

## VII

### **The logics of social organization**

The proposal that a theory adequate for communist practice must adopt an organizational point of view is an important first step. As we have seen, it is a way of formulating questions that allow us to concretely investigate the reality of different struggles and learn from them about how they are structured, how they act, and how they see the world they seek to transform. Without this rigorous yet flexible way of analyzing what goes on within struggles and movements, it is impossible to subsequently examine the common aspects of these diverse political processes and how to articulate them into a more general proletarian movement.

On the other hand, this proposal is still insufficient. After all, everything in the world is organized in a different way, and this could lead us to conclude that each organization has a unique and isolated form, type of action, and vision of reality—which is clearly not true, neither in the case of the organization of social life in general nor in the case of organizations engaged in political struggle. So, we need to introduce some criteria here that limit the scope of our analysis a little and help us ask better questions when investigating different political processes.

#### *The three social logics*

We mentioned earlier that when we deal with a very wide variety of phenomena and do not want to choose one of them as the ideal type, we need to use more abstract descriptions. We anticipated that communist theory, insofar as it needs to consider different fronts of political struggle, would have to find comprehensive abstractions if it wants to preserve this diversity without assuming that, at heart, all struggles are more or less similar versions of an ideal revolutionary struggle. The organizational point of view is an abstract idea in this very sense: it takes such a general position that, even though it provides important guidance for our investigation, we still need to investigate each particular organization to better understand its structure and the type of struggle it is capable of waging.

However, we do not live in a vacuum populated by singular and scattered organizations, but within a global mode of production called capitalism, where most social relations take the form of value. In this model, the main selection criterion that defines whether an organization will survive—be it a person, a family, a collective, or a country—is its ability to facilitate the accumulation of surplus value in the hands of a dominant political class. In other words, social life and political life are certainly organized in many ways, but not in just any way. And what we are going to propose now is a way of conceptualizing the forms of social organization that we find in capitalism, in peripheral capitalism, and also in every social formation that we know of so far. It seems like a megalomaniacal proposal, but we will soon see that, even though it is indeed ambitious, it does not replace concrete investigation and analysis, but only helps us in this process.

Let us begin, then, with the most abstract and general description possible. We postulate that every social formation—whether a capitalist world economy ruled by imperialism, an ancient Chinese empire, or a federation of indigenous peoples still untouched by European colonizers—is structured by a mixture of three distinct social logics: the logic of affinity, property, and value.

We will explain each of these logics separately—to then focus on capitalism and finally on peripheral capitalism—but it is important to note from the outset that this is an extremely abstract description, in the precise sense that we proposed earlier. That is, we call these modes of organization “logics” precisely because, taken separately and outside of concrete contexts, they present an idealized functioning that we will never find in reality. However, this distance from specific phenomena is what gives us the necessary space to concretely investigate how these logics mix in each case, bringing us closer to the specificity of each social formation—and even of each collective organization within a given society.

We could justify the choice of the three modes we present—affinity, property, and value—by appealing to the theoretical fortune of anthropology, sociology, and economics, the three “great disciplines” that academically study our social relations, each one mainly concerned with one of these three logics. We could also propose a more speculative argument, attempting to demonstrate

that, when we conceive of these three logics in a general and abstract way, it is actually impossible to conceive of any others, since they practically exhaust the forms that sociability could take. In other words, affinity, property, and value would be the three great “matrices” of the concrete and much more varied social forms that we find in history—an argument that seems overly ambitious, but one that has already been proposed by many philosophers, historians, and social scientists. Another possible argument would perhaps be to start more directly from the foundations of historical materialism, or even more so from revealing passages in *Capital* or Marx’s writings on “pre-capitalist formations,” to justify our focus on the three great dynamics of known modes of production. However, there is another way to justify our proposal, more consistent with the organizational point of view.

The justification that really matters to us as communists is that if we try to take the long history of revolutionary struggles seriously, paying attention to how different movements have conceived their obstacles and enemies throughout the ages, what we see emerging is neither a unified conception nor an infinite series of different descriptions. What we find—across the most diverse struggles and historical moments—are, in fact, a few recurring ways of conceiving what must be fought and transformed in the social world: different forms of segregation, expropriation, and exploitation. What we call “social logic” is merely the systematization of each of these general forms of social power—affinity, which organizes kinship and communities; property, which organizes hierarchical domination; and value, which organizes class domination. These forms became apparent precisely because they were confronted by struggles that rose up against them, for it is only from this point of view—of an organization structured as if another social world were possible—that some features of the current social reality will appear as *historical*, that is, as subject to change. Of course, it was often intellectuals who were able to devote themselves to studying and describing these modes of organization, but this would certainly have been impossible without the prior existence of struggles which, because of the way they were composed, and therefore the way they interacted with the world, made these forms perceptible. As many Marxists know very well, *Capital* would not exist without the international struggle of workers, in which Marx also participated.

In this way, we can treat the abstract description we propose below as an attempt to organize the "theoretical" balance—the representations or snapshots of social reality—accumulated throughout the history of insurgencies, revolts, and revolutions into a unified but extremely flexible conceptual framework. It is a bit like trying to theoretically represent "the interests of the movement as a whole," inventing a creative way to condense different visions of society produced by thousands of political movements that preceded us. From the point of view of those who fought and believed that the world could be different, how is our social world organized?

### *Logic of affinity*

We are interested in offering the most general description possible of each logic, aware that its concrete presentation varies depending on other important factors—such as, for example, which logic is dominant in that social formation and how each of these modes mixes with the others. In the case of the logic of affinity, its most notable form is the gift, the subject of hundreds of ethnographic studies in different societies. We suggest taking a step back and treating it more abstractly as a form of organization through affinity, as we believe that gift-giving, reciprocity, and kinship are particular and varied developments of this more general logic—therefore, it is not possible to study kinship or reciprocity in one society and say that all others are organized in the same way.

One way to describe the logic of affinity is to define it as a way of organizing society where we divide people and things in such a way that, if two parts are separated, they can still share something in common. Even more schematically, we can say that affinity works by separating the inside and the outside, but connecting the two sides because they have the same boundary. We call this shared boundary a *frontier*, because something in common remains even between two totally distinct parts. It is a dense and abstract definition, but it is worth reflecting on because it will help us much later on. Let's now see if we recognize this form of organization in some different social phenomena.

For example, when you receive a gift, the object is now yours, but it carries something from the person who gave it to you—if you get rid of a family heirloom, like an album of photographs, it will say something about your relationship with your family members. Something of the other remains there with you, even though you and the other are separated—and even if one of the parties has already passed away. This presence can also be uncomfortable; it can create an unwanted connection, like a debt. Not surprisingly, in the logic of affinity, *giving* can be a form of power, from which we can only escape or control by repaying what we receive, in a never-ending process.

Simple examples of this type of “frontier” organization can be found everywhere, not only in societies that are structured primarily through reciprocity or kinship. We mentioned the exchange of gifts, but the formation of affinity groups in modernity also mobilizes this same procedure: a certain collective forms a social part, but at the expense of sharing something with those who are outside the group. For example, it is impossible for the Flamengo football fan club to exist if there is not also something in common with the fans of other teams, from whom Flamengo fans eagerly distinguish themselves—that is, there must be a common passion for football. This shared element can either be disruptive—and fans can argue about which team truly represents real football—or serve as a basis for reconciliation—someone can try to avoid a fight by reminding everyone that they are all there for the love of the sport.

Furthermore, people do not need to be divided solely between those on one side of the frontier or the other; the logic of affinity also allows someone to occupy the place of the border itself. In the case of football, we have both the ball and the referee occupying this place: the former becomes almost enchanted, a symbol of this common love for the sport, while the latter becomes the object of all misfortune, constantly under suspicion by fans of “leaning” more to one side (as the law always does, as we will see shortly). In societies where the logic of affinity is more determinant, the function of occupying this frontier-like place can also become very important. Figures such as shamans, in some societies, find a social place from this position—and many communities have a space reserved for drunks, “madmen,” and “lost souls” that is neither inclusion nor exclusion per se. It is important to mention that the logic of affinity has three positions—inside, outside, and on the frontier—because it is very common in modernity to assume that every community is just a matter

of friends against enemies, of the included against the excluded, inside and outside. As we will see later, this concerns the specific mixture of affinity and property that characterizes modern states and communities.

At a very fundamental level, the logic of affinity is the form of social organization through which we form not only communities, but also ourselves as *persons*. This dynamic of creating frontiers, of differentiating while recognizing something in common, is the basis without which it is impossible for an individual or group to be seen by others as having a separate interiority—a distinction—which, however, is equal to ours—a shared common substrate. This is what we call a person: someone endowed with a distinct point of view, but one that is relevant to others. That is why one of the effects of total segregation, of breaking this connective boundary between communities, is the *depersonalization* of the other: when others are removed in this way from our networks of affinity and recognition, they cease to count as people, as beings endowed with a perspective capable of illuminating what is happening to us as well. This silencing or invisibility does not necessarily mean that others cannot speak or express themselves, but the social value of what they have to say disappears. One of the effects of gender oppression within families, communities, and political organizations is often this kind of erasure of the person as a being endowed with a point of view connected to others.

As we have already mentioned, none of the three logics we are presenting appears alone in a social formation. However, we can identify cases in which different logics gain a dominant role. In societies where this is the main form of social organization, we see that those characteristics of life that best adapt to the logic of frontiers are also the ones that gain predominance and serve as the basis for the social structure. The most striking example is certainly kinship. Although the logic of kinship presents itself in very different ways from society to society, kinship is, in general, a form of social organization that stitches together a series of divisions that preserve common substrates. A father is different from a son, but this difference is what we call family, what they both have in common. And one family is different from another, but they can still be linked through the kinship structures they share. And in the case of encounters between totally separate groups, we can unite

them through the exchange of gifts, or by building bonds of affinity or kinship, through marriages, for example.

In the case of social formations where affinity is not the dominant logic, it still continues to organize different aspects of social life, from the interaction between individuals as people who recognize each other, through the family structure, communities, and even our relationship with nature and the spiritual world. In capitalist modernity, kinship plays a very specific role, as capitalism willingly inherits the structure of the dominant communities and families of European feudalism, but restricts most forms of community to those forms of organization that will respect the logic of property and value. Nuclear families, for example, are extremely restricted forms of creating kinship, as they only serve to ensure the formation of the workforce, the perpetuation of the sexual division of labor, and the control of property transfers. The nation, on the other hand, forms an imaginary community of equals, incapable of organizing its own territories and social relations, as it must adapt to the modes of organization of the modern state and international capital—which even prevents nations from having shared frontiers, creating profound instability.

Ultimately, the only form of organization of affinity that is flexible and mobile enough to keep pace with the transformations of capitalism seems to be individualism itself, where each individual would be a kind of “one-person community.” In capitalism, we are only truly recognized as people when we present ourselves independently of any community or kinship. Being an adult in modernity means becoming independent from the family and depending only on work and property relations. In a way, individualism is the reduction of the community to a minimal unit, which is only really possible to experience within work environments, as sellers and consumers of commodities. But even this form of organization encounters obstacles, because the logic of property and value in capitalism is not neutral; it does not allow for a leveling of individualities. Since capitalism is structured by class, racial, and patriarchal domination, in order for distinct individuals to be recognized as such, they must also assume traits of the bourgeoisie, whiteness, and heteronormativity.

The logic of affinity is somewhat secondary in capitalism, as very little of what determines the course of the world passes through the communities we form or through organizations driven primarily by reciprocal exchange and the establishment of common frontiers. However, as we will see later, affinity plays a crucial role in the process of peripheralization, as it governs the organization of many of the support networks on which workers increasingly depend, as well as the form of different fragmented communities that do not share frontiers with each other.

### *Logic of property*

We have seen above that the logic of affinity, in its most general form, is one that divides the parts of organizations in such a way that, even though they are separate, they still share something in common. The general logic of organization by property—and here we use property without the additional qualification of private property, so we may also be talking about collective property—works differently. It divides organizations asymmetrically: one part will contain the boundary between them, the other part will have no boundary of its own. The common point between the two parts is restricted to only one of them. We cannot therefore call this boundary a frontier, as in the case of affinity, because it is not shared. We propose to call this form of limitation, which only exists on one side of the border, *a fence*, because it is like a wall placed around a piece of land: the wall itself belongs to the property in question, not to what is kept outside.

A fence does not divide the two parts of an organization in the same way. If, on the one hand, it increases control over one of the parts—since the property leaves nothing "left over" at the mercy of the other part—on the other hand, it characterizes what is left out in a different way, as if there were no clear boundaries or contours. When I buy a piece of land and have the documentation proving my ownership and a fence demarcating the land, this does not define any attributes or connections with what is outside – it may belong to someone else, it may not have an owner yet. This type of organization is well exemplified by the fencing of land, but it actually applies to any social relationship where the demarcation of boundaries is clear and internal to the agreement or exchange at stake – as in contracts, pacts, or even in the establishment of rights and duties. For example, a contract that unifies two parties includes exactly what is described therein and is fully

valid once signed and acknowledged – the parties bound by the contract have clear boundaries, described in the contract, and everything else is irrelevant to the agreement. For example, if you are unable to deliver what we agreed upon in the contract due to a tragedy in your family, you would still owe me a penalty—and you could not rely on our contractual bond as if it created a community relationship between us, as we remain completely unrelated to each other.

The essential asymmetry between the two parties divided by property deserves to be analyzed in more detail, as it is the source of the type of power inherent in this logic. At a first level, we can see that the idea of alienation—whether through exchange, plunder, or control—depends on there being a clear cut between the parties involved. It is only possible to extract something from nature and call it a property if the connection between the property and the space from which it was extracted is completely severed—as is the case with fencing and the extraction of natural resources in general. Similarly, effective exchange between owners is only possible if, at the moment something became yours, it completely ceased to be mine. You can acquire something that belonged to me and then destroy that object without it having any relation to me. And there is alienation in the act of working—not only in its products, but in the very way we labor—because the division of labor can also separate the “unlimited” power of the worker from the management that controls those limits. Social organization based on alienation therefore depends on this asymmetrical social logic.

But alienation, in the sense of an asymmetrical cut or enclosure, is also at play in the domination of one community by another; it is what effectively defines this domination. For example, the formation of a social stratum that is taxed in exchange for protection—whether by the mafia, the militia, or the state—also follows a division of social parts where the dominant stratum dictates the rules and limits and the dominated stratum must be limited and controlled by the rules of others. In addition to hierarchical domination, the logic of property is also at play in the social form of violence. Of course, states and social formations organized by property did not invent aggression, rivalry, and killing, but in societies organized by the logic of affinity, where frontiers operate, damage can incur in retribution—that is, the possibility of revenge, which can play an important social role. In the case of the logic of property, it becomes possible to attack, punish, and kill

without creating such a reciprocal bond or a possibility of reversal between the dominated and the dominant, and this is a possible definition of violence, which redoubles its harmful character: violence is an act of asymmetrical aggression, where only one of the parties has a monopoly on the reasons and means of aggression.

Another important aspect that also depends on this asymmetry is the production of a dual system of organization. On the one hand, among people who belong to the same dominant community, everything happens as if the relationship between owners were egalitarian and symmetrical—which is why people do not consider themselves primarily owners, but rather citizens of a state, subjects of law, for example. On the other hand, among the parties belonging to the dominated community – that is, a community from which goods, labor, and resources are extracted and alienated – the hierarchical dimension is evident and everyone is organized as a “limitless” or untamed strata that needs to be controlled and managed; they are subjects, subjugated. In this sense, the logic of property is closely linked to the category of *subject*: to be a subject is to be recognized by a property regime either as a limiting part—a sovereign who makes the laws—or as a limited part—a subject who is subject to the laws. The promise of the modern state and its political system is precisely that every individual could occupy both places, which is obviously impossible in a colonial and hierarchical social formation.

A common impasse in understanding the logic of property arises from taking its functioning in the modern state as a general example of how it operates. The functioning of capitalism requires that most market relations also be relations of private property—because this guarantees, among other things, the state’s assistance in managing and maintaining class divisions. Because of this, modern states form gigantic, interconnected bureaucracies that simultaneously govern a range of aspects of social life. The problem with taking the modern form of property as a model for this logic in general is that, when we do so, we lose sight of the plasticity of this form of organization—which has been the dominant logic for most of recorded human history, functioning very differently in different empires and social formations.

The challenges of organization by property vary greatly from case to case, as do the ways of dealing with the asymmetry inherent in the logic of alienation and violence. And while, on the one hand, the logic of property appears to us as constituting an enormous legal “superstructure,” almost a fictional world detached from reality, this cannot serve to disregard the fact that one of the main forces of this mode of organization comes from its silent presence *within* other logics. Perhaps this aspect is only really visible when we consider the abstract schemes we present here, but a quick comparison between the creation of “frontiers” and “fences” already allows us to conclude that a fence is “a frontier on one side only,” that is, it is *less* than a frontier. Similarly, an exchange between owners is an exchange of gifts *minus* the reciprocal bond created by affinity. And an act of violence is an aggression that *removes* the social possibility of retribution, of revenge. Now, if property is a “simplified” form of organization, everywhere there is an exchange based on affinity there could potentially be a process of alienation—all that is needed is for social forces to organize themselves in such a way as to disregard or eliminate any common ground between the two parties, consolidating an asymmetry. The very possibility of using the law as a means of mediating conflicts and disputes between communities—or, on an interpersonal level, of using politeness as a way of establishing an interaction with others that does not create real bonds, preserving the separation between people—depends on this ability of the logic of fences to operate “within” the logic of frontiers, deactivating the sharing of something common. It is no wonder that ancient China devoted much effort to developing legal systems, bureaucratic devices, codes of ethics, and spiritual guidance to help “stitch together” a huge empire made up of a hundred different ethnic groups and cultures. In this sense, property is a logic “internal” to the logic of gift-giving, which is why it can be mobilized to mediate conflicts, regulate relations between communities, or completely corrupt this other form of organization—and in many imperial social formations, its primary function was mediation between distinct communities, not preparing the ground for unbridled capitalist exploitation.

The question of the flexibility of organization by property, and the importance of distinguishing this logic from its modern, but notorious, form, will both be relevant when we turn to better understand what is happening in the process of the peripheralization of capitalism. As we shall see, the crisis of the modern state—the crisis of citizenship and other legal devices—does not lead to pure anomie or lack of order, but to the emergence of various regimes of dispossession, particular

laws, forms of domination and subjection centered on the same logic but dispersed across territories.

### *Logic of value*

We use the expression “logic of value” in Marxism to describe specific dynamics of capitalism, the result not only of the exchange of equivalents, but of the existence of a global system of production of commodities for sale, with the specific goal of capital accumulation. In other words, capitalism is indeed a universal system organized by value, but it is called “capitalism” because it is through value that the accumulation of capital is possible—and it is capital that defines our social system. Recognizing that the historical dominance of value as a general form of social organization is specific to capitalism does not prevent us from recognizing that the logic of value predates capitalism, constituting a very general social logic.

The logic of value, in its most abstract form, can also be defined by the way it divides the parts of an organization. Instead of frontiers or fences, organization through value creates *margins*, since the boundary between one part and another is diffuse, as if neither had clear contours or limits. A good example is a factory floor. How is this space organized? How are machines and people divided? Well, in the most profitable way—that is, there are no fixed boundaries: people can squeeze more into the same space, and distances that previously made no difference suddenly need to be shortened because those minutes gained are now relevant to competition. The whole theory of surplus value depends on the possibility of shifting the margins between parts of the production process.

If, on the one hand, the existence of margins between both social parts reintroduces a more symmetrical social relationship, on the other, it creates another type of power. How will the boundary between the parts of an organization be determined if it is originally diffuse or granular? Two people who are not starving or in need of anything else and who find themselves with surplus objects to exchange can bargain and find a ratio between the things they have brought that would justify calling the exchanged objects equivalent—without coercion and without any other bond

being established. But it is enough for one of them to be desperately thirsty for the proportion between what that person is willing to give in exchange for a glass of water to change radically. There was no coercion in the sense of a dominant force intentionally determining how much the glass of water would be worth – nor will a debt be created between the person who sold the water and the person who gave almost everything they had for the chance to survive – but it is clear that the margins delimiting the proportions of this exchange – which remains equivalent! – have been distorted by other factors.

In fact, the exchange of objects according to equivalent proportions of value did not wait for capitalism to appear. For example, the practice of “silent trade” is well known, where peoples who did not share the same language or culture exchanged goods based on a bargain of what would be objects of equivalent value. It is a way of creating momentary links with communities with which we do not share borders, without the need to connect with them through reciprocity and without the need for a process of domination to emerge. Money also emerged in various societies long before capitalism arose—and in some places it was a secondary means of ensuring exchanges of surplus objects, while in others it became an object of accumulation. Capital itself—as a quantity of value that is reinvested to generate more value—also exists in pre-capitalist societies, even if in these cases it did not become the main form of social organization.

In any case, our more “fluid” definition of value as division by margins begins to take on the characteristics recognized by Marxist analysis when we begin to try to organize larger parts of the social fabric based on this principle. That is, when these different equivalent negotiations need to be consistent with each other. The famous “simple or accidental formula of value,” presented in *Capital*, already makes it clear that the equivalence between two commodities actually hides a specific type of power, since the difference between the seller and the buyer, which is difficult to define at such a simple level, is the basis of the difference between who can determine the marginal limit between the parties and who will have to adapt to the established limits. Many interpreters of Marx point out that there is a conflict already inscribed in the analysis of the commodity form, but they usually have to perform theoretical acrobatics to explain whether commodities only exist when there is already a fully structured class struggle. From the point of view of our analysis, this conflict

inherent in value can be simply described as the conflict over the demarcation of the proportions of equivalent exchange: in the case of loose or "accidental" exchanges, this conflict can be circumvented by agreements, can be casual and reversible, and can be marked by forces of domination or cultural forces. In a society where the majority of people survives by selling their labor power, this conflict becomes structural to the whole society: whenever a worker arrives to exchange their time for money, they find themselves in the situation described above—they are like the person with intense thirst in the desert, constrained by "circumstances" to sell lives for a glass of water. This way in which the power of value insinuates itself, silently altering the conditions of buying and selling, is the force that produces and maintains what we call social classes.

The power of value is different from the power of affinity and property – it expresses itself precisely in this "marginal" way: even without the presence of an executioner or a coercive force, the proportions – the boundaries – of value shift more to one side or the other depending on everything that pressures and alters the ability of buyers and sellers to define how much they need what they do not yet have. Community and property structures—frontiers and fences—can also influence this process of delimitation. For example: from a legal point of view, work has a limit, whether it is a type of activity or a number of hours, and it is the property of those who work and decide whether or not to sell it, while from a value point of view, human activity has no determined social limit and can be shaped by other forces. Thus, if someone's working time is purchased for the purpose of accumulating capital, the limits of the activity will be determined by this process of valorization—a process that is protected by the logic of property, which places the margins of labor activity under the control of capitalist exploitation.

This game of delimitation, made possible by the division of diffuse margins, is central to understanding why some types of human activity gain an indispensable place in the capitalist system, to the point where we say that, in capitalism, only labor is capable of "creating value." The challenge of creating value is as follows: given a certain way of defining the equivalence between two things—be they objects, people, etc.—is it possible to reorganize the elements involved so that this proportion is altered? In other words, among the commodities purchased for the production of other commodities, there must be elements whose limits can be stretched—and labor power is

socially limited as a commodity by the logic of property, but its value can still be subjected to new "bargains" that the production process and the purchase of labor impose on it.

We mentioned above that when something or someone is part of an organization based on affinity, they become a person in that context—a social entity that shares something in common with what is outside of themselves—and when they organize themselves based on property, they become a subject—a social entity that has rights and duties, limits others, and has its own limitations. When we divide social space in terms of value, that is, in terms of parts whose margins have no predetermined limits, we organize people and things as *commodities*. But what is a commodity? Our first intuition is that a commodity is anything that can be bought and sold—but in light of what we have already presented here, we know that this does not only mean that it can be replaced or alienated. Being something that can be bought and sold means, more specifically, that the equivalence established is momentary, the proportionality is occasional, since the commodity can have its limits reinvented soon after: whether by market fluctuations, by an unusual negotiation, or by new forms of management and organization of the productive sphere. To alienate a property is to define a new limit—no one else owns that object but the owner—but to buy a commodity is to acquire the means to change a limit—capitalists buy labor power to exploit it, that is, to subject it to uses that transform its lack of limits into more value.

This comparison between alienation and selling allows us to return to a point we mentioned earlier, when we said that the logic of property exists, so to speak, "within" the logic of affinity. In that case, we saw that a fence is something like a defective, asymmetrical frontier. But property has a different articulation with value, since the logic of margins contains no limits, only diffuse edges. However, we saw that the logic of property divides organizations into different parts, one that contains the limit and another that is unlimited—the first is the defining part, the second is subordinate, it takes its limits from elsewhere. Now, every commodity, in this sense, appears to the logic of proprietary domination as something to be demarcated, managed—the commodity presents itself as if the owner were always outside it. On the other hand, as we have also seen, the asymmetrical domination of property creates entire communities stripped of their own boundaries, subject to the rules of the dominant community—in this sense, domination by property prepares the ground

for the commodification of that which is subjugated. This description is very schematic, but it can help us understand in a more structural way how the logic of property, by breaking down symmetric boundaries, prepares the ground for the hegemony of the margins of value.

In light of this explanation, we must return to our initial comment: our world is not dominated solely by value, but by capital—which, in turn, depends on the organization of the world based on value. It is only when most social relations are defined in a marginal way that the capitalist class can instrumentalize all equivalent exchange in favor of capital accumulation—which, in turn, constantly alters these marginal limits: the time we have to rest, the intensity and forms of work, and the very shape of the planet. Once we are aware of this circuit, we can no longer naively believe that where exchange is considered equivalent and fair, exploitation has ended, because it becomes clear that the very delimitation of this equivalence is where capitalist exploitation operates. On the other hand, it is still important to be able to separate the social logic of value from the way value exists in capitalism, because a new society will also need to deal with this general form of dividing its organizations, even if global money and other means of systematic exploitation of labor in the name of capital accumulation are abolished.