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THE IMMIGRANT AND THE « LAW OF POPULATION » IN MODERN CAPITALISM

Is there a contradiction between the globalization of the economy and the strengthening of restrictions imposed by States on migratory movements? Asked about this, a Socialist Interior Minister protested against the liberal approach to migration control, adding: "It is not only immigration that should be controlled (...) it is capital movements and unfair competition that should be controlled first". [1] In reality, however, and by the force of historical circumstances, the order of priorities is reversed: the democratic state concentrates most of its efforts on immigration control. So what are the capitalist needs that justify increasingly repressive immigration policies? Should this be seen as a barrier to population movements or rather as an attempt to create a new framework for worker mobility?

Several recent publications challenge the classic explanation of migration trends. In "The Mobility of Labor and Capital"[2], North American academic Saskia Sassen offers an original analysis of new forms of immigration, linking the movement of labour and capital. Her conclusions shake up some preconceived ideas.

Sassen begins by recalling that capital mobility has always created the conditions for labour force mobility and that the current immigration problem is only *"the new version of an old question"*. By the way, Sassen is surprised that most current studies on migration avoid addressing the relationship between the mobility of capital and that of labour - this at a time when the circulation of capital and the internationalization of production and the labour market are essential features of modern capitalism. Today, there exists *"a transnational space within which the movement of workers can be considered as one of the flows, in the same way as capital, goods, services and information"* (p. 3). Sassen insists on this aspect: immigration can no longer be treated as a strictly national affair but, on the contrary, as the result of the globalisation of trade. Only in this way will it be possible to understand why population (density and growth) and poverty issues are no longer sufficient to explain the new migration trends. Hence a first conclusion: in the current phase of capitalism, a society's place in the internationalization of production determines its place in the global labour market. Migration has always been explained by the lack of development. If it could have been true, it is no longer true. The current phase of capitalism sees a direct link between the internationalization of production and international migration.

In the 1970s, the strong flow of investment to poor countries accelerated this internationalization. Sassen shows that the countries to which US industry exported production were precisely those that became the main exporters of labour to the US: Mexico, Philippines, South Korea and China. This leads to the second conclusion: foreign capital investment creates both jobs and the conditions for new emigration. In search of ever lower production costs, multinationals have shifted intensive agriculture and labour-intensive export industries to poor countries. These investments have destroyed traditional societies and their economies, causing massive rural migration and, above all, the proletarianization of young women. This proletarianization is at the root of the destabilization of poor and patriarchal societies, provoking unemployment among men and creating a reserve of labour likely to emigrate[3]. The internationalization of production has also resulted in the industrial decline of the old capitalist centres[4]. Only, Sassen emphasizes, decentralization and international dispersion of production goes hand in hand with a concentration of capital and centralization of production control. While the scale of foreign direct investment in economies reflects the growing internationalisation of production, it also reflects the growing concentration of capital. This development, apparently contradictory, characterizes what is now called the "global" economy. It is accompanied by the emergence of a modern service sector, with a high technical level, concentrated in a few megacities of the old capitalist countries, which have become the specialized places of finance, management, information and control of a dispersed production. This sector requires a new, cheap, submissive and flexible workforce. As a result, the urban structure and human composition of these megacities are changing. In this regard, Sassen asserts that the development of the low-wage sectors and the underground economy is not the sign of a decline but, quite the contrary, the manifestation of the new capitalist dynamism. Now, she concludes: *"Deskilled jobs can be part of the most modern sectors of the (new) economy and backward sectors of the same economy can be carriers of its growth."* (p. 129)

Until the 1980s, North American capitalism was the world's largest exporter of capital. Since then, the situation has completely reversed and, in 1981, the United States even became the largest importer of capital. According to Sassen, this is explained by the fact that *"several regions of highly industrialized countries have once again become competitive with industrial areas in the Third World in terms of direct investment, both foreign and domestic."* (p. 171) As we have seen, the ongoing globalization has led to a centralization of capital control and management. After having initially been decentralized, part of manufacturing production returns to developed countries, to the detriment of poor countries[5]. The latter, after having been deconstructed by the creation of export-oriented production zones, run the risk of being abandoned again by productive capital[6]. This is to say how wrong it is to identify globalization and standardization of capitalist development. It's just the opposite. Globalization is the modern form of unequal development. Current developments also demonstrate that the multinationals that dominate the world economy remain attached to their nation states and home markets[7]. Sassen gives several explanations for this return of manufacturing production in capitalist countries: technical advantages, protectionist policies, proximity to large markets[8] and, finally, the cost of political and social instability in the new developing countries[9]. Added to this is the presence, in the old capitalist centres, of a new cheap and malleable immigrant labour force, perfectly adapted to the new forms of exploitation and manufacturing production. The current period of capitalism, known as "globalization", sees the tendency to impoverish the proletarianized populations confirmed, both in the societies of the periphery and in the old centers.

It is the emergence of a global labour market that has created the conditions for the rise of transnational migration. At the same time, the consolidation of States has made it possible to control such migration within a national framework, producing a labour force with a separate status. Since the 19th century, Sassen insists, *"any immigration policy of a nation-state is linked to its place in the world economy"* (p. 34). In any case, the institutional and legal differences that define the status of the immigrant worker are essentially aimed at lowering the cost of labour force reproduction - saving on training and social costs, exporting unemployment and the price of social discontent where appropriate. The import of labour has always gone hand in hand with capitalist expansion. This is how post-war reconstruction in Europe made massive use of immigration. Today, developed countries are using this labour force, drawing on an ever-expanding international labour market. New immigration is now concentrated in megacities where control of the global economy is centralized. Everywhere in developed countries, immigration policies are being revised in order to accentuate this separation, making the immigrant's legal status more fragile, even denying it[10]. Permanent immigration no longer meets current capital valorisation needs. States are therefore trying to institutionalise rotating immigration, of which insecurity is the normal condition. This allows Sassen to conclude: *"If we compare the current situation of international migration with that of migration at the beginning of the century, we see a growing tendency to treat migrants as commodities."*[11] (p. 50)

The shift from internal and colonial migration to transnational migration has always corresponded to a greater complexity of the capitalist system. The specific case of France is exemplary. After having resorted to internal migrations of peasant origin and migrations of colonial origin, French capitalism consumed, during its post-war expansion, the labor power of poor peasants and proletarians from the countries of southern Europe. In this case, labour movements preceded capital movements. But they announced the integration of European economies, the creation of a unified economic area. This development saw the weak peripheral economies gradually fall under the control of the large capitalist groups of the European "hard core". Their productive infrastructure has been destroyed and small local markets integrated into the unified European market. While the relationship between capital movements and labour force movements is clear in Europe, it may seem less clear when it comes to immigrants from Asia or Africa. Yet the persistence of a migratory current from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa towards France cannot be understood outside the history of French colonialism and neo-colonialism, of the maintenance of the interests of French capitalism in these regions. Moreover, the economic repercussions of this immigration were essential for the survival of the local regimes set up by Paris. Hence the importance of state-to-state relations in French immigration policy.

What these immigrant workers expect from French society derives, for many, from the historical ties and cultural reference points created by colonialism. Thus, the desire for integration into French society is a powerful mobilizing factor, as we saw with the struggle of "undocumented migrants" (1996-1997), where the demand for social rights for the children of illegal immigrants gave cohesion and determination to the movement. But this aspiration is also used by power for divisive purposes. The movements are diverted from the field of exploitation and reduced to the humanitarian and defence of formal rights, dividing the struggling community according to integration criteria, based essentially on the rights of families and children. This also explains why the French political class constantly hesitates between repression through integration and repression without integration. This is why the issue of family and children is at the centre of all immigration regulation projects and of any new State measures aimed at making immigrants' stay more precarious. That is why, finally, in the French case, any attempt to treat the immigrant exclusively as a labour force is a source of major conflict and a factor of political destabilization of society as a whole. Dynamic sectors of capitalism are now demanding a new type of immigration, precarious, malleable and with a minimum of formal rights. The French State must therefore establish a new immigration policy corresponding to current exploitation needs. To do so, he must deal with the weight of the past and procrastinate. On the one hand, it must continue to take account of the strong demand for integration brought about by immigration from its former colonial area. On the other hand, the loss of influence of French capitalism in Africa may finally allow the state to revise its immigration policies, freeing them from state-to-state constraints established at decolonization.

In capitalism, the movement of workers is done according to the conditions of sale and purchase of labour power as commodity. Like capital, this movement is "free" only within the framework of market laws. Today, the precarisation of the immigrant condition is the freest form that the movement of men as commodities takes. That said, it is important to see that in developed countries the overhaul of immigration policies is carried out in parallel with the reform of the welfare state. We know that, in the large modern states, social spending constitutes a minimal share of public spending[12]. The destruction of social security systems and the exclusion of large sectors of the poor population is primarily aimed at reducing overall labour costs and thus improving the profitability of capital. Tackling social wages makes sense only to the extent that it leads to a reduction in direct wages. The "flattening" of the old labour legislation, the breakdown of the guarantees of the former working class and the precariousness of the status of the immigrant are all measures that make it possible to create a new pool of cheap labour. The same applies to the reduction of social benefits. This is the meaning of the reform of American welfare, which today returns to the labour market a proletariat paid at rates defying all competition - whether it is workers from poor countries or illegal immigrants working in the United States[13]. Everywhere in developed countries, savings are being made on the cost of working class reproduction. The expansion of the labour market to the whole planet and the creation of a new malleable immigration go in this direction. The cuts in public health policies show that the capitalist system no longer considers these expenditures to be socially necessary and part of the cost of maintaining and reproducing the labour force. They are superfluous insofar as any precarious immigrant worker can be replaced, displaced, expelled at will, according to production needs[14].

In studying the movement of capital, Marx had concluded that to each period of capitalist development corresponds a "law of population". Today, it is capitalist labour force needs that drive immigration policies and explain the fate reserved for young people of immigrant origin in Western countries. Side by side with the proletarians definitively ejected from production, and in the same way as the population of the American ghettos and the slums of the Third World, these young people are part of the population in excess in the current phase of capital development[15]. Parked, marginalized and criminalized, this youth can no longer claim to join the ranks of the former proletariat, decimated by the decline of industrial production. The working conditions of their parents' generation (permanent immigrants with legal status) no longer exist or are unacceptable to them, as are those of the new precarious immigration. However, as Sassen points out, the new immigrant must increasingly be reduced to his status as a commodity, and the few formal rights attached to the former condition of immigrant must be abolished. The human condition of imperfect citizens, which was recognized to them, is now contested. Capitalist states regard the costs of reproduction, maintenance and control of young migrants with formal rights as a burden. In France, the successive reforms of the law of nationality and the constant use of practices such as the "double penalty"[16] target precisely the youth who are part of the proletarian overpopulation.

One of the functions of the modern state is to regulate the relationship between its nationals and foreigners, thus creating a category of labour force with separate status. In this context, the recurrent practice of regularisation has become the way to manage new immigration that is rotating, malleable and of precarious status. More than a measure intended to act on the labour market, regularisation seeks social pacification, it serves as a safety valve: *"The need to 'let bygones be bygones' on a regular basis, under penalty of seeing the development of a category of people without rights and therefore potentially explosive situations"*. [17] This means that the terms of regularization policies depend above all on the balance of power created by the struggle of immigrant workers, and not on an alleged "generosity" of the capitalist state. Regularising means recognising that illegal immigration has become a fact, irreversible and permanent under current capitalism. "Regularisation" is the legitimisation of the illegal situation.

The growing authoritarianism of the democratic system is not unrelated to the modern form of the "law of the people". The expenditure necessary for repression is that which the system considers essential to the stability of social relations. Formal democracy hides the social and economic inequality on which capitalism is based. Today we are entering a time when political power is trying to reduce this formal framework to its simplest expression. And where reverse reformism is defined by the defence of the lesser evil and the "least evil solution"[18]. But labour power is a very particular commodity in the sense that the worker who sells it never abdicates his rights as a human being, he never sees himself reduced to the commodity that makes him exist. The immigrant worker, even more so, invests all his energy in the realization of the project of survival and integration in society where he can sell his labour force at the highest price. If he sells his work force in a place, it is precisely to be able to live there. The tendency of modern capitalism to treat migrants as commodities creates new class resistances. This is how the struggles of immigrant workers who refuse to see the framework of their existence reduced to variations in trade must be understood and supported.

Charles Reeve

Notes :

[1] Chevènement, interview, "Le Monde", 26 juin 1997.

[2] Saskia Sassen, "The Mobility of Labor and Capital", Cambridge University Press, 1994. See also Nigel Harris, "The New Untouchables Immigration and the New World Order", Tauris, London, 1995.

[3] Without work, man is no longer able to start a family. Emigration occurs as the one and only opportunity to find work and regain traditional male identity. See "Tomorrow's second sex", "The Economist", London, 28 September 1996.

[4] Between 1969 and 1972, 22 million industrial jobs were lost in the United States.

[5] Sassen studied the ready-to-wear industry in New York and electronics in Los Angeles.

[6] See "Nike commence à trouver trop élevés les salaires asiatiques", "Le Monde", 24 June 1997.

[7] Large multinationals control 90% of capital movements. American multinationals sell 70% of their goods in the United States.

[8] The United States and Canada form the first world market.

[9] Strikes and violent demonstrations (Vietnam, China, Indonesia) worry multinationals based in Asia, see "Le Monde", 24 June 1997, op. cit. The 1997 general strike in South Korea shows that the fall in production costs in these countries has reached limits. In Mexico, multinationals are concentrating their investments in areas close to the border with the United States.

[10] In the early 1980s, the estimated number of illegal immigrants in the United States was 3 to 12 million... for a population of 230 million.

[11] The export of labor power has become essential for countries like the Philippines or Mexico (more than 600 000 people per year).

[12] In the United States, where 14% of the population lives below the official poverty line, welfare and food stamps represent 3% of the federal state budget.

[13] Under the new workfare system, unemployed workers who have reached the end of their state benefits (at the RMI rate) are placed in private companies or public services, where they continue to receive the same amount: \$1.5 per hour, the federal minimum wage being \$5.5.

[14] In the United States, the new immigration law (passed by the Democratic administration) deprives legal immigrants of social benefits (health, education, food stamps) from the federal state.

[15] The "discovery" of the consequences of this state of affairs in Viviane Forester's book, "L'horreur économique", constitutes a real cry of anguish from the humanist left. Its extraordinary success cannot be explained by the banality of the text, it rather reflects a fatalistic concern towards the economy seen as the fetish category of bourgeois society.

[16] Expulsion from the territory for young people of immigrant origin who have served a prison sentence.

[17] Editorial, *Le Monde*, 11 juin 1997.

[18] The regularization modalities as well as the amendments to immigration laws are elaborated by "experts", academics and others, whose work invariably leads to conclusions of reformist xenophobia: the definition of the "acceptable level" of immigration !

WHAT'S UP WITH THE GREEKS ?

Important struggles were waged last winter in Greece. First, there was the mobilization of farmers, particularly cotton producers, who were severely affected by last year's heavy rains and, more generally, by the end of the protectionist measures resulting from the GATT agreements. The agrarian problem is quite complex, but it is mainly due to the disappearance of small farmers due to the restructuring of agriculture. The percentage of peasants in Greece is, at 21 %, the highest in Europe, which the government considers as excessive. He therefore stated that it should be reduced to 7 %. The 1980s had already seen the gradual questioning of customs barriers, subsidies and fixed price policies. Subsequently, these measures were replaced by others imposed by the EEC's agricultural policy and then by the GATT agreements. European subsidies mainly favour large agro-business complexes. On the other hand, quotas for certain agricultural products have become stricter. This means that a farmer who exceeds the set production quantity must pay a fine: a measure that hits small farmers first. Given the high cost of production and debts to banks, small farmers are unable to compete with agro-business, either in Greece or globally. According to the Agricultural Register, which came into effect in September 1997, farmers whose main income is not derived from agriculture, for at least 50 per cent, are not considered farmers and, as such, are not eligible for subsidies and compensation. These conditions effectively exclude the majority of the peasant petty bourgeoisie.

The peasants have blocked the highways twice. The first time, from late November to mid-December 1996, was the most effective, but the Communist Party, which completely controls the peasant committee, was called upon to stop the mobilization during the Christmas holidays. However, the movement resumed at the end of January but no blockade could be undertaken this time because the government sent thousands of cops and anti-riot sections to the Thessaly plain. From the beginning of the movement, media propaganda against them has been harsh. As the Minister of Justice called them "donkeys", "criminals" and "vulgar", the peasants circulated donkeys in the villages mounted on carts flanked by panels bearing the name of the minister in question. There were also some attacks by police vehicles: during one of them, peasants literally lifted a police bus off the ground with their arms when it was full of cops, before leaving with the ignition keys. A game of hide and seek then began across the fields: farmers directing their tractors towards the highways while riot police armed to the teeth pursued them on foot. Unfortunately, after a few days of pursuit, the cops took revenge by damaging the tractors which, on the advice of the Communist Party, had been left unattended on the Paleofarsalos motorway. Many farmers promised them that they would find each other on the football fields.

As to the fishermen, they live under the constant threat of unemployment. Boat owners have not only reduced the composition of crews but also the proportion of Greeks in favour of foreign fishermen. Three years ago, the government passed a law allowing fishing bosses to hire more foreign workers at wages equivalent to a third of those of Greek fishermen. Thus, in January 1997, the sailors stopped the machines for ten days and blocked the ports, which caused much more problems in the movement of goods than the peasant movement did. That is why they have been thwarted more quickly than the latter by the special police forces and their union... Yet they have reached a "compromise" on social measures and tax burdens.

Furthermore, there was another struggle: a thirteen-day strike by primary school teachers, which I consider very important, and not only because I personally took part in it. The movement began when the strike by secondary school teachers was in its second week. This has always been the case in the past: secondary school teachers being more militant were starting a strike and everything they could win automatically benefited primary school teachers, whether they were mobilized or not. However things were a little different this time. Although secondary school teachers had been on strike for two months, the teachers' movement had been more dynamic because most of them were very young. In addition, union leaders, mostly members of the government party, appeared so openly sold and deplorable that they were attacked and driven out of the hotel where they had called for the withdrawal of the strike in mid-February. The hotel, which was rather chic, looked like a battlefield after the rally. We then walked to the union headquarters where we were greeted by the cops. The building was occupied for two days but the strike was over. This collective explosion has been dynamic which is quite unusual among teachers who are quite conservative people. The strike itself put forward relatively few demands. Given the enthusiasm of the strikers, I believe that the vast majority of them participated in the movement not only to obtain an increase in wages but also to protest against working conditions and the role of union leaders. The strike by secondary school teachers had been more disciplined. Most of its activists are between 40 and 50 years old and are part of this generation that became involved in political action after the fall of the dictatorship. Their ideology is the pure expression of social democracy. Slogans such as "Free and public education for all" dominated during the movement. It is difficult to say whether the two strikes won or not. Most of the demands were not fully met, mainly those concerning wage increases, but the strikes at least temporarily hampered, no doubt, future liberal reforms in education and the public sector as a whole (increase in part-time jobs, lengthening of the contribution period to claim a full pension, wages indexed to productivity).

K.

JUNE 36 : BEHIND THE SCENES

While May 1968 remained in the social memory as a social movement repressed in a combined manner by employers, the State, left-wing parties and trade unions, it only retained the "social achievements" of the Popular Front from the strikes of May-June 36. Yet these were only the necessary concessions of Blum's government to the repression of the largest social movement in the interwar period. Daniel Guérin's reissue of "Front populaire, révolution manquée"[1] is an opportunity to revisit this period, which in many ways is close to ours. If the role played by the PC will not surprise much (the historical word of Thorez, *"It is necessary to know how to end a strike"*, has remained in the annals of social police), that of the socialists is less known. Beyond the action of left-wing parties and trade unions, the events of May-June 1936 remind us that when it comes to social repression, we are never better served than by those who represent us and speak on our behalf, at least until the rule of the game has been changed.

The occupation movement emerged spontaneously, taking the employers, the government, the unions and the left-wing parties by surprise: *"The movement started without knowing exactly how and where."* (Jouhaux, Secretary General of the CGT). What was the attitude of the employers, the State and the trade unions to put an end to the occupations in June 36? [2]

Minimize the extent of strikes, misinformation, withholding of information

If the employers very quickly denounced the revolutionary character of the occupations, on the other hand, socialists, communists and trade unions deny any subversive character to the strikes movement. On June 6th, Jouhaux declared: *"The strikes currently taking place in Paris and throughout France are neither political nor insurrectional, they are strictly corporate"*. The kidnapping of bosses in the occupied factories is frequent from the beginning of the movement, but at the request of the government the unions put pressure on the strikers to stop this practice. The CGT states that employers *"must be free to enter and leave establishments"* and that *"any exaggeration, demagogic bidding, dangerous disorder must be avoided"*. While, generally speaking, the bosses expect in May-June to be dispossessed and expropriated[3], they are surprised to realize that they are only dealing, thanks to the moderation of the unions, with demands[4]. At Renault, *"Lehideux[a member of the factory management] is very surprised at the modesty of the workers' demands"*[5]. In the working class press, the tone is one of moderation. "Humanity" makes a comparison between the first strikes only on May 24 (they began on May 11). When strikes resume, in the second phase of the movement (2-7 June), it is only on the sixth page that "L'Humanité" announces the resumption of strikes. The same thing will happen again after the Matignon accords and the renewal of occupations. Disinformation against occupations is practised equally by employers, who denounce kidnappings where they do not exist, and by left-wing parties and trade unions: it is a question of making strikers bend by all means. Salengro, the Socialist Minister of the Interior, published a communiqué on 6 June stating that the unrest was ebbing as it was increasing. When the movement really ebbs, the workers press won't say a word on the last resistance of the strikers. The media coverage of labour unrest by trade unions is a crude but effective means of distorting the reality of social struggles: each defeat of strikers is misrepresented as a victory. In striking companies, the union withholds information to isolate strikers from the context in which it negotiates with management, officially on their behalf. *"[At Renault], as the days pass, notes Simone Weil [6], the information given to the workers by the delegates becomes scarcer and less precise."*

Blackmail in the national interest, the foreigner as a scapegoat

The CP, patriotic since the Staline-Laval Pact of 1935, which associated the tricolour flag with the red flag and "La Marseillaise" with "L'Internationale" at each of its demonstrations, used national defence blackmail to put an end to the workers' excesses: *"We consider impossible a strategy which, faced with the threat of Hitler, would risk jeopardizing France's security"*. [7] ("L'Humanité" of June 3rd). It poses itself as a guarantor of the unity of the nation: *"The broken negotiations must be resumed. It is up to the government authority to intervene forcefully with the employers' unions so that they agree to give satisfaction to the workers. The present situation, due to selfishness and employer obstinacy, cannot be prolonged without endangering the security of the people of France."* (idem, June 6). After Thorez's appeal of 11 June calling for the resumption of work (*"We must know when to end a strike"*), strikers who continue occupations despite opposition from trade unions and communists are openly slandered: anarchists and Trotskyists are accused, along with fascists, of trying to drag the masses into an adventure. At Renault, the communists encouraged demonstrations of intimidation: simulated funerals of yellows (TN : see « yellow unions ») but also of Fire Crosses (far-right) or Trotskyists; leaflets nominally designate the supposed Trotskyists. It is a matter for the PC to oppose the union of the French nation to the workers unrest, implicitly accused of encouraging, by persisting, the Hitlerian and fascist threat. Antifascism in its bureaucratic-bourgeois version becomes the ideological justification for the repression of the occupation movement by the workers' organizations themselves (PC, SFIO, trade unions). An amalgam is made between elements foreign to trade unions and foreigners who work in France. The outsider becomes the scapegoat. It is the supposed intrusion by elements outside the trade unions that is the pretext for the government to take its first measures of order: *"It is true, says the socialist Blum, that there is a feeling of suspicious groups from outside the trade union organisation."* On July 4th, the government published a circular to the prefects: *"France intends to remain faithful to its tradition as a land of asylum. It would not, however, be acceptable for foreigners on our territory to take an active part in domestic policy discussions[hear factory occupations] and cause unrest and disorder."* At the end of June, the movement was almost over in the cities, but it continued in the countryside where strikes by agricultural workers broke out in mid-June in Ile-de-France: the repression drew attention to the role of foreign labour in this unrest. Strikers and demonstrators are accused of attacking the nation, of being the hand of the foreigner. This accusation does not only come from the far right, but now also from the Popular Front government and the organisations of the workers movement. [8]

Negotiate strikers' demands within the social consensus

As early as 1935, in the face of the crisis and the fascist threat, the CGT advocated a rapprochement with the middle classes: *"We know that it is impossible in the present circumstances to achieve immediately [the total transformation of the economy] because, by pursuing it, we would set up against us a coalition of people, some of whom, on the contrary, must be with us"*. Thorez, in his speech of June 11th, does not express himself differently: *"Our goal, he says in substance, remains the power of the Soviets, but it is not for this evening nor for tomorrow morning, because all the conditions are not met and in particular we do not yet have behind us, decided as we have until the end, all the population of the countryside. We would even risk, in certain cases, to alienate ourselves some sympathies of the layers of the small bourgeoisie and the peasants of France."* The trade unions are therefore striving to reduce workers' demands within the bourgeois legalistic framework. In October, after the strikes movement, the CGT declared that *"it is to practice a true democracy that [to] put on the same level the right to work and the right to property, and to want both to find, through solutions of social justice, their safeguard"*. In times of social unrest, for the ruling classes the union of the classes is the absolute priority: Blum limits his governmental action within the limits of the ultramoderate program of the Popular Front, he recalls that the voters did not vote socialist but Popular Front. Echoing this, Thorez explains that *"we cannot be saying that "now the issues of demands take second place and that it is a matter of taking possession of the factories and placing production under the direct control of the workers"*: the government's work must not be compromised. Frachon, a communist leader of the CGT, wants to put an end to the factory occupations in order not to endanger the alliance with the radicals (in this dupe deal, within the Popular Front, the centrist party of the radicals, supported by the powerful insurance trust, will oppose any measure of constraint with regard to the employers). From the first strikes of May 36, the Popular Front (government, parties and trade unions) and the occupation movement were made to collide.

For a rational management of capitalism

Trade unions and workers' parties denounce the "irresponsibility" of employers. As early as 1935, the CGT Plan explicitly called for a directed economy based on nationalisations covering all activities, private or not. Although the ideas of the Plan are not retained in the proposals of the Popular Front, the idea of a more rational management of the economy is a strong idea in trade unionism and in the so-called workers parties. On May 29th, "L'Humanité" explains that, if the employers understood better what was happening in the factories, the occupations would not have taken place: *"The metalworking movement in the Paris region can very quickly calm down if, on the employers' side, they are prepared to accept legitimate and reasonable workers' demands"*. [9] More rational plant management would therefore be sufficient to avoid this type of "inconvenience". This idea of a rational and directed management of the economy is also found, in this period of crisis, within a part of the big employers, which is expressed in particular around the "Nouveaux Cahiers". This magazine, which brings together bankers, industrialists, senior civil servants and trade unionists, proposes a collaboration between employers and trade unions: *"While some French industrialists have not yet understood the importance of the changes that have taken place in recent months in the social order and have some chimerical dream of returning to the mistakes of the past, others know that such an evolution is irrevocable. They are ready to adapt and to adapt their factories."* June 36 is the beginning of the mixed economy company in France.

State intervention: the Matignon agreements

The intervention is requested by the employers[10], which does not succeed, in spite of the support of the trade unions, in absorbing the movement of the occupations. If the State intervenes, it is because, for the first time since 1919, the social balance in France is no longer in favour of employers. In agreement with them, Blum made it appear that he was at the origin of the Matignon agreements. This lie by the government of the Popular Front has the advantage for the employers to reinforce the prestige of the State at a time when the employers cruelly need its help, but also to hide from the strikers the real weakness of employers who does not want to show them that they are ready to negotiate[11]. The government hopes, through the Matignon agreements, in exchange for social benefits (collective contract, paid holidays, 40-hour working week, wage increases, etc.), to end the occupations in a few days. If the employers are ready to accept everything to recover their production units (as long as the essential, private capitalist exploitation is not called into question), the trade unions, on the other hand, are moderate because the object of the negotiations is less to pay a high price for social benefits than to stop the movement of occupations at any price. It is at the initiative of employers, and not trade unions, that the principle of workers' delegates in companies is retained in negotiations. The Matignon agreements thus enshrine trade unionism in its social function of managing social relations with employers and the State. But this consecration only validates the repressive, useful and effective role that trade unions had to play to put an end to occupations. In this sense, if June 36 is a great victory, it is that of unionism and a defeat for the strikers movement. To survive, French capitalism had to change. The recognition of the union as a legitimate partner by employers opens "a new era" (Jouhaux), but even more so the appearance of the State as a third partner. Jouhaux will also say: "*This shows peremptorily that it is not necessary to realize the totalitarian and authoritarian State for the elevation of the working class to its role of collaborator in the national economy, but the regular functioning and the elevation of democracy allow it*".

Employers discover the usefulness of the union in times of social crisis

The counterpart of the gains ceded by the government and the employers to the strikers during the Matignon agreement of June 7, is the evacuation of the companies. The unions are committed to promoting recovery, but insist on the responsibility of employers in the social crisis: *"It is really now that you may regret having systematically taken advantage of years of deflation and unemployment to exclude all trade union activists from your factories. They are no longer there to exercise the authority over their comrades that would be necessary to carry out our orders."* And Richemond, representative of the employers, to recognize: *"It's true, we were wrong."* The employers approve the CGT when it explains that if trade union activists had not been repressed for fifteen years in companies, there would not have been a movement of occupations in France. For the union, it is in the perspective of a rational management of capitalism that union activists are useful in factories, to prevent crisis situations and also, when they break out, to help resolve them. At the end of the collective agreement on metallurgy, the employers' representative, Baron Pétiet, *"strongly hopes that contact will be maintained between the two delegations (employers and CGT) through periodic meetings"*. The employers intend to keep in touch with a union that has proven its ability to help it resist the demands of strikers. Some company managers put pressure on non-union employees to join the CGT, the best guarantee for them not to have an uncontrolled outburst in their company. But this sudden lucidity on the part of employers towards trade unions was only imposed in June 36 by the urgency of the social crisis; it will be forgotten very soon as the crisis is over. In September 1936, the textile employers wrote a letter to Blum explaining the new rule of the game: *"The textile manufacturers of Lille no longer want their factories occupied. They no longer want sequestrations, passes granted to bosses by factory delegates, threats addressed to staff who do not share the CGT's vision. They no longer want to see bosses stuck at home or assaulted in their factories, they no longer want to see their offices and shops occupied, they no longer want to be "allowed" to enter their establishments to pay their workers, they no longer want picket lines installed day and night at their managers' homes, they no longer want their staff to be tried by a factory council."* The boss doesn't want to be humiliated anymore. In November 1938, a classic and revengeful repression was decided by the right-wing government that succeeded Blum: according to the testimony of one of the CGT leaders of the time, 9% of the working population of the industrial and commercial sector was fired on December 1st 1938 following these last strikes.

Nationalizations versus occupations

Among strikers, there is the idea that the nationalization of companies by the state is a guarantee for them. The threat of calling for nationalisation is often brandished by them in occupied enterprises. After the failure of the Matignon agreements of June 7th, the strike movement resumed in metallurgy because the strikers denounced the agreements they felt were below what they had expressed in their notebooks of demands (the CGT, on the contrary, called for the resumption of work on June 9th and spoke of victory). On June 10th, the strikers issued an ultimatum to the employers: in 48 hours, the latter must have satisfied their demands, failing which they will demand the nationalisation of the war factories and those working for the State, their operation being ensured by the technical and working staff, under the control of the ministries concerned. In Rouen, the oil workers declared that they wanted to continue the strike until nationalisation. Since nationalisation is first a dispossession of the private boss, there is both the belief among strikers that the revolution can be done from above (by the state) and a first phase of self-management (the next phase would be not to wait for nationalization by the state but to self-manage the enterprise directly). But the requisitions by the State are already envisaged by the CGT as means of breaking the social protest movement. On June 16th, Jouhaux reminded the Confederal Committee of the CGT that the government had, at its request, considered requisition procedures: *"We had the principle of requisition accepted in the branches indispensable to consumption, on the sole condition that the workers organisations would put themselves at the service of the requisitioned companies. The government didn't have to use this weapon, but it says it exists."* Belin, a member of the CGT bureau, commenting on these words, explains what the requisition means: *"Let us suppose that, as a result of the conflicts, the supply of petrol, milk and flour to the capital is compromised. The role of government would be to ensure by all means the distribution of these products. To this end, it should requisition establishments where striking workers and employees would return to work under government orders. What if the conflict goes on? The State would remain, throughout its duration, the manager of the industries and businesses requisitioned. In this case, the strike would no longer be characterized by the cessation of work, but by its resumption under the management of the State, thus by a temporary dispossession of employers. They would return to their companies as soon as the conflict was over. Note that the plants have not been considered for operation, this is only an exceptional measure to prevent serious inconvenience to the population."* (Lefranc, p. 141). Another form of neutralisation was inaugurated by the Blum government : arbitration. It consists of a social conflict freeze in the company, effectively protecting it from strikers, who have everything to lose from neutralizing their offensive, while it serves the interests of employers by validating, by its application, capitalist legality. *"This is how, explains Blum, the strikes in the North and the Sambre were settled amicably. Neutralization was a kind of sealing in which all rights on both sides were respected. We then had the Houses vote on a text that prohibited strikes and lockouts as long as the attempts at conciliation provided for by law continued."* [12]

ABC of Socialist Repression

The employers are opposed to the use of force by the government, although the wild occupations of its production units take it by the throat: *"We risk a bloody conflict [an employers' delegate argues], it is blood that will spill over on us and it will perhaps forbid us to take back the direction of our factories"*. [13] Occupations are an offensive as well as a defensive means: they forbid employers to recruit, in this period of crisis and unemployment, new workers. The priority objective is to free occupied factories. The Blum government will do its best not to use police force against strikers. On July 7th, the Interior Minister summarized his policy before the senators: *"Salengro told the Senate that he would end the occupation of factories by all appropriate means. In his idea, this means an intervention by trade union activists, then by the public authorities. If this were not enough, we would have this intervention confirmed by activists and public authorities. If the result was still not achieved, joint action would be taken, and only if all these attempts at persuasion failed would the government use other measures. That means we'd send cops."* [14] For the Popular Front government, the repression of occupations thus goes through several phases: first of all, the use of trade unions as a dissuasive and policing force within companies, then the intervention of the State as arbiter, then, as the last means, the use of the armed forces. If the use of trade union force is a palliative supposed to prevent the government from resorting to armed force, from June 11th and from Thorez's call for the resumption of work, the process of repression is launched: the government mobilises the armed forces, troops of mobile guards are concentrated by the government around the workers' centres, in the Paris region, in the agricultural centres and in the north of France. The Popular Front is lowering its mask.

In *"Front populaire, révolution manquée"*, Guérin, a former member of Pivert's revolutionary left within the SFIO, gives an autobiographical account of the rise of fascism in France in the 1930s, of antifascist resistance (the Front populaire) but also workers resistance (the June 36 occupations). If the reading of this book makes it possible to enlighten usefully, by comparing them, the rise of fascism and antifascism yesterday and today, it is less so, on the other hand, to understand what was the social repression of the occupations movement of June 36, by the Front populaire antifasciste precisely. Very talkative on the creation of the Popular Front from 1934 to 1936, the political quarrels and the criticism of the party drums, Guérin devotes only thirty small pages on the occupations of June 36. If this work is useful, however, in the study of the movement of occupations, it is in what it tells us, involuntarily, of the means of repression that were implemented to break the strikes of May-June 36. And the GR of the SFIO, by participating in the transformation of a Popular Front guarantor of capitalist legality into a pseudo-government with a revolutionary tendency that that only need to be pushed to the left to make it take a revolutionary leadership, made its contribution to this repression.

Guérin rejoined the GR in 1935, when Trotskyists were excluded from the SFIO. Far-left of the SFIO, the RG was in turn excluded in 1938, and individualized outside the party by becoming the PSOP (Socialist Workers and Peasants Party, 1938-1940). Until their exclusion, the Pivertists believed they could push the Popular Front to the left but, while criticizing Blum, they participated in the government of the Popular Front (Pivert was in charge of propaganda). [15] By actively participating in the heroicization and mythology of the Blum government, not only do they support the initially moderate and then openly repressive policies of the Popular Front, but also and above all they are in the vanguard of this dupe deal where the Popular Front coalition poses as the ally of striking workers, whereas its mandate is precisely to repress labour unrest. As the Blum government prepares to sign the Matignon agreements on the evening of June 7th, 1936, the purpose of which is above all, in exchange for a few concessions, to put an end to strikes, the picketers are busy making the socialist leader a hero : *"When, the day after [the presentation of his government], in front of the chambers, on June 7th, [Blum] comes to the Vélodrome d'hiver, to swear to the people of France never to be dislodged from power without a fight, an extraordinary staging greets his entrance. The spotlight is on him. An orchestra plays "The International". The activists metamorphose into choir members. The Young Guards in blue shirts form a vibrant double hedge. The faithful chant indefinitely until they lose their breath: "Long live Blum" or "Blum! Blum!" Who is the director of this cult? None other than Marceau Pivert. A little later, too late, he will invite the militants to free themselves from a "certain religiosity" that prevents them from judging the policy of the "most prestigious militants" in a healthy way. But in the meantime, he's the high priest."* Guérin concluded: *"We were thus helping, to a certain extent, to spread a deception."* (p. 163) Guérin clearly shows the influence of the new mass propaganda techniques inaugurated in Nazi Germany on socialist ideologues. Pivert *"believes in totalitarian propaganda techniques"*, for him *"socialism must respond to these "poisonous" weapons (fascist and Nazi propaganda techniques) with equivalent weapons and use against fascism the same methods of provoked obsession."* [16] In both cases, the individual exists only through the masses.

While criticizing Pivert, Guérin followed him until the war, from the SFIO to the PSOP. Just as he saw no possible action except within the socialist or communist parties (he chose the SFIO), so the GR (in vain) proposed the unification of the SFIO and the PC, because *"it was from within the unified workers movement that we wanted to seek the possibilities of revolutionary recovery"*. (p. 165). This explains why Guérin's view in this book focuses essentially on the activity of the parties and their leaders. After the war, Pivert returned to the SFIO and wrote retrospectively about the Popular Front: *"Yes, anything was possible. Relying on these fervent masses, Blum could do anything[17]; none of the forces of great capitalism, fascism, the general staff, the Church, reaction could have resisted him. If he had wanted to,[18] he had only one word to say and armed workers and peasants militias would have emerged from the ground even in the smallest villages; they would have protected the social conquests, supported the great nationalizations, reduced the trusts to powerlessness."* (quoted by Guérin, p. 186). That the socialist Blum did indeed do everything he could to put an end to the factory occupations is a historical fact which still escaped Pivert twenty years later. It is easier to understand how the pivertists, including Guérin, by supporting a Popular Front they criticized, helped to "propagandize a deception". Despite the limitations indicated, "Popular Front, Missed Revolution" is an extraordinary critical testimony on the rise of fascism, antifascism, the Popular Front and the strikes of June 36, and an excellent introduction to this period and its stakes.

Barthélémy Schwartz

Notes :

[1] Editions Babel/Actes Sud, 1997.

[2] Main sources: "Juin 36", by Danos and Gibelin (La Découverte 1986); "Juin 36", by Lefranc (Julliard, 1966); "La France en mouvement", edited by Jean Bouvier collection of articles by various authors, devoted to June 36, published in "Le mouvement social", (Champ Vallon, 1986).

[3]"Remember, on June 4 and 5, 36, there were one million strikers. Remember that the movement was gaining from hour to hour and from person to person throughout France. Eyewitnesses told you so. Mr. Sarraut said it, Mr. Frossard said it. Panic and terror were widespread. I was not unrelated myself to the representatives of the big employers and I remember what I was told, or made to say by common friends: "So, what, it's the revolution? What are they gonna take from us? What are they gonna leave us?" Blum au procès de Riom, 1942, Pottecher, "Le procès de la défaite", (Fayard, 1989, p. 129).

[4] See the testimony reported by Lefranc (op. cit., pp. 204-205).

[5]"Les grèves du Front populaire aux usines Renault", Badie, "La France en mouvement".

[6] Note on Simone Weil.

[7] Unless otherwise indicated, italicized passages in quotations are underlined by me.

[8] It was not until the end of the occupation movement at the end of June that the government issued a decree on the dissolution of the far-right leagues.

[9] Reasonable, for whom?

[10] Blum was contacted by the employers three days after his arrival in power, which the Stock Exchange welcomed, "because it is generally thought that the new government will quickly end the strike movement" ("Le Temps", 4 June 36). During the Riom trial, Blum declared: "At that moment [when the first strikes broke out in 1936], in the bourgeoisie, and particularly in the employers world, I was considered, awaited and hoped for as a savior. The circumstances were so distressing, we were so close to something that resembled the civil war that we hoped only in a sort of providential intervention: I mean the arrival in power of a man who was given sufficient deterrent power over the working class to make it listen to reason and decide not to use, not to abuse its strength. (Guérin, p. 192).

[11] Richemond thus deplored "the notorious lack of resistance on the part of many employers."

[12] Blum at Riom's trial, "The Trial of Defeat", (p. 143).

[13] Sarraut before the Senate, July 7, 1936.

[14] Ministry of the Interior press release, July 36

[15] Guérin will, however, be the only pivertists to vote against participation in the Blum government (p. 188).

[16] Tchakhotine, author of the "Viol des foules par la propagande politique" (1939), is introduced into the GR by Pivert.

[17] Emphasis mine.

[18] Idem.

SERGE BRICIANER, SHADES OF BLACK AND BRIGHT RED.

I am told that, with the passing years, it will be like war. Craters everywhere, a void that gradually envelops us. The only way to salvation, others add, is to fill the void with life, to continue to live with death, in short. How to describe the unacceptable that we are forced to accept. The death of friends that becomes part of our lives. According to the usual formula, you have to get used to the idea. Another one of those *"common metaphorical places that our laziness usually regales itself with without fear of surprise,"* wrote René Crevel. And suddenly, a big surprise. I circle around the question, I dare not write the words that hurt me. Serge Bricianer, my friend, is dead.

First there was this medical error, as he said with irony. One less lung, it was still bearable. Medicine, he used it like everyone else. Without believing it more than the doctors themselves. *"Doctor or no doctor, it's shit,"* he said, a few days before the end. The second mistake was irreparable: death. Serge was part of my life, one of my critical points of reference about the world. How do you try to talk about him in the past? Serge was not, strictly speaking, an example of sociability. He was solitary and secret, someone very shy and reserved, with a difficult approach, sometimes to the point of rejection. A rich trajectory summarized in a few lines, one of the rare times when he wrote about himself: *"After accompanying the Communist Youths of the year 40, as long as they spoke of 'proletarian fraternization' (at least that is what I thought I heard), I crossed some of the shades of black and bright red."* [1]. Shades ranging from surrealism to "Socialism or Barbary", "ICO" or more confidential magazines like "Mise au point" or "Spartacus". In the bubbling after 68, some of us crossed his path, and the encounter turned into friendship. In friendship, he was unfailingly faithful, as in enmities, for that matter. Through him, often in spite of himself, I and others, were introduced into the tribe of the subversives of the century who were part of the panorama of his life. There were: Breton, Pannekoek, Brauner, Rubel, Debord, Souvarine, Tanguy, Luca, Mattick, Herold, Natalia Trotsky, Korsch, Péret, Castoriadis, Nadeau, Malaquais, Franz Jung and many other illustrious unknown. Make no mistake about it. Serge hated anything that could be anything like a veterans' fraternity in any way. He spoke of them when he felt like it, when the occasion encouraged him to - with the ironic hindsight with which he was so good and not always with tenderness. *"The past interests us only to the extent that it helps us understand the present,"* he said. In his own way, Serge lived totally in the present. With the distance that was proper to his personality, he was interested in everything, followed the disastrous state of the world. But cynicism, which he handled very appropriately, never replaced a strong social ethic. Straight and upright, he made no concessions. His sense of humour was fierce but you had to know his codes to play the game of irony. In times of confusion, when the ambiguity of situations confused my mind, I called upon him to open a window for me. *"What do you want me to think?"* he started by saying. Then, in a sentence, a lapidary formula, he swept the fog. But of course... Of a rare intellectual exigency and an exceptional rigour, he always weighed against those who allow themselves to say anything about everything. He never stopped writing and always considered that what he was doing was unfinished. That exasperated us. *"And you think that's how it's done, that you can deal with a question like that in a few sentences?"* For him, intellectual work consisted in *"clarifying a context, further supporting or extending an analysis or, if necessary, discussing or updating it by proceeding in successive touches."* [2]. Its purpose is to *"persuade the reader to do the same"*.

He left us two books [3] that refer to those interested in the revolutionary Marxist currents: "Pannekoek and the workers councils" (EDI, Paris, 1969) and "Karl Korsch, Marxism and counter-revolution" (Seuil, Paris, 1975), as well as numerous translations of Paul Mattick and other authors of the current of council communism. From an inexhaustible culture, with a wisdom that never resembled an accumulation of knowledge, he was sometimes sharp, dry, even elitist. How could we ignore what he considered essential? He had always refused to "succeed", and he was little stingy with sarcastic remarks about academics and other professional intellectuals, whom he gladly called "state researchers". There was not the slightest jealousy there. What he was questioning was the social function. His great friend Paul Mattick's formula was his: *"Say what you must say, do what you must do, speak where you are given the opportunity, but, above all, never compromise yourself with fools.* The foolishness, mediocrity and weaknesses of thought, he was very good at detecting them. The internationalism of the current of ideas to which he was attached always seduced me. An internationalism that was in its way of being, not a political position of doctrinaire sectarianism. The surrealist disgust of everything that has a patriotic or identitarian smell, he had kept intact. Many of his life's friends were those who had experienced exile, immigration and uprooting.

I will stop here, because he would not have liked these lines to look like praise. *"Brrr! What's the point? It's life that counts."* A great emptiness is there, since Serge is no longer with us.

It's more than a lack. It's unspeakable. It seems almost pretentious to say that we must continue without him, by keeping alive what we were able to take at home. Courage, coherence, self-respect, ethics, sensitivity to social injustice and a deep desire for a fraternal and egalitarian world. Like his friend, the surrealist poet Jean-Pierre Duprey, Serge Bricianer was "allergic to the planet". Let's make sure that feeling is shared.

Charles Reeve

Notes :

[1] Introduction, "Karl Korsch, Marxisme et contre-révolution" (choice of texts translated and presented by Serge Bricianer), Seuil, Paris, 1975.2] - Ibid.

[2] Ibid

[3] Since the publication of this text, Ab irato has edited by Serge Bricianer: *étincelle dans la nuit : Islam et révolution en Iran 1978-1979* (2002).

THE MYTHS OF EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE

In the history of societies and states, there are founding myths. Undeniable truths, at least for the most part, their function is always to justify the mode of domination in place and to stifle in the egg attempts to call it into question when it begins to appear for what it is. The same is true of the founding myths of science. Faced with the accumulation of catastrophes and scandals in which it is involved, the body of scientists still has the impudence to affirm that it is only a question of blunders, nothing but blunders, attributable to some irresponsible researchers, corrupt politicians and mad mad military... But science as such would have nothing to do with such horrors. From now on, the fauna of the reformists and moralists, researchers still in activity or already in retreat, rises to the occasion. They use all the advertising and media means made available to them by the State in order to make it more presentable in the eyes of the disillusioned. To believe them, it would be enough that it reunites with the spirit which was, it seems, hers at the origin so that it returns in the good way. It therefore seems useful to us to revisit this imaginary genesis somewhat.

For the official history, the decisive advance of science, towards the end of the Renaissance, was the work of extraordinary personalities, solitary, honest and disinterested, persecuted by the Church and ready to the supreme sacrifice to make their cause triumph: to dispel the darkness of obscurantism, to illuminate with the lights of the knowledge of nature the way of humanity so that it progresses in the conquest of happiness. But far from being intrepid revolutionaries, the founding fathers of science were generally fearful reformists, dyed-in-the-wool clergymen, landowners and bourgeois, even beasts of power, like Francis Bacon, Chancellor of England and principal ideologue of experimental science. They were even hostile to the radical questioning of religion: Bacon had Giordano Bruno expelled from the University of London for heresy. On the other hand, all criticized the Church for taking a position on matters that did not concern it. Theologians should no longer be the censors of natural scientists: *"We must give back to faith what is faith, to science what is science."* [1] The separation of the divine and the profane was on the agenda. The emancipation of science from theology went hand in hand with the emancipation of the bourgeoisie from the aristocracy and the Roman church, especially in England, the cradle of capital accumulation. Despite the wrath of the Church, the recognition of science by the State was very quickly acquired. The absolutist states, prototypes of the national states of today, were engaged in wars for the control of the world market in the process of constitution and for the sharing of the colonies. They were anxious to consolidate their own civilian and military manufacturing base. Hence the foundation, during the Great Century, of royal academies of sciences, placed under the tutelage of the monarchs, but also of parallel academies, financed by the banking and commercial companies which had the monopoly of exchanges with the colonies. Academicians were retired by the state and sometimes salaried by manufacturers, bankers and traders. The academic luminaries were thus able to acquire notoriety and lucrative incomes to carry out, in the shadow of despotism, their expensive research. Isaac Newton, the symbol of science at the time, president of the Royal Academy of England, was also one of the main shareholders and managers of the East India Company and the future Bank of England. The credit of science accompanied the growth of credit itself.

Autonomy of thought towards the Roman Church had been the great demand of the founding fathers. In their minds, the enlightened despotism of the State was to protect them from the persecutions of the Church. But the monarchs and knights of industry, banking and commerce did not limit themselves to financing the academies. They intervened in their discussions and their choices. State intervention became even more systematic, particularly in France from the reign of the Sun King. The ministers of the King of France, in the decades preceding the Revolution, even forbade academies to continue studying physics in the spirit of Aristotle, sanctified by Rome as the master of mechanics. Newton's physics was already well established and recognized as the model of experimental science. The State stimulated the development of the sciences which were indispensable for the accumulation of capital and the increase of royal power. Thus, botany gained importance in connection with the extension of the plantations placed under the control of the various companies of India. The botanical gardens they financed in metropolitan France were laboratories where naturalists studied the possibilities of increasing the yield of exotic crops in the colonies.

In the minds of the ideologues of science, the concept of nature had very specific functions: religion had ruled in the name of God, science was going to do so in the name of Nature. Strange nature by the way that they were supposed to represent. Reified, it no longer had anything to do with nature as understood by the best critics of Christianity, such as Giordano Bruno, in spite of their pantheistic shortcomings: creative nature, source of life, which existed only through the multitude of things and transient beings that made it up. Driven by dynamic and contradictory forces, the evolution of nature was not limited to the perpetual repetition of the same phenomena even when they presented, during their movement in space and time, remarkable regularities. For Bruno, the notion of creativity, in the profane and non-divine sense, implied that there had been and would continue to be unexpected spontaneous creations, disappearances and transformations in nature, that all evolutions, mutations and regressions are not given in advance and predictable. There were some things that were elusive, indescribable and unthinkable in nature unless one imagined that humanity, in the image of God, was the true demiurge of the universe. Moreover, he did not simply recognize the importance of the connections and correlations between humanity and nature, understood as the indispensable environment for human life. Humans themselves were one of the manifestations of nature's creative power. They were part of it even if they distinguished themselves by their particular faculties, in the foreground of which they placed sensitivity and thought.

The idea that nature could be creating was not to the taste of science. Nature must have been silent and when it was not, scientists did not hesitate to silence it: *"The only hope of progress lies in the restoration of science and the beginning of this restoration must take into account the totality of natural history but it is of a new kind. For what understanding requires is the preparation of the appropriate thing and that is why we look very little at the history of free and unbound nature in its own spontaneous work and course. We are concerned with the history of forced and tormented nature as it is when mortal effort and art tear it from its proper state, sense it and shape it. We care not for the pride and prestige of the thing and nature appears to us more through the torments and irons of art than in our own freedom."* [2]

"Knowledge is power" [3] : Bacon, with the cynicism of the statesman, had at least the merit of clearing showing his colours. The lapidary formula contrasted at its root with the claim to the innocence of science, distinct from the needs of capital, motivated by the search for knowledge for the pleasure of knowledge of nature. The foundation on which science was based was the historical process of separation between nature and society based on exploitation and domination, the process of appropriation of nature through labour, which was taking on dimensions hitherto unknown with the emergence of wage labour and the instruments necessary for the development of capital. From the perspective of the ideologists of science, nature had always been the seat of foreign forces hostile to humanity. The progress of humanity consisted in taming them ever more in order to transform nature into an environment adapted to the needs of property and the State. And the role they assigned to science was to work to aggravate the process of domestication to *"finally make us masters and possessors of the totality of nature"* [4] - As the elite of knowledge, they naturally placed their research activities well above those of ordinary mortals. But, in spite of the sophisticated means they used, they nonetheless remained work intended to develop capital. This is why, from the dawn of industrialization, they did not only concern themselves with pure research but undertook to merge science and technology. Their laboratory instruments were already both models and prototypes of those beginning to be used by capitalism, especially in the decisive field of engine power.

As a result, it is hardly surprising that they equated natural history with the history of class societies, particularly capitalist society. When Bacon affirmed that *"we, ministers and interpreters of nature, can govern it only if we obey it"* [5], he revealed that, in the upside-down world of science, it was capitalism itself that appeared as nature, as the supreme authority to which all owed allegiance. The so-called laws of nature were like the laws that idealized the way capital worked, guided by the need to constantly generate, invest and reinvest profits to survive, even if it meant ravaging and sterilizing nature. In other words, they expressed only submission to the necessities of accumulation. The book of the wonders of nature interpreted by science was very similar to the prosaic books of accounts of the bourgeoisie and the state.

Following the fathers of faith, those of science also intended to tame human beings. They knew, moreover, that the achievement of their objectives ultimately depended on the damned of the Earth. They didn't think they could change the world on their own. On the other hand, they wanted to manage it.

That is why, at the end of the Renaissance, they began to draw up plans for reorganizing society and the State. In the utopian and totalitarian society he imagines, "New Atlantis", Bacon anticipates in many ways the scientist to come. Even if Christian religion and morality continue to have their place in Atlantis, the empire of Reason has succeeded the kingdom of God on Earth. No authority without power, no power without knowledge, no knowledge without science that validates it, such is the central theme of Bacon's utopia. Rich in their experience in mastering things and beings, scientists form the core of the hierarchy. They run it and regulate everyday life, from the workshop to the domestic kitchen. The ideal city functions, like automata, on a regular basis under the control of the masters of knowledge. Guided by the knowledge of the world held by the cénacle, it is free from the contradictions that until then had disturbed the harmony of society. When they appear, they can only be the result of maladjusted people who refuse to place the laws of the community, based on science, above their own individual passions. If the troublemakers of harmony refuse to understand, they must be neutralized. In the image of the reason of State, Reason hated contradiction.

We see it, from the beginning, scientists had the incredible pretension of teaching the rest of humanity to live and die. The "obedient commanding" revealed their excessive thirst for power. Nothing is more relentless than the ideologues who finally imagine they hold the key to understanding the world. Mirrors of the world, they are therefore the only authentic interpreters and the rest of the universe owes them obedience. As Bakunin showed, *"their government can only be cruel, exploitative and oppressive"* [6]

The hatred of the senses, dreams and human passions was one of the main characteristics of theologians. Worship of the divine world was the only passion they recognized as worth living. Scientists, hostile to sensualism, did the same in the name of knowledge of the secular world. They affirmed, like Bacon, that *"our mind does not need wings but lead soles"*) and fought like the plague *"the senses and passions that deceive us, the imagination and the fantastic and superfluous representations that clutter our mind"* [7]). Far from freeing these essential faculties of the human species, which are sensitivity, reflection and imagination, they therefore had the objective of subduing them even more to adapt them to the needs of their idol.

In their minds, scientific rigour stemmed from the implementation of the inductive and deductive method of thought. Considered as a prerequisite to the process of forming the concepts themselves, it was to bar the way to vain speculation and facilitate the realistic investigation of nature through the care taken in studying the details hitherto neglected. But in use, the "discourse of the method" sanctioned the triumph of instrumentalist ideology, the reign of the functionalization of thought, of heavy formalist, analogical, repetitive cogitation and incapable of showing critical spirit. The spontaneous processes of the formation of ideas, both individual and collective, which implemented all human faculties, were no longer of any importance. The ideal was the mathematization of nature.

Indeed, there could only be science that could be quantified and it could not govern the world without calculation. The clerics had Latin as coded language, the vehicle of the revelation of the mysteries of faith. Scientists had their own, mathematical language, as a means of keeping their accounts with nature up to date. They did not make mystery of the reductive character of mathematics, where reiteration took the place of argumentation *"but science is the art of measurement and measurement is at this price. Outside the convenience of calculation, everything seems far too confusing and subtle."* [8] Thanks to them, they were finally able to realize their obsession: to transform the world into equivalent, weighted, measurable, calculable, quantifiable entities that could be formulated into mathematical symbols. The famous laws were themselves only convenient means to equate the phenomena of life. They explained nothing but proved useful for observing and calculating the state and evolution of systems and functions.

As a power aspiring to domination, science needed martyrs. Galileo's fame among the enlightened public of the time came much more from the trial than from the questionable evidence that he was supposed to provide as the basis for the principle of inertia, the keystone of experimental physics. But martyrology nevertheless proved insufficient. From religious, truth had to become scientific, not revealed but proven. Thus was born the myth of experimental proof.

Humanity had not waited for science to conduct experiments. All human beings realize it from birth to death. They have always been an integral part of human life, and even non-human, as soon as it possessed faculties such as sensitivity, memory and reflection, even if they were embryonic. In the spirit of the best thinkers of the time, like Giordano Bruno, experience, the sensible associated with thought, was one of the main sources of knowledge of the world but also of oneself.

The ideologists of science, full of themselves, despised the experience of common sense. They were obliged to take this into account, however, since their own experiments seemed very hermetic in the eyes of the people they wanted to captivate, aristocrats and enlightened bourgeois. Also, in their mouths, the call to common sense had the function of striking the imagination of the dazzled naive. Newton would have so formulated the principle of gravitation thanks to the fall of apples in the Garden of Oxford. Undeniable proof of genius because, since the time that apple trees bloom in the English gardens, nobody had had the idea to draw from it such universal principle. But the cheaters forgot to say that without Galileo's acceptance of the axiom on inertia, Newton's hypothesis had no value.

In reality, for scientists, human experience was something inferior and unessential ! "*The domain of vulgar things, which cannot teach us anything about the intimacy of nature*" [9] Detached from life and considered superior to it, experience became their reserved domain: it was to reveal to them the hidden mysteries of nature, the invisible and somewhat immutable substance, hidden within visible phenomena and which was to determine their evolution. But, prisoners of their instrumentalist prejudices, they never managed to understand in depth the world they were supposed to observe impartially. They were said to study life, but properties as essential to life as sensitivity, they did not encounter under their measuring instruments except as obstacles to overcome. Generally speaking, all the phenomena that did not fit into the mould fixed by the cankers of the experiment were considered as annexes. Bacon confessed himself without blush: "*Is worthy of the name, the one designed and presented with the skill and rigor of art to obtain what is sought. Induction proceeds by separation in experimentation and the necessary conclusion depends on the forced exclusion. And the necessary is the measurable.*" [10] The a posteriori checked the a priori on condition that one did not hesitate to manipulate the manipulation. It was sufficient to define and isolate the area of validity of the tests and to define in advance what should be fragmented and discarded. In the final analysis, the validity criterion depended on the choice of standards and measuring instruments that confirmed, corrected and even invalidated the basic axioms when the tests did not lead to the desired consequences. It was even possible to demonstrate almost anything. But in reality, choices were never made without ulterior motives. Experimenters could not leave ideology at the door of their laboratories. And, attached to their status as privileged bodies, it was very rare that they did not orient their experiments in the direction determined by the needs of capitalism and the State.

Experimentation has never proved anything other than the deadly nature of science. In action, researchers should not give in to "*any kind of sensibility*" [11] - They should not hesitate to destroy to know. This was not without its difficulties, for some, even among academics not inclined to sentimentalism, were reluctant to participate in the planned massacre and shivered with disgust at the ignominious acts perpetrated in the experimentation rooms. The experimental approach was not an analysis but a dissection of life, literally and figuratively, cut, carved, dismembered, quartered and mutilated. Things and beings subjected to instruments were themselves only instruments, flesh for experimentation. Primed for and by experimentation, they were already only members of themselves. And after the disassembly, came the reassembly form, the creation of models supposed to represent in their generality the phenomena of life subjected to tests. Science thus seemed to bring to life the things and fugitive and transient beings it had annihilated. But such abusive generalizations were never but frozen extrapolations, the ghosts of the individualists detached from their environment, thus deprived forever of their own life, even when they were still palpitating under the instruments.

In accordance with humanist ideology, science had placed the human individual at the top of the hierarchy of species, next to God, then in God's place. This seemed at least to offer the guarantee that it would not do to the human species what it did to species considered subordinate. But, under the pretext of promoting the progress of humanity, she did not hesitate to sacrifice human individuals on the altar of experimentation. The cold passion of the experimenter sometimes even pushed him to the worst extremes. Bacon, the first, proposed the use of prisoners subjected to torture for experimental purposes and, following him, the Newtons, Lavoisiers and other academic luminaries of the period of the Great Century and later of the Enlightenment. The honorable members of the royal academies left their laboratories to carry out in the crowd, in the middle of London for example, experiments of electricity and chemistry which crippled onlookers. The Enlightenment saw the appearance of the practice of soliciting the poor, later generalized by the laboratories, beginning with that of the good Doctor Pasteur. For a few pennies, the teams of reelers took them to the cellars of the royal academies or the experimenters made them ingest preparations which, sometimes, poisoned them. With the notable exception of Diderot, who denounced its inhumanity, the matter did not prevent many people from sleeping, even on the side of encyclopedists. When one sees what the humanists of the academies were capable of, it was not surprising that they manufactured without complex instruments of war and torture.

it is not my intention to transform all the men of science of the time, any more than their successors, into bloodthirsty monsters. However, the ease with which they became indifferent and even ruthless in their activity speaks volumes about the inhuman nature of science. It is pragmatic. Only the results count, and the end justifies the means. Faced with Reason, the principle of individuality displayed by science has never weighed very heavily. An abstract humanist principle, it has always masked the little attention it paid to concrete individuals, both human and non-human. For scientists, they have never been anything more than sketches, not always very well finished, of the prototype they wanted to refine to achieve the perfection of the model.

As we can see, the idea that science is capable of self-correction as long as it reconnects with humanism is ridiculous. The fold was already taken at the end of the Renaissance and, since then, it has shown what it is capable of in terms of inhumanity.

It is in the nature of humans to create their own world, to transform the non-human environment that surrounds and penetrates them, according to their goals, ideas, desires and needs, an activity that also includes their own transformation, especially through the formation of conceptual thinking and articulated language. To our knowledge, such creative faculties are unique on the planet, at least at such degrees of complexity. The transformative power that humanity possesses is both promising and disturbing. To paraphrase the popular saying, while it can generate the best, it is also capable, when historical circumstances permit, of generating the worst. And the worst always happens when human beings see the world as nothing more than their property, which they can and must possess through their work.

More than ever, they are confronted with the problem of profoundly transforming activities and relationships in the world of exploitation and domination. One of the essential conditions for progress in this direction is that they finally understand that nature is much more than just their playground. They will never be content to observe without touching it, to interpret it without modifying it. What is essential here is that the modifications and transformations they will carry out take the spontaneous evolution of natural phenomena into account as much as possible. Their own freedom is at stake because, as human history attests, the domination of man by man is the corollary of the domination of nature by man. *"The human creature will only be free when all earthly creatures are free,"* [12] Munzer prophesied with some reason. But even if such conditions are met, the human adventure will not be over unless we believe that, like gods, humans are not capable of mastering their destiny in its entirety. There is no guarantee that, even when they are freed from capital, they will not sometimes fall back into all-too-familiar failings and even into others, unknown, that we cannot even imagine today. Human life is also made up of criticism, trial and error, implementation and questioning, individual and collective experiences, through exchanges within our species and with the rest of nature.

Reconciliation with nature is one of humankind's antediluvian dreams, no doubt since the appearance of property and the State. But it is not cheap. It is to be conquered unceasingly. Moreover, unless they want to force human life back to the idealized stage of vegetative survival, the mere presence of human beings on the planet implies that they modify it to live. Even in the absence of exploitation and domination, this sometimes has unpleasant, even deadly consequences for some of them and for other natural beings. The essential thing is not to repress contradictions in the name of universal harmony, but to recognize them as such when they appear and to seek to create favourable conditions so that they do not turn into destructive and self-destructive antagonism. There will no doubt always be contradictions in natural and human history, especially between individuals. For individualization is one of the properties of life that also appears in non-human nature, though sometimes not very noticeably for us. But we cannot ignore it unless we reduce ourselves to undifferentiated and interchangeable objects. The recognition of the individual dimensions of existence is one of the conditions for rediscovering and developing a sense of sociability, symbiosis and reciprocity in nature and with nature.

André Dréan

Notes :

- [1] "Advancement of learning", (1605) F. Bacon.
- [2] "La Valeur et le progrès des sciences", (1623) F. Bacon.
- [3] "New Atlantis", (1625) F. Bacon.
- [4] "Le discours de la méthode", (1637) R. Descartes.
- [5] "La Valeur et le progrès des sciences", (1623) F. Bacon.
- [6] "God and the State", (1872) Mr. Bakunin.
- [7] "On Principles and Origins", (1620) F. Bacon.
- [8] "La Valeur et le progrès des sciences>>>", (1623) F. Bacon.

[9] "Advancement of learning", (1605) F. Bacon.

[10] "Novum Organum", (1620) F. Bacon.

[11]"La Valeur et le progrès des sciences", (1623) F. Bacon.

[12] "Mulhausen articles", (1524) Th. Munzer.

THE LOVES OF ART AND MONEY

Art and money have appeared in various types of society other than capitalist societies, which have given them their present form. Or, rather, we encounter phenomena presenting the characteristics of the activities called today art and money in different forms of social life. But they did not yet possess the essential characteristics related to the roles they play in the society in which we live. The classical authors had already stigmatized the degeneration caused by the love of money, especially the deleterious effects it had on poetry. However, until recent centuries, money was not the true general equivalent of trade between goods (since labour power barely existed as a commodity) and it played only a rudimentary role as capital. For the most part, the term "art" was still synonymous with trade or know-how. And it was only towards the end of the 18th century that the modern system of the arts was to see the light of day.

The intensification of trade during the Renaissance and the development of a production method centered on the expansion of value encouraged the emergence of a great love story between art and money. Poets, musicians and plastic artists began to produce for merchants and bankers as well as for popes and princes. In the 18th century, however, the seeds of conflict first appeared in this emotional relationship. So much so that in 1771, Mrs. d'Épinay could write of Fragonard: *"He wastes his time and talent: he earns money."* [1] Diderot's salon criticism, for example, represented the opposition between the emerging social principle of capital and earlier aristocratic ideals. And this is in the form of a fear that the arts will degenerate because of the very increase in wealth, which should have fostered the flourishing of culture. However, at the turn of the century, art generally came to appear as a redeemer of wealth, not only by embellishing bourgeois homes but also by providing some spiritual refuge to hard-working capital. (Note the difficulty of assigning a gender to art: while the artist was clearly defined as male, the art object tended to be female.

The role of the State was decisive here, as for any legitimate link, recognized by society. From the end of the 18th century, the first museums were created from princely and royal collections, as symbols of national power and dignity and also as institutions intended to elevate the taste of the common man whose existence, with the development of modernity, had to be recognized. In the United States, as soon as the unified capitalist power became aware of its strength in the aftermath of the Civil War, businessmen from New York gathered in Paris to call for the foundation of an art museum, to show that they could now speak as equals with the ruling classes of Europe. To varying degrees and in different ways, States have encouraged the establishment of private collections, set up institutions for the training of artists and subsidized theatres and concert halls.

Like other marriages, this one combined true affection, dependence, resentment and mutual distrust. After all, it was in this society, dedicated to commerce like no other in history, that the spiritual virtues of art were associated with the idealized overcoming of the search for profit. From the artists' point of view, artistic activity was an expression of their superiority over labour, which had become the common lot of humanity in bourgeois society. Art was thus defined - Kant's aesthetics is the classic example - as "free", that is, exclusively governed by the internal impulses of its creators. Like other modern forms of freedom, the artist's freedom was one of the particular applications of the laissez-faire ideal, marking the replacement of commissioned works by patrons, characteristic of pre-modern arts, by work for the anonymous market. Given the actual mechanism of markets, it is not surprising that the inseparable myth of freedom of expression has been bohemian life. By virtue of necessity, involvement in a profession that provided wealth, or even sufficient income, only to small minorities, aroused aristocratic disdain for trade and, therefore, the appearance of a way of life that was intended to be superior to that of the businessman.

The other side of the coin was the tendency of the art lover businessman to distance himself from the pursuit of mere gain. The veneration for art came to express the aspiration of the upper classes of capitalist society to rise above the down-to-earth concerns of commerce, as worthy heirs of aristocratic culture. As manufacturers and financiers in Europe and America bought estates and started hunting, they filled their homes with antique furniture, paintings by old masters, or works of art of the moment.

The golden age of these loves can be illustrated by Joseph Choate's words at the opening of the new building of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Central Park in 1890. He urged New York millionaires *"to convert pork into porcelain, grain and fresh food into precious pottery, the coarse ores of the carved marble trade and the parts of the railway and the actions of the mines - all things which perish without being used and which in the next financial panic will shrivel up as surely as burned scrolls - into famous paintings of the great masters of the world... It is our highest ambition to convert your useless gold into objects of living beauty which will make the joy of a whole people during thousands of years."* [2] In reality, the dependence of this living beauty on nothing less than useless gold governed the constitution of collections as well as philanthropic donations of works of art. It explains the mixture of admiration and contempt with which the rich regarded artists.

In 1939, Clement Greenberg drew our attention to the evolution of these conflicting loves in the 20th century. Thus, he described the relationship between the vanguard and *"elites within the ruling class of this society, from which it considers itself cut, but to which it has always remained attached by an umbilical cord made of gold"* [3]. Given the opposition of fascism and Stalinism to modernism, which had its favor, Greenberg believed that only socialism - the abolition of a society devoted to the enlarged reproduction of money - could keep culture alive. He could not see that the upper classes would soon embrace the vanguard with enthusiasm, and that modernism would become the official art of progressive capitalism. [4]

With the victory of American modernism after the Second World War and the shift of contemporary art to the centre of the aesthetic scene, we could see that art had become a kind of concentrate of the characteristics that make the success of an individual, a society or a nation: audacity, innovation, sensitivity to new needs still unknown to those who will recognize them at the time of their satisfaction [5]. The most coherent attempts to challenge the ownership of the avant-garde by capital, for example works such as Hans Haacke's "Documentation of Peter Ludwig's Industrial and Artistic Holdings", are easily absorbed by the artistic system even if, within it, an institution or another protests (as when the Guggenheim refused to exhibit Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings of Shacke in 1971). The fact that modern art, including post-modern art, functions as a class symbol is verified by the way it can be mobilized in an almost populist way by American conservatives in their struggle for power.

Phenomena of this order reveal the existence of elements disturbing the embrace of culture and commerce, as partners age. Art has not only been, from the beginning, one of the areas conducive to the representation of conflicting relations within bourgeois society, but it has also been affected by its development. With its world historical success, capitalism has lost much of its "bad conscience" and its initial sense of inferiority to earlier social orders. Thus, art can function more freely not only as signifier of wealth but also as a means of its expansion.

In the 19th century, as we have seen, art was defined as the embodiment of values superior to those of the market, as a model of meaning and as an object transcending everyday commercial life. Today, this conception of art, although still in force, is apparently in decline. One of the striking manifestations of this phenomenon is the tendency of artists, critics, historians and collectors to accept in their work, however ironic they may be, the coexistence of trade and the aspiration to transcendence, even the pre-eminence of the former over the latter.

Andy Warhol is, of course, the very example of the artist who placed the commercial character of art at the heart of his own activity. Interesting variations on this theme could be the work of JSG Boggs and H Steinbach, who specialized, respectively, on the monetary and commercial poles of value circulation. The recent increase in interest in the art market among sociologists, art historians and economists is part of the same phenomenon, as is the influence of Pierre Bourdieu's studies on cultural production, highlighting the link between aesthetics and market value and making fundamental use of the notion of cultural capital.

The take over of artistic production and consumption and, in particular, the avant-garde domain, by State and university institutions, combined with the gigantic and rapid expansion of the art market, have eroded the ancient conception of art based on overcoming the social division of labour, carried out by the creative, heroic individual. Art today is, at least in practice, more clearly subordinated to the private and state institutions that govern all other areas of social life. This is not necessarily bad for artists, or for anyone else who seeks to find in the debris of capitalist civilization materials for the creation of new meanings. It is always useful to know where you are.

With the collapse of pseudo-socialism, now retrospectively transformed into a preparatory stage for the further globalisation of capital, the realm of money seems larger and more solid than ever. At the same time, the crisis in the state-party system was one of the elements of the much larger crisis in the state-capital system. It is certainly too optimistic to speak of the "ageing" of money, thereby implying the programmed death of bourgeois society. But, beyond the certainty that this society, no more than those that preceded it, will not last indefinitely, the current period, combining economic decline and many ecological disasters, shows that we are entering an era of disasters. It could perhaps make the search for forms of association beyond today's conceivable once again.

It is this situation that has produced the ruin of the ideology called post-modernism, the loss of confidence in progress, in all areas of social life. While art, like politics, science and self, continues to function as one of the fundamental representations of social activity, it is itself part of the general decline. In the United States at least, the eclipse of art, as an object of worship, by religion, may reveal it to us. Even though it promised to be its substitute. In their old age, art and money have not found peace and security which, only forty years ago, seemed to be their due, but anguish, disappointment and doubt, which all the bullshit and self-persuasion can only alleviate momentarily [6].

Paul Mattick Jr. [7]

Notes :

[1] Quoted by Étienne Jollet in L. B. Dorléac et al, "Le commerce de l'art", Ed. La Manufacture, Besançon, 1992, p. 129. In addition to this very interesting article, see also, P. Mattick Jr, in P. Mattick et al, "Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics and the Reconstruction of Art", Cambridge Univeversity Press, New York, 1993, pp. 152-177, and Annie Bec, in Jean-Claude Bonnet, et al, "La Carmagnole des Muses", Armand Colin, 1988, pp. 81-95.

[2] Quoted in C. Tomkins, Ditton, New York, 1973, pp. 23-24.

[3] C. Greenberg, in Art and Culture, Dutton ed. in Boston, 1961, p. 8.

[4] Two descriptions of the early stages of this development can be found in Nicholas Fox Weber, *Patron Saints*, Knopf, New York, 1992, "Étude du mécénat moderne aux États-Unis dans les années 30", and James Sloan Allen, "The Romance of Commerce and Culture", University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1983, on the alliance between modern art and the American business elite.

[5] To quote just one of many expressions of this thought, Hamish Maxwell speaking in place of the sponsor of Picasso and Braque's 1989 major exhibition on Cubism at the Museum of Modern Art, said that "Philip Morris [was] pleased to contribute to the presentation of this tribute to the enduring value of creativity, experimentation and innovation, qualities we believe are as important to business as they are to the arts. For whether we are in 1908 or 1989, in a rapidly changing world, not taking risks is the greatest risk of all" (William Rubin, *Picasso and Braque : Pioneering Cubism* [New York : Museum of Modern Art, 1989], p. 5.).

[6] An earlier version of this essay will appear in Sheely Horstein and Jody Berlands (et al.), *State Institutions and Value(s)*, McGill- Queen's University Press, Toronto, forthcoming.

[7] Additional note: On this theme, P. Mattick Junior co-published with Katy Spiegel Argent in 2004.

« DECHERVELAGE »

In this month of October, at the top of the bill, everywhere: Che Guevara. *"Remember this small condottiere of the 20th century"*, wrote this stakhanovist of the guerrilla before going one last time to hunt down the paper tiger of imperialism at the bottom of a jungle. And thirty years after his death, we still remember him, in a world where the memory of the past helps us to forget that the present has no future, and where the history of the past struggles, their commemoration, so invigorating for the veterans, have for role to make incomprehensible the current struggles. What is celebrated in Che's face? The revolutionary agitation of the 1960s, if it still holds a utopian surplus in the subversive imagination, could not be reduced either to the pavé-étalon of May 68, nor to the image of Christ-guérillero that we see flourishing again in the shops of radical ready-to-wear. But it is perhaps also the very idea of revolution that one wants to tie with this so expressive goatee, in the archaic ideology that it conveyed in the shade of the morose mangroves. A revolution which is only a military adventure, which aims only at the take-over of power, which the masters of this world have all the means to guarantee themselves...

However, I dare to believe that this idea is conveyed differently, in relationships more complex than the adoration of an icon to the cult served by journalists, leftists repented or not and the last Stalinist bureaucrats in exercise. This complexity is commensurate with the current confusion, which will not, far from it, be lifted by the mystification of a "real left" watering, under the gaze of a few tutelary figures, the old tree of the "next-day-singer" whose best fruits after successively falling in the gardens of the "socialism-in-one-country", would fall today in cadence in the Chiapan eden. Two months ago, during the last papal performance in Paris, a friend told me that he had seen an interview on the news with a teenager participating in it. To the journalists astonishment to see him on such an occasion wearing a T-shirt bearing the effigy of the most famous Cuban Minister of the Economy, the young man replied more or less this: *"Che is for the mind, the pope is for the heart."* News of idolatry. If it is still reassuring that this boy knows he has a mind and a heart, the symbolic forms he communicates to them, when will they stop carrying these deadly deliriums to open more avenues to desire? To hell with the Vatican carrion and the fatigue relics, but will the circulation of the Guévarist legend be able to exceed its commercial objective and untie in this senseless world the need for the renewal of the Promethean myth? Not of course in order to feed with devoted militants some Marxist organization claiming to be this arboricultural strategist ! But since this whole media operation is addressed not only to the guevarists of yesteryear but especially to a younger generation so obviously devoid of culture that the minister of its education proposes to give them lessons in morality, it is important to know if, against all expectations, once the whirlwinds of incense have dissipated, the image of the bearer of the star beret is likely to grant itself an unforeseen metaphor, that of an irreconcilable rebellion against the order of this world. The images that run through the streets of contemporary mythology have a latent power that is not controlled by those who, speculating on the misery of sensible life, gradually deprived of effective achievements to the benefit of virtual substitutes, multiply their appearance. Because playing with the portrait of such a cigar smoker is also playing with the desire for fire and the burning of an entire horizon.

But this image of Che, what is it an ad for ? It sells thirty-six cultural products, books, films, symposiums, exhibitions, festivals and various ceremonies including on a tropical island, a funeral with great fanfare. The mechanism of the show is well oiled and certainly, it has made his teeth on tougher prey than the sparkling operative. And yet, it is October. For thrill seekers, it is the 80th anniversary of the Russian revolution. We don't speak of it much, was it only this "*vague ministerial crisis*" as claimed Aragon, whose 100th anniversary we celebrate ? Let us bet that in spite of all the indisputable utility that the communist parties resulting from the consequences of the October 1917 coup d'état showed for the survival of the old world, the revolutionary events from which they benefited are not yet reducible to sports commentaries.

World upside down before being renewed world, the time of the revolution could be confused with the time of the carnival. In the world of entertainment, the carnival is a permanent promise, a promise of what lies beyond the commodity that is nostalgia for its mad expenditure . In other words, exoticism. And what could be more exotic than the Rio carnival ? The idea of revolution, to make it inoffensive, let it thus be confused with that of an historical exoticism ! In such an un festive perspective, the figure of Che works best. The sparrow scarecrow under the palm trees over there, so far away.

Guy Girard