourselves. The endeavor, which we here and now propose for ourselves, i.e., the collective liberation from capitalism is not the task solely of the current generation but rather that of many generations, which will require a long journey of prolonged dedication -*perhaps enduring for centuries*. For humanity, the era of capitalism has only just begun – one need only observe the enthusiasm with which the peoples of Mexico, Brazil, China, India, Russia, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa and other African nations are just now embracing this system.

One could consider this a civilizing effort. When we create and reinforce these new, post-capitalist organizations, there will spontaneously well up within us the desire to dedicate ever more time during each succeeding generation to raise our children in a manner that they will have the opportunity to choose, as adults, between working for and founding capitalist corporations or alternatively (if they so prefer) to continue to perfect our, post-capitalist organizations -- thus following the evolutionary path already opened for them by us, their parents.⁵²

⁵² Cf. Allones (1999)

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