

Part IV

COMMENTARIES

Alternative Production Systems?

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The desire to live in a non-exploitative society is not a new one, but the idea that a new "mode of production" or "alternative production system" is required to achieve this is barely 200 years old—nearly as young as the concept of "mode of production" itself. Both are products of the modern pattern of capitalist power. Although this idea was politically and theoretically formulated and debated in early nineteenth-century Europe, half a century would go by before it gained general acceptance.¹ Since that time, albeit with well-known ups and downs, this idea has been continuously present in debates and social conflicts worldwide. It has often been the well-spring of ferment and fervor, as in the 1960s. But at other times, such as our own, this idea has emerged from the margins, and yet nevertheless has had wide repercussions.

Thus, from a European perspective, capitalism is the field of relations that gives meaning to any "alternative" "mode" or "system of production" that is considered—or expected—to be capable not only of replacing the capitalist system, but above all of eliminating the social underpinnings and historical conditions of exploitation and social domination. In other words, for the last two hundred years, this idea has been one of the central axes of the struggles against capitalism in particular, and against all forms of exploitation and domination in general.

This is neither the time nor place to cite historical facts or discuss the debate among European currents on proposals for such "alternative modes of production," although this is a task that should be undertaken in order to compare them with the proposals of the rest of the capitalist world. However, reference should at least be made to the proposals that have been prominent in the debate and that have played a more influential role in revolutionary struggles and in power struggles in general.

Throughout the nineteenth century and until the First World War, various proposals emerged within Europe. These ranged from Saint-Simon's ambiguous but widespread idea of a "society of producers," and included the "cooperatives" proposed by Owen, Fourier's phalanstery, the nationalization of all production resources proposed by Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*, the Russian *obshchina*-type community, proposed by the *narodniks*, or Russian "populists," the Paris 1871 "Commune" revolution (which would be adopted by Marx, radically correcting his previous proposals in the *Manifesto*), the "Commune" of the anarchist movement, and the "workers' councils" proposed by some minority groups within European socialism, especially in the Netherlands.

Of these, until very recently, it was the nationalization of the economy proposed in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 that enjoyed the broadest practical application. The European social-democrat movement, and especially the so-called Bolsheviks, embraced it as specific to socialism, despite the later proposals made by Marx himself on the basis of the Paris Commune. When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia in 1917, that idea was put into practice for the first time. During the Spanish Civil War (1936–39), major groups of Spanish society, although in open conflict with the defenders of a state-run economy, attempted to set up "communes" and "councils" as a central form of organization for the new society. Most of these experiments took place in Catalonia and Aragon, but the defeat of the Republican forces brought them to an end. After the Second World War, Russia imposed the state-run economy within the entire "socialist block," both inside and outside Europe. From that time on, given the hegemony of the communist movement, which relied on the prestige and political power of the Soviet Union, this model also gained intellectual currency worldwide, shunting other proposals aside, particularly those associated with "Utopic Socialism," "Councils," "Russian Populism," and "Anarchism," which were interpreted according to Bolshevik and Stalinist perspectives. Thus, the rich, complex debate of European anti-capitalist revolutionaries was virtually squelched, and the idea that socialism and state-run economies were theoretically and politically interchangeable concepts became the norm for nearly the entire twentieth century, until the power of the Soviet Union and the European "socialist bloc" disintegrated in 1989.

Only cooperativism managed to weather the storm, although at the cost of drastic contortions: in Europe it found shelter with the movement that kept the name of social democrat, and outside Europe with certain democratic-nationalist currents that opposed the oligarchic-imperialist alliance in both Asia and Latin America. Since all these political groups were eventually reduced to fighting for reforms in the capitalist system, in order to alleviate worker exploitation and help manage the relationship between capital and labor in the countries where they were able to gain a foothold

in government, cooperativism became linked to the conception and practice of these reforms. In this way, cooperativism remained within the political debate and practice, but as a fringe sector of the capitalist economy. In a sense, this turn of events has shown that Marx was right when he stated that cooperatives did not constitute an alternative to capitalism in and of themselves, but that they could play an important supporting role in helping workers educate themselves in preparation for retaking control of their labor, and fighting against the despotism of capitalism.

Outside Europe, particularly in Latin America, different proposals emerged during the 1925–1935 revolutionary period.² The Peruvian José Carlos Mariátegui (1895–1930) probably provided one of the most important proposals, but due to his premature death it was not systematically researched or fleshed out, and so retained some ambiguities. On the one hand, Mariátegui's reflections on the role and place of the "indigenous community" in a socialist revolution bears some relationship to the research and proposals of the Russian *narodniks*, although it is doubtful that he was familiar with that debate except in its Leninist version. But, on the other hand, Mariátegui was explicitly interested in nationalizing the population occupying a political space, and did not discard the modern nation-state as the institutional axis of a socialist revolution. His proposals regarding indigenous communities and the national question were harshly condemned by representatives from the Communist International at the First Latin American Communist Conference (Buenos Aires, 1929). Later, in 1941, he was accused of being a *narodnik* by a Russian political commentator.³ Today, some European Trotskyist scholars still call him a "romantic anti-capitalist," due to those very proposals.

Two new projects came on the scene with the Second World War. During the takeover of Palestine, the socialist currents of Zionism organized a type of communes, which they called "kibbutz," in the territories that they began to occupy. For many, kibbutzim became one of the most interesting experiences of their kind, and perhaps the closest to the vision of a democratic socialist society. But kibbutzim were soon forced to bow to the needs of capitalism and the new state of Israel, to the contingencies of the Palestinian resistance, as well as to infighting between authoritarian and liberal sectors within the state of Israel itself. Today, while not completely disbanded, they are admittedly moving further and further away from their original project and earliest achievements.

The other project came out of Yugoslavia, under Tito and the Yugoslavian Communist League, after its break with the Soviet Union and Stalin. This project, involving worker "self-management" of production, arose as an alternative to the state-run economic model of the Soviet Union. Although it was under the bureaucratic control of the state, it was presented as the basis for a democratic socialism contrasting with Stalinist despotism. The

evaluation of this experience has yet to be made, but it did not survive the disintegration of Yugoslavia. In Latin America, it exercised limited influence in the debate among minor socialist factions in favor of "democratic socialism" (for example, in Chile's Socialist Party prior to 1973) and in certain regimes such as Peru's "Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces" (1968–1980), led by General Juan Velasco Alvarado in its early stages, and hence known as "velasquismo."

WHAT HAS CHANGED WITH THE ADVENT OF GLOBALIZATION?

Capitalism has certainly changed a great deal, particularly since the world crisis that began in the mid-1970s. And it is the perception of such changes that has led to the dissemination of the concept of "globalization." When calling for an "alternative production system," the reference is, necessarily, to this new mode of capitalism, which undoubtedly implies important new dimensions in the concept of "alternative." Yet, however much capitalism may have changed, the patterns of power have not. In this sense, the search for "alternative production systems" or "modes" still takes capitalism as a reference point.

Does this then mean that the search for an "alternative" economy holds nothing new? No, it does not. I believe that today there is a new anti-capitalist imaginary that opposes not only capitalism, but also the nationalization of the economy as a viable alternative to capitalism. I think that this is what is indeed new about the current critical imaginary in the society and the period associated with "globalization."⁴

Accordingly, we may say that the "alternatives" proposed for "systems or modes of production" take their meaning from two main points of reference: 1) capitalism, of course, particularly due to the virulent trends unleashed by globalization; and 2) the frustrating past experiences with pervasive state power and bureaucratic despotism in the socialist block, particularly in the Soviet Union.

The new anti-capitalist imaginary has yet to be expressed in or associated with a systematically researched critical theory of power and its corresponding revolutionary political proposals, although work is now being done in that direction. This probably explains why criticism of and resistance to the most predatory capitalist tendencies that globalization has unleashed against the rights of the oppressed and exploited still rely on the tools of the critical theory that was associated with the worldwide defeat of anti-capitalism between 1968 and 1989. But it also explains why none of the emerging alternative proposals make any mention of nationalized economies.

In this context, it might seem strange that the massive popular protests denouncing the lack of salaried jobs and demanding a more equitable

distribution of income, goods, and services, as well as the protests against the suppression of the legal rights of wage workers to negotiate the terms of their labor contracts—in other words, against the flexibilization and precarization of work—are all directed primarily at the state. But, in fact, there's nothing strange about this, if we take into account that, while no other concrete and effective options are brought into play, the state continues to be, within capitalism, not only a tool wielded by those who dominate and exploit, but also the arena where social battles are fought over the limits, conditions, and modalities of domination and exploitation. Within the state's institutional framework, it is unlikely that this will change. After all, even the most advanced capitalist democracies are nothing more than the negotiated institutionalization of such conflicts.⁵

For nearly three decades there has been no radical questioning of this pattern of power, nor have alternative proposals been presented. And, before this period, prior to the collapse of the socialist bloc, the hegemonic currents of the worldwide anti-capitalist movement insisted that the battle against capitalism was being waged to "take over" the state, and from there to "build" a new society. This shows that the state has a central role not only in the ideological universe of liberalism but also, and often in a more emphatic manner, in the ideological universe of historical materialism. Thus it should be no surprise that, at a moment when massive resistance against neoliberal policies and global imperialism is beginning, the sectors that radically question the existing power structure and present new proposals are in a minority. For this very reason, it would be equally unsurprising if, with the growth of resistance and protests, the dominating forces were gradually forced (as is slowly beginning to happen) to make concessions that normally could only be made through the state. If this actually happened, perhaps proposals for nationalized economies might find their way back into the debate as the normal alternative for the development and transformation of capitalism into socialism, as presented in historical materialism. But it is doubtful that current intersubjective tendencies will be completely discarded and existing social conditions dismantled. Even if this were to occur, it is equally doubtful that the nationalization of the economy will again be proposed as the best alternative to capitalism.

SOURCE AND MEANING OF THE PRINCIPAL CURRENT PROPOSALS

A review of the literature and history of the alternatives to capitalism that have emerged with the world crisis that began in the late 1960s allows us to differentiate two moments and two trends. The first has to do with Latin American research on the question of marginalization.⁶ In 1966, Latin American researchers were the first to point out emerging trends in

capital-labor relations, beyond the well-known capital expansion/contraction cycles, trends that were depriving a growing number of workers of stable salaried employment. The term used to describe this was "marginalization," but did not imply that the affected population was left completely outside of the capitalist system. Indeed, a group of these studies found that "marginalized" or unsalaried workers tended to organize what was called the "marginal pole" of the economy (i.e., capitalism), in which the relationships between the market and reciprocity were extremely heterogeneous and precarious, but also extremely active (Quijano, 1969).

The second trend was the result of the worldwide capitalist crisis beginning in mid-1973. When the crisis broke out, there was an explosion of "marginalized" workers all over the world, particularly in peripheral and dependent areas.⁷ It was in this context that the concept of "survival strategies" (Duque, 1973) rapidly took on universal meaning for the immense masses of workers who were excluded from salaried employment and left to swell the ranks of the poor. At about this same time, economists began using the term "structural unemployment" as empirical recognition of the fact that the changes in capital-labor relationships were no longer conjunctural or transitory. For the ideologues of capitalism, under this same mechanism of "abstracted empiricism," these masses of marginalized workers became "the poor" and the huge population to which they belonged became "the socially excluded." A large number of social researchers, previously critical of those in power, adopted these terms. The subordination of social thinking, even among those calling themselves social scientists, did not take long.

In reaction to these capitalist trends, a new era of workers' protest movements began. This era can be divided into two periods. Almost until the end of the twentieth century, resistance consisted mainly of ensuring survival. But how was this to be done when mercantilization had literally taken over the world, and being unemployed meant precisely a lack of income and "buying power"—or "solvency," as economists call it—making it virtually impossible to make a living from or according to the market?

The majority response was to universalize the mechanisms of the "marginal pole of the economy," or, in other words, to expand the "informal economy," understood as it was back when the term still meant "what the poor did to survive"—that is, before capitalists invaded even that space and began making jobs more precarious and flexible, began universalizing subcontracting, i.e., before the relationship between capital and labor was formally "deregulated." It was in this first period of workers' anti-capitalist resistance that "grassroots organizations" began to expand, although they had been active, at least in Latin America, since the early 1960s. This stage of resistance would continue until the end of the 1980s.

During this same period, due to the defeat of all the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist regimes, movements, and organizations, the polarizing tendencies

of capital accelerated and deepened. This was accompanied by a drastic re-concentration of control of public authority at a world scale into the hands of a global imperial bloc.⁸ In the face of such trends, workers—depending on their individual circumstances in such a heterogeneous historical and structural context—were pushed into different behaviors: 1) submit themselves to the exploitative conditions in place before they were salaried workers, now all the more perverse since such conditions were the result of the current trends and demands of capitalism; 2) resort to "survival strategies," using the logic and mechanisms of capitalism, continue to demand salaried employment, and fight to obtain it; 3) go back to the practice of reciprocity, under the new conditions and using the tools produced within capitalism.

A major percentage of workers worldwide fell victim once again to the worst type of pre-salary era exploitation. Conditions of servitude and slavery were reproduced and expanded. Production by small independent merchants proliferated worldwide, constituting probably the central sector of the so-called "informal economy." These perverse capitalist trends continue to grow under globalization.⁹

But increasingly broader sectors of unemployed workers who had lost their salaries (the "poor" and "excluded") had to resort to reciprocity, not only to exchange their labor and work among themselves, but also to find a way to handle—to their least possible disadvantage—their inevitable and indispensable relationship with the market. The situation worsened as "structural unemployment" took hold, and especially when it became a worldwide policy produced by the increasing lack of interest of capital in employing individuals and valorizing labor in a stable and regulated manner.

Reciprocity¹⁰ was never completely absent from capitalism, but its field of action became increasingly restricted. However, recourse to this form of control over work and organization of production has now increased. This is actually a rediscovery made by workers in their resistance to capitalism, although it is not the result of a conscious and explicit criticism of capitalism. Rather, it is primarily a social behavior arising from capitalist trends themselves, especially from the waning interest in the labor of individuals.

The increasing recourse to reciprocity constitutes a new trend in workers' resistance. It implies the beginning of another stage in the new historical era of social experiences and conflicts under capitalism. It is the material needs produced by current capitalist trends and their resulting realities that are forcing workers to realize that they can better defend themselves from capital, and even use the rules of the capitalist market to their advantage, only by abandoning these rules and implementing social practices that can lead them to regain control of their labor, their resources, and their products, as well as of all the other areas of their social existence.

Social agents and protagonists in reciprocity do not necessarily have to be fully aware, from the onset, of the theoretical and political implications of

their own actions or of the process itself. In fact, as has already been noted, such practices may appear in odd combinations with conservative political ideologies. Rather, it is the social practice itself, whether related to production or other areas of social life, that constructs and will continue to construct different ways of producing meaning, i.e., viewpoints that are different from those related to capitalism. These viewpoints, in turn, will then gradually be incorporated into the practices in question, even though the individual actors are not fully aware of this process. If they were, it would certainly help jump start the process, and also help them better defend themselves from the capitalist reaction.

Clearly it is no mere coincidence that resistance to capitalism and globalization has become a worldwide movement in only one decade, and that this movement is now explicitly seeking alternative societal options. The slogan of the World Social Forum, "Another World is Possible," is a sign of the times, reflecting the transition from an attitude of merely resisting the status quo, to one of seeking an alternative to it.

THE MAIN VARIABLES IN LATIN AMERICA

This is a complex period in which workers have shown their resistance to capitalism in many different ways. Understandably, a great many organizations and social practices present themselves as alternatives to the prevailing economic system. It is therefore important to distinguish between the options that have the social vitality required for them to construct a different history, in a different social environment, and those that do not. Proposals for making this distinction abound.¹¹ But there is a critical problem: how to define the elements that are adequate to make this distinction? Is it enough to consider the self-definition and explicit intentionality of those proposals and practices that present themselves as different from capitalism? How to evaluate their capacity not only to sustain but also to reproduce themselves inside the capitalist system, even while working against it?

There is, for instance, ample literature on grassroots organizations. Some studies address the "survival strategies" employed by the victims of the polarizing tendencies of capitalism, while others focus on the "new social movements," an issue that rocked virtually all NGOs worldwide. In Latin America particularly, this was a hotly debated issue when the worldwide defeat of what are now known as anti-systemic movements became evident to all and many groups thought they had discovered new "revolutionary subjects"¹² in these movements.

The experiments of grassroots organizations are frequently construed as an alternative economy. However, a relatively extensive study of the research on and documentation of these experiments (Quijano, 1998) shows that practically none of the grassroots organizations was able to move beyond the

"survival strategies" stage. This in no way diminishes the immensely important role they have played in helping the growing population of the world's poor to survive—and in many cases even to improve their living conditions. But, as Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito suggest in their introductory chapter, it is not unwarranted to maintain certain reservations regarding their claims about being an alternative. Thus, Anis Sheldon is right when he states that:

Non-governmental grassroots organizations are so frequently lost in self-admiration that they fail to see that the strengths for which they are acclaimed can also be serious weaknesses. In the face of pervasive poverty, for example, "small scale" can mean merely "insignificant." "Politically independent" can mean "powerless" or "disconnected." "Low cost" can mean "underfinanced" or "poor quality." "Innovative" can mean simply "temporary" or "unsustainable." (Sheldon, 1988: 209)

Even a portion of the literature on the so-called "informal economy" presents it as a whole new "mode of production" or an "alternative economy" (Souza and Tokman, 1976),¹³ since this "sector" of the economy deals with what workers do to produce and distribute products (among themselves), and not what capitalists or companies do. This would mean that the "production unit" is labor, and not the company. And that would be the key difference between the "informal sector" and the "modern sector."

Clearly, an institution following a code of ethics based on solidarity is praiseworthy, but this is not enough to imbue that institution with the vitality and viability required to become an "alternative production mode" to capitalism, given how powerful, flexible, and adaptable capital and capitalism have proven to be. If it were enough, the history of humanity would have been decidedly different. However, as the chapters in this volume attest, the absence of solidarity weakens any effort to keep an alternative project alive. It is not within the scope of this text to take this review any further. My purpose is to identify the main currents of the debate in Latin America regarding alternative forms of production, as reflected in research and writings. There are basically two:

1. What some authors call the "solidary economy." The cooperative is its central institution as an alternative to capitalism. As I have pointed out earlier, this proposal runs through the entire Atlantic tradition of the past two centuries. While some (Coraggio, 1998, among others) are quick to discard the alternative promise and potential of cooperatives, I feel this is a hasty judgment. Cooperatives are institutions that do or can organize a great many individuals, among whom no primary relationships exist, or at least not necessarily. Cooperatives generally cover a given branch or sector of economic activity, and are systematically linked to the market. Consequently, in order

to reproduce themselves and grow, they need to have a relatively clear division of labor and an effective administration. Therefore, their differences in relation to capitalist companies are not to be found in the division of labor, relationship to the market, wages, or hierarchical administration. According to current proponents of cooperatives, the main differences lie in the fact that their agents explicitly define them as a system of self-management of and by workers, of the labor they provide, their instruments of production, production resources or objects, and final products. In other words, they explicitly define themselves in ideological and political terms as the opposite of capitalism. Consequently, the distribution of products, goods, services, and profits is made—or should be made—based on agreements reached by the workers, according to purposes defined by them, which should naturally work to their benefit. One of the main theorists of cooperatives maintains that they represent a way for collective persons to regain autonomy in what concerns the crucial areas of labor and citizenship (Singer, 1998).

2. The form of production known as “popular economy.” This would seem to be a specifically Latin American proposal, although it probably exists under another name in other areas of the world. What distinguishes the popular economy from the solidary economy is that the former, in the first place, comprises heterogeneous institutions in what concerns the organization of production, distribution, and relationship with the market, being connected, sometimes even simultaneously, with diverse economic activities of production and distribution. In the second place, the common denominator is that they form units comprised of individuals in primary relationship, and are therefore relatively small. In the third place, their social organization tends to follow what some authors have called a “communitarian logic” (Razeto *et al.*, 1990).¹⁴ The difference between the “solidary economy” and the “popular economy” is that the participants in the latter do not always necessarily profess an ideological and political agenda, nor revolutionary viewpoints. They may even maintain opposing political stances. What truly characterizes the “popular economy” is that working relationships and product and resource distribution are mainly organized around reciprocity and social life, around everyday social practices—in short, around the community. But this does not obviously mean that it is not connected to the market to many different extents, and in many different ways.

What clearly differentiates these options is that, in the case of cooperatives, the rules of the market and wages play a bigger role and reciprocity operates outside labor relations, due to a conscious decision by co-op members, or at least by the ruling minority, approved by the majority. This is probably why, when such consciousness does not exist, or when difficult situations regarding the materiality of labor relations and product distribution arise,

cooperatives generally disband or reorganize into conventional companies in order to grow and expand. Conversely, in many Latin American cities, within the heterogeneous world of the so-called “popular economic organizations,” it is the very materiality of social relationships themselves that requires—or imposes, if you will—the solidarity of their members. In other words, it is because reciprocity constitutes the very fabric of social relationships that it leads to the practice of solidarity, which may even prevail over the formal political consciousness and social ethics of the members. I will come back to these issues in the last section of this text.

Seen from this perspective, the empirical chapters on alternative production systems in this volume discuss cooperative experiences, be these urban, such as those of Brazil (Paul Singer), Colombia (César Rodríguez-Garavito), and India (Sharit Bhowmik), or rural, with examples from Brazil (Paul Singer, Zander Navarro, Martins de Carvalho, Almeida Lopes), Mozambique (Cruz e Silva), and South Africa (Heinz Klug). In the case of Brazil and, to a certain extent, Mozambique, these experiences are mainly linked to the land and the fight for land, but also to the cities that are built to be inhabited by agricultural laborers.

The cases and inferences contained in these chapters speak for themselves, and it obviously makes no sense to summarize them here, especially in light of Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito's effort in the introductory chapter to theorize and summarize the case studies as they speak to the larger question of the construction of a non-capitalist economic canon that animates this book. What I can do is attempt to offer an initial overview of the significance of these experiences for the constitution of alternative production systems, and point out some of the major issues requiring research and discussion.

URBAN COOPERATIVE EXPERIENCES IN BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, AND INDIA

Two types of urban cooperatives are documented and discussed in this volume:

1. Those organized by workers after the companies employing them had declared bankruptcy. All were established in industrial production sectors, and the workers used the defunct company's institutional structure—including commercial, financial, and government relationships—to launch the co-op. One of these was set up in India, and the rest in Brazil.

2. Co-ops organized in sectors such as the collection of recyclable materials found in garbage, which has not (or not completely) been taken over by companies. These are therefore the initiatives of workers in a non-industrialized activity, not dependent on public authorities, with no previously established

institutions, nor prior commercial, technological, or financial connections in play. The two experiments documented here took place in Ahmedabad, a city in western India, and in Bogotá, Colombia.

The industrial co-ops in Brazil and India share some basic elements:

1. All started activities in the late 1980s (India) and early 1990s (Brazil), when "structural adjustment," neoliberalism, and globalization were in their developmental heyday.
2. All were built on the foundations of companies gone bankrupt. In some cases, workers occupied the premises of the companies to avoid a lock-out and non-payment of salaries, while in others a transfer of the company's assets was negotiated with the owners and/or the state.
3. All started out with the political and institutional support of the respective factory unions, or that of local or regional union federations.
4. All received financial support from the state, the Church, or an NGO. When this support ceased or diminished, they had serious financial difficulties that in more than a few cases led to the dissolution of the cooperative. In others, growth or technological development was limited at a time when the lack of such resources made it impossible to keep up continuous and acceptably profitable operations.
5. Those that managed to survive established networks of commercial and financial relations with the business world; those that did not simply disappeared.
6. Relations with unions, political parties, and the state are ambiguous, contradictory, and at times conflictive.
7. The largest and most successful either joined or organized regional, national, and/or international associations.
8. All are part of industrial sectors in which there is not a large concentration of financial capital, and generally use outdated technology.
9. The in-house division of labor is not very different from that of companies and there are problems with profit distribution. For example, one of the Calcutta co-ops has 150 members, thirty-five of whom are office workers who earn higher salaries. Insufficient data were supplied to enable us to compare this with the Brazilian cases.
10. Generally, the number of workers tended to go down, not up.

These ten points bring up some issues, of which I will address only a few. In the first place, all the studies on alternative production systems contained in this volume emphasize the fact that cooperatives are a manifestation of the social and political consciousness of workers and of their decision to work outside the capitalist production model. This is true in the case of autonomous initiatives by workers, particularly in nineteenth-century

England or, during the twentieth century, in moments of general social upheaval, expressed politically in struggles for power within a given society. For example, in Chile, prior to Pinochet's 1973 coup and particularly under Salvador Allende's Popular Unity administration, many industrial companies were taken over by workers, who then established self-managed cooperatives with the financial and technical support of the state and the PU parties. The so-called Social Sector of the Chilean economy was built on these foundations. Likewise, during Bolivia's 1952 revolution, under the 1970-72 Popular Assembly term, and later under Siles Suazo's 1983-84 administration, workers occupied mines and factories and set up cooperative self-managing bodies, as well as what was termed worker/state co-management.¹⁵

It is clear from these examples that the workers' political decision to take into their own hands the management of their labor, production resources, and products was part of a national political process they sought to guide into a true Socialist revolution. Here, social consciousness and revolutionary politics played the central, determining role. True, the new social sector companies and cooperatives were eliminated under Pinochet. But this was a general political defeat—surely among the worst ever suffered by the workers movement worldwide—announcing the entry of a new global capitalist policy: a prolonged association between military dictatorship and neoliberalism, one that set up the groundwork required to force even groups from the old left to accept neoliberalism in "select" regimes, such as that of Chile.

The question, of course, is whether, in the current Brazilian and Indian experiences, we find a similar political phenomenon, based on an explicit social consciousness, when workers decide to take over companies gone bankrupt and negotiate with the owners and the state in an effort to avoid unemployment or non-payment of social benefits, when what the owners and state bureaucrats want is precisely that. I do not mean to give short shrift to consciousness or deny its importance, but these and other equivalent cases are not necessarily a reflection of a critical awareness or of revolutionary anti-capitalism. Rather, they are a response to a different set of aspirations: avoidance of unemployment. Otherwise, how to explain the reaction of cooperative employees in Brazil and India in the face of financial or commercial difficulties if their co-ops were founded on the principle of anti-capitalist consciousness? This problem is not limited to Brazil or India. Under the Pinochet dictatorship, companies that had been taken over by the workers under Allende were naturally returned to their capitalist owners. But many owners had lost interest, and preferred to sell them to the workers at a profit. Some workers' groups took out bank loans to buy them and formed cooperatives. Later, between 1982 and 1983, when Chile's economy imploded under the burden of accumulated foreign debt and the embezzlement scandals by pro-Pinochet bankers, many factories went under. Then, the dictatorship itself decided to sell them off to the workers, precisely so

they would form cooperatives, using state credit. The co-ops established in this way have survived. A few became traditional companies, which is to say, capitalist.¹⁶ Does it make sense to believe that the actions of those workers were the result of a critical anti-capitalist consciousness, or that a bloody dictatorship would have the flexibility to turn these companies over to the workers—for those reasons and under those conditions?

That same question comes to mind upon verification that, in virtually every single documented case, cooperative will depends on outside financing from the state, the Church, an NGO, or, less frequently, on bank loans. When support ceases or is reduced, the cooperative initiative among members usually wanes or disappears entirely and co-op membership drops. Another common aspect is that the members are dissatisfied with the division of labor, and particularly with the distribution of salaries and benefits, the latter due, to a great extent, to precisely those financial difficulties.

This behavior is notably similar to what happens in other organizations based on a "solidary economy": they are established by initiative or with the support of institutions that help the "poor" (Churches or NGOs, such as Caritas, working with the Churches), they keep afloat for a while, and even appear to raise the social consciousness of their members and create a social ethic of solidarity. But almost all fall apart as soon as outside funding is cut off. And the very few that do survive tend to become small- and medium-size enterprises dedicated explicitly and consciously to individual profit, controlled by and benefiting those who had formerly managed the "solidary" organizations.¹⁷

These problems in no way diminish the importance of workers' cooperative efforts to face up to the consequences of the polarizing tendencies of capitalism and fight for their own survival. They also constitute an educational experience, which may lead to their developing a new critical awareness. But we should be cautious about developing overly hasty expectations as to their anti-capitalistic, revolutionary potential, or equally hasty negative conclusions regarding that potential. These issues are not black and white; they require further exploration. The relationships between social and political consciousness and the cooperative organization of production and the market are undoubtedly complex and contradictory; above all, they are as heterogeneous as the specific historical and structural contexts in which they occur. They need to be discussed in terms of such specific contexts, because social phenomena simply cannot be explained—and make no sense—when taken out of context.

The authors of the studies on garbage collection cooperatives in Ahmedabad (Western India) and Bogotá (Colombia) explicitly recognize that they reflect not so much a connection between social awareness and cooperativism, but rather between an immediate, urgent need for employment and income and the possible advantages of the cooperative organization to

meet it. In the case of Colombia, Rodríguez-Garavito articulates this clearly in presenting the research question of his study: "the central question that this chapter seeks to answer is: what are the conditions for the emergence and consolidation of non-capitalist popular economic organizations that can both further the struggle for the inclusion of the popular classes and compete in an increasingly globalized market?"¹⁸ In other words, we are not dealing here with an "alternative mode of production" (as seen in the case of the Brazilian industrial workers), but rather with "non-capitalist" organizations that are, nonetheless, prepared to take part in a "globalized market." They are, therefore, better defined as alternatives to unemployment and poverty, rather than to capitalism.

For this very reason, both experiments would be expected to share common elements. And they do, but what is more relevant is the differences in their individual stories, which imbue each with different meanings. For example, neither was formed by the initiative and effort of the workers, but due to the initiative and with the financial support of other agents. The case of the Indian cooperative documented by Bhowmik is especially interesting, because its members are all workingwomen. Known as the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), it was founded within the Textile Labor Association (TLA) organized by Gandhi in 1918, and unionized under the 1926 Trade Union Act, although it stopped being a union after India's independence. SEWA now has 250,000 members. It promotes the organization of cooperatives in different areas of activity, and provides technical and administrative training to its associates. SEWA was founded during the heroic days of cooperativism, and is a clear example of ideas, institutions, and experiences that do associate a nation's fight for independence with anti-capitalist non-state alternatives. This then, was a political initiative, the result of people acting on the basis of political ideas. Its history is not only a different one, but also has advantages for its cooperative Hindu workers: SEWA defends them from the police, and gives them political, technical, and financial aid. When it was found that intermediaries were paying very low prices to the garbage collectors, SEWA conducted a market study of waste recycling and discovered that prices fluctuate greatly. It then decided to help the cooperative build a storehouse for the garbage collected each day, and pay the workers a previously negotiated price. When market prices rise, the waste is sold and the benefits are distributed equitably among the workers. Thus, SEWA is the main institution, not the co-op. It is SEWA that provides guidance to garbage collectors about how to organize other cooperatives in different areas of activity so they do not have to depend exclusively on garbage collecting. It signs cleaning contracts with public and private institutions, and pays the workers a salary to collect the garbage, which is later sold at a profit. The profit is then distributed among all co-op members, not only those directly involved in the work. SEWA encourages the workers to

learn to read and write, provides training on food preparation and nutrition, and encourages them to start up their own businesses. SEWA is not a cooperative institution; it is a union and political organization of working women that provides guidance and political leadership to co-op women.

The people who collect garbage in India are not only poor, female, and workers—all of which constitute a terrible disadvantage in any part of the world—they are also “untouchables.”¹⁹ Naturally, belonging to a co-op is extremely important to them, and particularly being associated with an institution like SEWA. Bhowmik’s work documents extraordinary changes in these women’s lives as a result. They now enjoy better income, improved working conditions, and greater on the job safety because they have learned to use protective equipment. Production has also increased, they have learned to read and write, and they have learned management skills, including domestic management. But, most importantly, the women have developed self-esteem and have gained social respect. All of this has surely given new perspectives and meanings to the lives of these poor, untouchable, female workers.

In Colombia, as in most parts of the world, those who collect garbage are also workers from the most underprivileged sectors of society. But in Colombia there are no “untouchables.” And since the local market for recyclable materials collected from urban garbage moves a large amount of money (20 million dollars, according to the data supplied by Rodríguez-Garavito in his chapter), it constitutes a considerable source of alternative income in times of “structural adjustment” and economic slowdown. For this reason, while this work has traditionally been performed by poor families, and passed on from parents to children, today a portion of those who collect garbage and sell recyclable materials are newly unemployed industrial workers, many of whom have high school—and some even university—educations. This is a growing trend that makes it very different from the Calcutta situation. To begin with, it probably makes it easier for the state and private social assistance organizations to promote the establishment of cooperatives for garbage collectors nationwide. In 1999, there were fifty cooperatives of this type. Now there are ninety-four. Both the state and private institutions also encouraged the cooperatives to form regional associations, and, in 1991, a National Association of Recyclers (ANR) was founded. These same entities are attempting to expand the cooperatives’ activities to include commercial intermediation, and even the industrial processing of recyclable materials.

Both experiences obviously have much in common. As in India, in the case of the Rescatar cooperative in Colombia the initiative and financial and technical support came from an outside agency. But in this case it was a religious (Jesuit) NGO, called the Fundación Social, whose purpose is to provide social assistance to the poor. It is not, like the Indian SEWA, a political organization of workers. And that makes a major difference. Now, the Fundación Social, which supports more than twenty of the ninety-four cooperatives,

has decided that the time has come to phase out its financial, technical, and institutional support so that the workers and co-ops can develop autonomously. This occurs at a time when the state is already turning over control of garbage collection and recycling to capitalist companies. Rodríguez-Garavito concludes that the cooperatives and networks are now in a critical period, in which their ability to continue to develop without relying on outside support will be tested.

There is no doubt that the situation of the women working in this sector improved socially and economically thanks to the cooperative experience. Even the networks began to play a role in the debate on the future of this area of activity. But here we should note the case of another, very similar, process that was doing extremely well but that came to a halt when the social assistance agency decided to bow out. In the 1970s, a nationwide network of rural co-ops was organized in Colombia. It was successful so long as it had the support and supervision of another Jesuit institution, similar to the Fundación Social, known as the Instituto Campesino Avanzado. This national network grew to include 1,300 cooperatives, 15,000 families, and 100,000 individuals. But when the Instituto Campesino Avanzado ceased its support, nearly all the cooperatives fell apart, and only a few became privately owned companies (González, 1987; Flora *et al.*, 1988). Even so, times have changed, and behaviors do not have to be the same or lead to the same results.

THE LAND QUESTION, PEASANT MOVEMENTS, AND COOPERATIVES

It is well known that the relationship between peasants and capitalism, and between these and land (whether for farming or settlement), has been a subject of ongoing debate for hundreds of years, with no end in sight. The question of “the end of the peasantry” also continues to be debated. Some of the chapters of this book address these issues, but I can refer to only a few of them here.²⁰

Based on the studies of the cooperatives associated with the Landless Movement (MST) in Brazil, it appears that their tendencies and material results are not very different from those of the cooperatives in industrial sectors and urban activities in what concerns economic success or relations with workers. The experiences documented by Singer in his chapter indicate that some of these cooperatives run into general, even massive resistance, and frequently lose members. Martins de Carvalho reports in his chapter that in June 2001, of 1,500 settlements associated with the MST, there were only forty-nine farming and cattle-raising cooperatives, comprising 2,299 families, thirty-two service co-ops, made up of 11,174 families, two credit co-ops, two worker co-ops, and three small producer co-ops. Overall, only 13,473 families out of a total of 250,000 belonged to co-ops.

Conversely, the social, political, and cultural implications of the massive mobilization of peasants or people seeking land to farm is extremely problematical. In a vast and heterogeneous space, we find complex and equally heterogeneous living conditions as a result of land occupation, the creation of new settlements, relations between groups of people with very different backgrounds and histories, relations between local, regional, and national leaders, the emergence of new forms and structures of authority, as well as new forms of emancipation or subordination—in other words, as a result of the social project that has emerged with this movement, with its own characteristics and perspectives.

In his chapter, Almeida Lopes addresses the problems arising when a massive group of people occupies a large area of farmland. This problem has never before been addressed in studies on the peasant struggles for land, and is part and parcel of another, broader issue: the country–city relationship in struggles for social transformation and in the revolutionary process of a given society. This is an issue that must be urgently re-addressed and refocused within the local and global historical contexts in which these social movements are now taking place. Almeida Lopes describes the emergence of a set of urban-type relationships, civic behaviors, new occupations, types of neighborhoods, and ways of communicating, in which the peasants' activities and lives are interwoven with the new needs and images of urban life. For the author, this is a specific experience, a "city of agrarian reform," mainly because the city itself has been gradually built like a cooperative, so much so that one wonders if the terms are not interchangeable. But, as we soon discover, they are not, because the MST faces the settlers' resistance to the collective model it seeks to implement. Furthermore, the settlers are still peasants, which raises the question of whether this is a "city without citizens." But it is the city that makes citizens, and not the other way around. In any case, a new field for debate and research has been opened.

The thick of the debate revolves around the nature, perspectives, and implications of the movement led by the MST. However, the studies on the MST included in this volume do not provide sufficient specific information to allow the reader to determine not only the pertinence of the issues themselves, but also what is really happening in this new experience. For example, mention is made of people's resistance to the cooperative models and social organization proposed or imposed by MST leaders. The reader is left to wonder what exactly they are resisting against. Are they against belonging to a cooperative and having individual property rights and being entitled to benefits? Or are they resisting the collectivization of property, resources, and profits? Who takes the initiative with respect to these different options: the peasants, the technical staff, or the MST leaders? Who makes the final decisions about the type of organization, division of labor, production goals, etc.? These are precisely the matters under debate. Zander Navarro and Singer

(the latter less explicitly) focus the debate on the question of democracy, while Carvalho focuses on socialism. Thus, what is actually at stake is the nature and the perspectives of the MST project, not only with regard to land and the peasants themselves, but to society as a whole. In other words, what is at stake is a project about power, upon which depends what to do with the land and rural work. Zander Navarro, while acknowledging the MST's achievements and success in mobilizing peasants, does not see the MST as having any potential for changing the system, or for leading to any global, radical, transformation. He questions the MST's vertical organization, ideological mysticism, and even a certain military ethos among its leadership. On the contrary, Carvalho maintains that the transformation is already underway, and that a new "network society," with its own identity, is being built. And, in an implicit defense of the MST leadership style, he further argues that neither political parties nor other types of intermediation or representation are needed for a group that is mobilized and focused on direct action, since it is from this that a project identity and a new "network society" will arise. It is unfortunate that none of the authors has chosen to explain what they mean when they mention either democracy or a new "network society." But I will return to the issue of power later.

The problems encountered by Heinz Klug in his chapter on South Africa are perhaps even more difficult and complex in what concerns land. These problems have to do with models of production and settlement in a society in which "the clearest indicator of poverty" is still "being black, female and living in a rural area." In the new South Africa, land policy is governed by three laws concerning restitution, redistribution, and tenure reform. But applying them in practice is not easy. There is not only the expected resistance of the white colonialist landowners, but also defiance by the local leaders of the colonized or "black" populations. This is an indication of the colonialization of power, both in its "racial" dimension and in what concerns the control mechanisms introduced by colonialism, which are later reclaimed as traditional rights, i.e., privileges. This is a question of great political and theoretical interest, which should be studied in relation to problems arising in struggles for social emancipation. Particular attention should be given to the "racial" element, which is also undoubtedly relevant in Brazil. However, this aspect has not been touched upon by the Brazilian researchers in this book—an omission due, perhaps, to the fact that the conflicts discussed are no longer located in the northeast, as they were during the days of the *Ligas Camponesas* (Peasant Leagues) and of *Julião*, but are now in the southern and central-southern areas of the country.

Once again, it is democracy that is at stake. Local chiefs oppose the application of rules that would lead to equality among association members (which would naturally extend to gender relations), involvement in decision-making, access to property associations, responsibility of its members,

transparency in their behavior, representation by and in administrative bodies, etc. Despite the concessions made to the "traditional chiefs," they and their followers defend their "traditional rights," which go against those rules and particularly against equality, transparency, open membership, and equal representation. The argument is that these traditions were in place before colonial times. But, in fact, here, as in many other parts of Africa, it was colonial rule that either altered previously existing social relationships and hierarchies or created new ones to benefit the colonizers.

There are two opposing currents regarding property ownership. One side pressures for immediate privatization and issuance of title deeds to the land, which would give them control over water resources, pastureland, and the land itself. The other side defends the concept of communal property as a pre-colonial African legacy, which is used to "romanticize" non-democratic structures and repressive tendencies toward the population, while forgetting that colonization played an active role in establishing supposedly ancestral and pre-colonial rules, especially for purposes of colonial segregation. These problems cannot be resolved with new forms of property because wherever "blacks," peasants, and poor people live, whether in communities or on their own property, they continue to provide a source of cheap labor—and the labor force is reproduced at little or no cost to capitalists.

Individual stories aside, the results of semi-urban cooperative experiences in Mozambique are much the same. Although the co-op women manage to survive more easily, the co-ops cannot be described as "alternative economies." As Cruz e Silva concludes in her chapter on popular economic organizations in Mozambique "[i]n the current economic context of Mozambique, the search for solutions to the cooperatives' problems, rather than being directed toward the emergence of a counter-hegemonic alternative, is more a search for survival that seems to be leading women increasingly toward participation in the market and to their proletarianization." This is the same question Heinz Klug asks about South Africa: do property and production associations truly constitute paths toward social emancipation, or are they merely marginalized strategies for survival? This, obviously, is a problem that cannot be resolved by forms of property or organization of production.

FINAL NOTE: QUESTIONS PENDING

Does any "alternative economy" exist today? This is the question we ask ourselves in Latin America, particularly in relation to "popular economic organizations." The underlying question of all the studies on this topic included in this volume is whether the experiences documented and discussed are "alternative modes or systems of production."

It would appear that there are no categorical answers to these questions, at least based on the specific information available. But this is due not only

to a lack or deficit of information. I think that what needs to be done is to refocus the terms of the debate on the issues involved, particularly the questions linked to perspectives on knowledge, the production of knowledge and meaning, the ability of which to explain the world's historical experience is now being questioned and is in crisis.²¹ It is beyond the scope of this article to make more than a brief allusion to a few of these questions:

1. There is a deep-rooted idea that history can be divided into pre-capitalist and capitalist periods, based not only on chronological differences between capital and non-capital, but also on the idea that capitalism, after winning the necessary battles, would eventually push all other "modes of production" off the historical scene. Therefore, capitalism would finally be able to exist and develop on its own. In this view, capitalism is a term that refers exclusively to capital. But the history of the last 500 years has proven that theory wrong. It didn't happen that way, and if current trends continue to develop, it never will. Capital exists solely as the main axis around which all the other known "modes of production" are articulated. It never existed in any other form, otherwise it would not have been able to develop and become dominant. Thus, capitalism is the term that refers to the whole system of articulation of production modes under the sway of capital.

2. One might suppose that the search for "alternative modes or systems of production" is associated, implicitly or explicitly, depending on the case, with the evolutionist-dualist perspective that was dominant in both positivist liberalism and historical materialism. This search is for a "mode" that will succeed capital. However, what we might be facing are tendencies to reconfigure the articulation of capital and other "modes," since capital is increasingly reducing, for technological reasons, its interest in and capacity for employing workers. Although slavery, servitude, small-scale commerce, and reciprocity are expanding, capitalism continues to dominate, but in a way very different from that of the past.

3. In the twentieth century, all the main lines of social thought admitted as obvious that the economy, society, politics, and culture can be differentiated in social life, as well as reified and separated in practice. Following this same line of thought, historical materialism²² sustains that domination is the result of exploitation, in the sense that the former is determined by the latter. If this is the case, a new alternative production system or mode might emerge and, if it manages to replace capitalism, eventually generate its own system of domination. But domination does not originate in exploitation, although it may be shaped and influenced by it, and, above all, it relates to the control of authority and subjectivity. It produces much more lasting and powerful instruments than a given mode of production, like capitalism, to which it is

associated. One of these instruments is the 500-year-old social classification of the world's population based on the idea of "race."²³

4. Historical materialism also sustains that private property is the very condition that defines exploitation and capitalist exploitation in particular. The enemy continues to be the private ownership of production resources. For this reason, the search for alternative modes of production focuses on the property system: the less private the property system, the closer it will be to an alternative to capitalism. Further, given the failure of the nationalization of production resources, the tendency is toward totally collectivized property as the alternative. The entire range of possibilities between private property and collective ownership is seen, in evolutionary terms, as the road that progressively moves away from capitalism. Even in "Third World" nationalist dictatorships, "socialist" rhetoric has invoked state-owned property, self-managing participation, and communal cooperatives as proof of the anti-capitalist orientation of these regimes. But in the history of exploitation, every possible form of property—be it collective, individual, group, entrepreneurial, or state—has played a role. Thus, we must look for the sources of exploitation elsewhere.

5. Exploitation consists in the control of work (labor force and product) for the benefit of those who are not workers. In order to impose it, the worker must be kept from controlling his/her own labor and production resources. And this, obviously, cannot be done without domination. The control of authority and force—and subsequently the naturalization and/or legitimization of domination—is the primary tool of domination. Later, the control of subjectivity, knowledge, and of how knowledge is produced will be added to it. Therefore, the property system is neither the source, nor the explanation for exploitation. Nor is exploitation the source or explanation for domination. On the contrary, without structured and lasting social domination, there cannot be equally structured and lasting social exploitation.

6. In history as we know it, power is a relationship of domination/exploitation/conflict among the members of a society with the aim of controlling each of the fundamental, decisive dimensions of human social existence: a) work-resources-products; b) sex-resources-products; c) subjectivity-resources-products; d) collective authority-resources-products. None of these dimensions of power exists in isolation from the others, but neither are they the result of any of the others, because each corresponds to a basic area of social existence. Nor are these areas the result of any of the others, although they are all interconnected and could not exist otherwise except in an isolated, transitory way. The various historical forms of interconnection between those dimensions of power give shape to a given pattern of

power, although its specific form is ever changing, due to the very nature of power.

7. Due to all of the above, it is here that the question of democracy arises in all of its significance. Under capitalism, a system that depends on legal and political equality among non-equal holders of power, even the most advanced democracy can do no more than opt for an institutionalized negotiation of the limits, conditions, and modes of exploitation and domination. The so-called modern nation-state is its institutional framework. But if democracy is to be a structure of social relationships in which individuals, all individuals, have autonomous control over their own work, sex, subjectivity, and collective authority, this presupposes an institutional framework that is capable of expressing that structure and, at the same time, putting it into practice. The nation-state, no matter how modern, is not the right institutional framework.

8. This means that democracy is not the result, but rather the *sine qua non* of every historical trajectory in which domination and exploitation are reduced and eradicated. In other words, democracy is the *sine qua non* of a social revolution. From this standpoint, it makes sense to affirm that there can be neither an "alternative economy" nor "alternative production systems" without a structure of authority that is alternative to that of the capitalist state, in any of its forms, from the brutally authoritarian and repressive to the most democratic. In fact, under capitalism itself, democracy has been a determining factor in all the processes that have led certain countries to join the "center" of the world system.

9. It goes without saying that democracy is incompatible with slavery and personal servitude; its limitations in what concerns wage work and small-scale production have also been demonstrated. Democracy requires a context in which the authority system supports the reproduction of a system of control of labor, which in turn supports the reproduction of a democratic control of authority. This obviously cannot be established except in an environment of community and reciprocity.

10. Thus, it is essential to recognize the basic difference between reciprocity, as a social relation of democratic control of labor, its resources and products, and community, as a structure of democratic control of collective authority. Community is an equivocal term, and today it is the focus of a broad-ranging political debate. It is therefore essential that the idea of community be strictly associated to a formalized structure of authority in which all members enjoy equal and free access to the permanent control of the responsibilities and roles agreed upon, and tasks assigned to those responsible at any given moment.

11. In recorded history, a community, in this specific sense, has always been (or can be) connected to a population using more than one means of production, although reciprocity is the axis of their relationship. And if Eurocentric dualism/evolutionism is once and for all dispensed with in the struggle to eliminate all types of labor exploitation, then there is surely room for more than one non-exploitative means of production and distribution—for example, apart from reciprocity, small independent mercantile production, which could lead to the exchange and distribution of work among individuals.

Through this brief and schematic summary of issues I am suggesting that we need to open again all the basic issues of the debate on society, power, historical change, revolution. The first step in this direction is, undoubtedly, to free ourselves of Eurocentrism, not only in Europe but also in the rest of the world.

Notes

- 1 The process of theoretical elaboration of this idea began with the critique of capitalist society and continued with the critique of the theory of capitalist economics or "political economy," which began to be developed during the eighteenth century and reached its high point at the end of the century with Smith and Ricardo, in what could be called its "classical" period. The theoretical and political critique of European capitalist society began near the end of the eighteenth century, but reached maturity only in the early nineteenth century. First came the vast, pioneering work of Henri de Saint-Simon, and, later, as the century wore on, the works of Owen, Fourier, Proudhon, Marx, and Bakunin, to cite only a few. The critique of the theory of capitalist economics would only be elaborated after the first half of the nineteenth century, especially with the writings of Marx, whose *Das Kapital* (1867) was subtitled, precisely, *A Critique of Political Economy*.
- 2 An explanation may be in order for non-Latin American readers. During those years, all Latin American countries, without exception, were shaken by revolutionary processes, some of which were highly influenced by socialism. The movements were directed against the imperialist-oligarchic alliance that held power in those countries at the time. All of these revolutions, with the exception of those in Mexico and Chile, were defeated, and bloody military dictatorships took and held power until after the Second World War. There are few specific studies of these events. A particularly useful anthology on the matter is González Casanova (1977).
- 3 Many editions of his *Complete Works*, including his letters, have been published in Peru. His most famous book, *7 Ensayos de Interpretación de la Realidad Peruana*, originally published in Peru in 1926, has been reprinted

several times and is one of the most widely translated works. It is part of the American Classics Collection of the Ayacucho Library. In 1991, the Fondo de Cultura Económica press published a volume entitled *Textos Básicos. Selección, Introducción y Notas de Aníbal Quijano* (Basic Texts. Selection, Introduction and Notes of Aníbal Quijano), which includes his entire body of sociological and political works. There is a vast and growing body of work on Mariátegui in several different languages. Among the first studies, see, for example, Miroshewski (1942).

- 4 I have set forth some ideas on these issues in Quijano (2001).
- 5 A discussion of this matter can be found in Quijano (2001a).
- 6 This debate was mainly opened by José Nun and Aníbal Quijano in the mid-1960s (Nun, 1969; Quijano, 1977). Each of the authors has pursued the questions involved, and the debate continues, now with a large number of individuals who have joined in.
- 7 It should be pointed out that, in the context of Latin America, 1973 was also the year when Pinochet overthrew Allende's government in Chile.
- 8 On these processes and on the concept of the global imperial block, see Quijano (2001a).
- 9 Information on these processes has only recently started to be gathered in an orderly manner, but the available data is hair-raising. According to the UN, it is estimated that nearly 200 million individuals live in slavery, not only in Africa but also in Southeastern Asia, Latin America, and on the US-Mexico border. I began to discuss these issues in Quijano (1998a, 1998b).
- 10 In this context, I define reciprocity as exchanging labor and work (products, tangibles, and intangibles) without market intermediation.
- 11 Coraggio (1998) suggests distinguishing between, on the one hand, individualism, associationalism, and solidarity (linked to capitalism, but directed at combating poverty and promoting development), and, on the other, "popular economy," which can be considered as an economic subsystem within the capitalist economy, but is different from it (67-68).
- 12 An immense amount of bibliography is available on this matter. A review and discussion of a good portion of it can be found in Quijano, 1991.
- 13 Among the numerous publications of the Programa del Empleo en América Latina y el Caribe-PREALC (Latin American and Caribbean Employment Program) on this issue, see especially Souza and Tokman (1976) and Tokman (1987).
- 14 The terms "popular economy" and "popular economic organizations" to describe these units come from the numerous publications by members of the Programa de Economía del Trabajo, PET (Labor Economics Program), including Luis Razeto, Arno Klenner, Apolonia Ramírez, and Roberto Urmeneta (1990). Another important author in this debate is José Luis Coraggio, cited earlier. My own contributions were published

- in Quijano (1998a), which contains references to a broad range of studies from Latin America, Asia, and Africa.
- 15 For the case of Chile under Allende's administration, see Peter Winn, 1986, as well as the article by Ruiz-Tagle and Doma in Iturraspe (1986), pp. 9–48. On Bolivia, see Juan del Granado Cosío, also in Iturraspe, pp. 156–192.
 - 16 Information on this can be found in Larrain, n.d.
 - 17 See Quijano, 1998, especially pp. 109–29.
 - 18 The expression “popular economic organizations” is obviously a reference to the Latin American debate I have mentioned earlier, just as the idea of “inclusion of the popular classes” is a reference to the literature on “social exclusion” and “human development,” which usually uses the term “the poor,” since the “popular classes” (meaning the “workers”) are “included” in the machinery of capitalist exploitation and domination.
 - 19 The untouchables occupy the lowest and most oppressed and socially rejected rung on the Hindu social ladder. For this reason they are known as untouchables. This is not due to “racial” reasons, in the European sense, but because society in general and those in power still associate them with “impurity.” This association is due to the fact that, for far too long, they have been forced (like the *burakumin* of Japan) to perform the dirtiest, most denigrating, most “impure” jobs. See, among others, Dumont (1986).
 - 20 Over thirty years ago I began publishing the results of my research on this matter (Quijano, 1967). The issues addressed in that work have yet to be resolved.
 - 21 There is a wealth of literature on the debate about Eurocentrism, particularly in Latin America. See, among others, Mignolo (1995; n.d.), Lander (2000), Coronil (1998), Dussel (1998), Quijano (1992, 1997, 1998).
 - 22 What is called historical materialism is the most Eurocentric version of Marx's theoretical legacy. It is a hybrid that combines some of his theoretical proposals with positivist evolutionism and dualism, as well as with the Hegelian idea of a historical macrosystem. Stalin codified it as Marxism-Leninism after 1924, and it was imposed as the dominant theory in twentieth-century social critical thought worldwide.
 - 23 See Quijano (1997) for a discussion of these relationships of origins and colonialism and their implications on power.

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