ON THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF OVERCOMING THE CURRENT CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

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The production of theory in relation to the aims and contents of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's "Next Future" Programme, under the scope of the Workshop due to be held on 12 and 13 November 2009 to discuss the different responses to the crisis, involves a series of challenges and problems for research that are complex and difficult, but also extremely current and pertinent.

The object of observation giving rise to the central scientific object of the production of theory is itself contaminated by the dilemma of the crisis. As a polysemic, generic, abstract and complex concept, the crisis induces us to explain it, interpret it and understand it, based on a series of causes and effects originating in social, political, cultural, civilisational and economic phenomena that, through their emergence and social plasticity, have a profound effect on the normative functioning of contemporary societies. Unemployment, the precariousness of job tenure, deviance, crime, war, poverty and misery, all resulting from the dysfunctions and perversions of the regulation of the market, the State, the institutions and the organisations of civil society are unequivocal demonstrations of a type of crisis whose configurations and biological and social tendencies highlight a widespread sense of civilisational unease about the ecosystemic equilibrium of the human species with the plant and animal species of planet Earth. At the same time, the emergence of a multiplicity of deviant and perverse social conflicts increasingly inform and structure the processes of socialisation and sociability that are tending to develop towards the outbreak of an interindividual civil war on a planetary scale.

First of all, these emblematic questions call into play all the actors-scientists undertaking research in the fields of the social and human sciences, but also all those who work and carry out research in other scientific areas: biology, health, physics and mathematics, etc. In view of the fragility and impotence of the prevailing scientific models and paradigms and their inability to demonstrate their heuristic value and efficacy in preventing and controlling the deviant and perverse phenomena that gave rise to the current crisis, the first lesson that is to be learnt is that these models and paradigms are also themselves in a profound state of crisis. Since all sciences are inscribed in the normative context of the instrumental rationality of capitalism, when they do not include the mechanisms of efficacy and lucrativeness determined by the maximisation of profit, they naturally find themselves in imminent danger of being excluded from the market that regulates the global system of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of scientific goods and services.

In such a situation, as far as the general theme of the crisis is concerned, I also admit my own ignorance about the particular and global systemic factors that inform its epistemology and current ontology. From what I have just said, I consider that we are far from being able to control or even anticipate the complex and abstract nature of the current crisis in contemporary societies. In my view, such a desire reflects a widespread ignorance on the part of the different actors who either wish or seek to identify the incidences of risk, uncertainty,

fear and perplexity in the face of the ever more rapid emergence of its biological and social dysfunctions and perversions.

It is not my aim here to adopt a global systemic posture of an encyclopaedic nature, nor do I have the cognitive and emotional wherewithal to do so. In view of what I have said, I do not structure my narrative discourse on the basis of dichotomous and deterministic analyses that look at the crisis as if it were essentially economic and financial, paying no heed to the civilisational, cultural, biological, social and political factors that have helped to shape it. By renouncing the comparability and systematic contrast of readings and quotations from authors who have devoted their attention to such a vast, complex and abstract theme as that of the current crisis, I surrender myself to the condition-function of an actor-scientist who is learning the sociological languages that shape my reality as a teacher and researcher.

By adopting the position of a learner as an actor-scientist in the context of my biological and social historicity, I readily assume my condition-function as both an object of observation and a scientific object, avoiding the systematic analytical disjunctions of the narrative discourses that separate theory from practice, the present from the past, objective factors from subjective factors, qualitative factors from quantitative factors.

Despite knowing that my analysis may lead me into speculation and error, I refuse to follow the models of "Judaic-Christian" analysis mechanically separating the parts of the whole that shape individual and collective action, as well as the interdependence and complementarity existing between the parts and the systemic whole that lie at the origin of the socialisation processes of social, political, economic, cultural and civilisational phenomena. Instead of adhering to the parameters of that comprehensive, interpretive and explanatory mechanism, whose causes and effects of deviant and perverse phenomena always have an essentiality that is either behavioural or structural and institutional in nature, I centre my analysis on the parameters of the current crisis of capitalist society, bearing in mind the structuring function that the actor represented by the labour factor of production performs in its global process. I am or I try to be far removed from deterministic analyses, as is the case with the currently prevailing models and paradigms, which, in most cases, mechanically separate good from evil, theory from practice, slavery from submissiveness, the bourgeoisie from the proletariat, the individual from the group, as well as civil society from the State. This separation or mechanistic disjunction is both objectively and subjectively impossible, and yet it is the object of systematic expiation and blame by those who may or may not suffer from the vicissitudes of the current capitalist crisis.

This type of behavioural attitude with great social plasticity seems to be paradoxical, but it isn't. Whether in a situation of unemployment, earning starvation wages, or in a situation of poverty, precarious job tenure or social exclusion, the perception and generic deduction of the negative effects of the problems and the origins of these realities is always to be found in capitalism or in the State, but never in the individuals, groups, communities or civil societies that have identified with and adapted their normative structures to that same capitalism and that same State. So much so that, despite the fact that these negative problems have been a constant feature of the history of capitalism and the State, today, faced with an unprecedented crisis that could never have been imagined, those who live in a situation of extreme misery and poverty continue to demand work, employment, starvation wages and inclusion in the prevailing social order, demanding for this purpose what capitalism and the State cannot provide.

In view of the introductory questions and issues that this same text involves, I shall base my analysis on two fundamental dimensions: 1) the nature of the process of industrialisation and urbanisation based on the historical limits of the transformation of organic matter into inorganic matter; 2) the contingencies of the Information and Communication Technologies

(ICT) and globalisation, and their behavioural consequences at the local, regional, national, continental and world level.

1. **Limits to the industrialisation and urbanisation of contemporary societies**

Although the industrialisation and urbanisation of contemporary societies remains an unstoppable process, particularly at the level of the emerging regional powers, with China, Brazil and India being emblematic cases, the biological and social perversions created by this process have reached their historic limit. The reasons for this fact derive from a model for the transformation of organic matter into inorganic matter that became exhausted in the apogee of the "thirty glorious years of capitalism" (1945-1975).

The structuring effects of this model were felt mainly in the mass transformation, destruction, reduction and exhaustion of the natural resources, water and oxygen of planet Earth. The gigantic exploitation, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, of the soil mountains, rivers, seas and forests that have provided, and still continue to provide, raw materials for the production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods circumscribed to the sectors of automobiles, chemicals, steel, oil, nuclear energy, iron, cement, glass, textiles, real estate, transport and the agro-food industry, has given rise to an unsustainable situation at the level of the environment and land use management. This industrialisation process was given an enormous boost by the hegemony of the structuring importance of these sectors in the economic growth rates and in the capital value process of the most developed capitalist countries. On the other hand, this process has recently been stepped up in less developed capitalist countries, in whose territories it is still possible to extract raw materials with organic potentialities. The transformation of the immense natural resources that are still available into a range of inorganic goods allows for expansion and provides a way out of the crisis in which the industrialisation process now finds itself immersed.

In the broad sense of the term, upstream, within and downstream of this industrialisation process, it is practically impossible not to be aware of the historical emergence of a simultaneous process of urbanisation with its own populational specificity as far as its dimension, density and populational heterogeneity are concerned. The processes of migration from the countryside to the city, as well as the mass phenomenon of emigration between countries and continents, explain the content and the forms of urbanisation in close interdependence and complementarity with the industrialisation process materialised in the form of factories, workshops, housing areas, markets, transport, roads, bridges, shopping centres, small businesses, tourism, leisure, cultural and recreational activities, and sport, as well as political, religious and social activities.

It is a systemic urban-industrial process of integration, interdependence and structural and functional complementarity, whose evolution has been expressed in a growing complexity and social, economic, political, cultural and civilisational abstraction. Today, when we observe the everyday life of the *homo urbanus* in the great urban agglomerations of the contemporary societies that bring together several million inhabitants, we can easily understand that reality. Social stratification and inequality have become widespread in the interstices of an immense informal and underground economy that vegetates and lives from the waste and the remains of the rubbish bins left abandoned by the ostensive and unbridled consumption of the powerful and privileged social strata that lead the processes of institutionalisation and formalisation of the formal economy. At the same time, because of the interdependence and complementarity that exists between the two, these phenomena are also to be noted in the informal and underground economy. In either of these circumstances, the identity of the everyday life of any inhabitant of the large urban agglomerations based on the unbridled

consumption of objects from the industrial sector is becoming progressively exhausted and gradually disintegrating.

The territorial spread of any urban agglomeration implies the extinction of many animal and plant species. Through the transformation of immense tracts of land into cement, iron and glass, the probabilities of there being oxygen and water in the organic soil also disappear. Through its becoming a dead inorganic territory without any probabilities of producing oxygen and water, the chances of survival of any animal or plant species were extinguished. We can say that the genuine sources of the creation and sustainability of any animal or plant species, in these circumstances, have been extinguished, insofar as there are no natural resources, water or oxygen in those territories that are confined within the space-time of the urban-industrial system.

In the same sense, the space-time of the transformation of organic "inputs" into inorganic "outputs" inscribed in the standard model for the production, distribution, trade and consumption of products from the industrial sector – automobiles, oil, chemicals, textiles, steel, iron, glass, cement, the agro-food industry and transport – is in itself the personification of the extinction and destruction of the oxygen and water existing in the aquifers and ground water tables, as well as of the greater potential for emissions of greenhouse gases expressed in the increase of the ozone layer and the ever faster desertification of planet Earth, logically resulting in the extinction of all plant and animal species.

Insofar as progress and reason are fundamental structuring factors determining the efficacy of the standard model of the instrumental rationality of capitalism, this same model increasingly shows itself to be powerless to maximise profit through the probability of life that is inherent in the human species, particularly with regard to the individual and collective action of the actor represented by the labour factor of production. By extinguishing oxygen and water as a result of the lethal actions performed on animal and plant species, the probabilities are also extinguished of reproducing the capitalist system based on the human species, as the anthropocentric essence of planet Earth. In this sense, the limit of capitalism itself lies in its historical incapacity to capitalise the natural resources, whose inexistence and progressive destruction endanger the very existence of the human species, including that part that still hopes and aspires to survive biologically within the normative parameters of capitalism.

The objective signs of the biological trends pointing towards the implosion of the capitalist system continue to be symptomatic of the unsustainability of capitalism based on the emblematic sectors of industry: automobiles, oil, chemicals, steel, agro-food, cement, iron, glass, real estate and textiles. Contrary to what is claimed by the ideologues of the capitalist system and other political ideologies, the crisis that this is currently facing is not a mere question polarised around the financial system or the economic system at the world level. Unemployment, as well as the precariousness of job tenure, poverty, misery and present-day social exclusion are the result of countless natural calamities, the mass abandonment of the sources for the creation and maintenance of life on planet Earth, and above all the ignorance of a social system and a human species that has transformed the natural resources bequeathed to us by nature as organic sources of life into inorganic elements of death.

The loss of the human body's immunological capacity when faced with the emergence of a series of diseases caused by the mutations currently taking place in the different animal and plant species must, at the very least, alert us to the risk, uncertainty and negative symptoms that biotechnology, bioscience, technoscience and biomedicine already personify for the systemic equilibrium of the everyday life of the human species and of all animal and plant species. As far as the experiments being conducted with genetically modified cereal crops are concerned, especially the unbridled production of maize and soya beans to sustain the impetus of demand on the world market, it is, at the very least, imperative that we should

stop in order to think, feel and act differently. The historic emergence of the fragility and immunological incapacity of the human body when faced with the emergence of new bacteria and new microrganisms is largely the result of the changes introduced by genetically modified products that form part of the market of the agro-food industry at the world level. In fact, this is a market that is ironically dominated by transnational companies, with its crisis-torn sector tending to transform them all too easily from the giants of the agro-food industry into the giants of the agro-biological industry.

As far as the evolution of the world economic and financial crisis is concerned, we need to realise that we are fast heading towards the final paroxysm of the transformation of organic matter into inorganic matter, reaching the limits of the sustainability and continuity of the process of industrialisation and urbanisation of any society on planet Earth. Rather than placing our trust in the confidence that we are trying to build up at any cost in the world's population based on positive economic growth rates or increases in the GDP, as in the paradigmatic cases of China and India on the Asian continent, Angola in Africa and Brazil in Latin America, what we need to understand is that, besides a population of roughly three billion human beings, these countries have territories that are filled with a gigantic quantity of raw materials of an organic nature. In the final analysis, it is a crucial refuge for expanding the model of the transnational companies in crisis, whose basis for gaining returns on their investment and maximising their profits is fed and reproduced through the payment of starvation wages and the maintenance of unrestricted slavery, giving rise to unemployment, the precariousness of any form of job tenure, poverty, social exclusion, crime and deviance.

The transnational companies engaged in real estate and financial speculation, or involved in the industrial sectors of automobiles, textiles, chemicals, cement, iron and glass, oil, and the agro-food industry, find that it is impossible for them to realise this wish in Europe, the USA, Japan, Canada, Australia, etc., and so they have shifted their investments and capital to the less developed countries where there are enormous potentialities in terms of energy and natural resources for developing these economic activities even further. The strategic structuring function of these economic activities clearly demonstrates that the "thirty glorious years of capitalism" (1945-1975) are now in decline and are tending towards extinction in the developed capitalist countries, and that, at the same time, they are probably the only "sheet anchor" of a moribund capitalism that bases its historical survival on the parameters of progress and reason, and, as a consequence, on the limited structuring of the industrialisation and urbanisation of societies.

The historical costs of this model of hegemonic expansion at the planetary level, because it has been developed in parallel with the historical process initiated in the 1970s, basically induced by the contingencies of the ICT and globalisation, have progressively resulted in an unprecedented biological and social crisis. The gigantic transformation of organic "inputs" into inorganic "outputs" has resulted in a significant increase in soil erosion and the desertification of the planet, air pollution and the destruction of animal and plant species, while, at the same time, the development of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of these economic activities has resulted in the ever greater increase in carbon dioxide emissions and the thickening of the ozone layer. In this particular regard, it is enough for us simply to analyse the world statistics on the *Worldometers* website (http://www.worldometers.info/pt/) as updated on 10 October 2009, to reach the conclusion that, in terms of economic activities, on that day, at 3 pm, the number of cars produced in that year had reached the total of 32,439,199, with 68,106,571 bicycles having been produced, and with the number of computers sold already standing at 178,514,015. In environmental terms, the panorama was as follows: in that year and on that day, 7,086,233 hectares of forests had been lost; 2,719,814,252 metric tons of oil had been used in the production of energy;

2,256,374,627 metric tons of coal had been used in the production of energy. On the other hand, in terms of the energy potential of the sun's rays striking earth on that day, the figure of 1,710,518,177,953 tons was estimated as the probable amount of solar energy produced.

Finally, if we think that the current world population at this moment amounts to almost 6,800,000,000 human beings and that, on the other hand, half of that population lives through the vicissitudes of the crisis concentrated in the large urban agglomerations, we are bound to see the crisis from a global systemic perspective, bearing in mind that the interdependencies and complementarities between its local, regional, national and continental diversities bring together a multiplicity of dysfunctional and perverse phenomena in an inextricable and complex web of economic, social, political, cultural and civilisational factors.

2. **Contingencies of the ICT and globalisation in the current crisis of capitalism**

Now, restricting myself to analysing the structuring dimensions of the ICT and globalisation at the heart of the global society, I can say that it is not enough just to focus on the typological diversity of the stimuli and behavioural responses brought about by the production, distribution, trade and consumption of a vast array of goods and services embodied in "hardware" and "software". The world of the ICT, as embodied in the social plasticity of information technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, telematics, biotechnology, bioscience, technoscience, biomedicine, nanotechnology, the Internet and web languages, is an unfinished world of innovations and changes originating in a growing integration and progression of science and technology within the framework of the instrumental rationality of capitalism.

The ICT, combined in an interdependent and complementary form with the purposes and aims of globalisation, have given an unprecedented boost to this particular phenomenon. In fact, when we reflect upon the impact of the ICT on economic activities, we cannot and must not limit ourselves to analysing the industrial sector, but we must also, and above all, examine the services sector, without, of course, forgetting the agricultural sector. Today, the economic activities contained within the context of the instrumental rationality of capitalism basically relate to education, the environment, health, biology, services, communication, transport, culture, social services and sport, in short to all the economic, political, social and cultural activities that are produced and reproduced by our present-day contemporary societies.

At the same time, insofar as they make it possible for virtual space-time and real space-time to coincide, the ICT enable the production, distribution, trade and consumption of any good or service with analytical and symbolic properties to take place in a standardised form at the local, regional, national and world level. Any football match, any war in Iraq or Afghanistan broadcast live, any social conflict, crime, news about celebrities enjoying great media success, activities with transnational companies, activities performed by the State and civil society, in short all of this and much more, can be produced, distributed, traded and consumed at the time of its emergence and global systemic integration at any second, minute, hour or day of our everyday life, circumscribed to any individual, family, group, organisation, community or ethnic group inhabiting planet Earth. These are unrepeatable acts performed as part of the tasks and functions of each actor/labour factor of production involved in the process of production, in strict interdependence and systemic complementarity with all the other actors/labour factors of production involved in the process of the distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services. Based on their sense organs, the billions of human beings involved in this process of causing virtual space-time to coincide with real space-time have distinct non-linear probabilities of taking part or not in a systemic process

of learning cognitive and emotional competences, and, in this way, taking part in the work process and the organisation of work that call for timely and appropriate skills, normatively inscribed at the level of each task or function in the division of work, of the formal hierarchic authority, the leadership process and the decision-making process arising from the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services.

Globalisation is implanted in a linear fashion at the local, regional, national, continental and world levels, leading each actor/labour factor of production to evolve along the lines of a standard behaviour, whether such behaviour includes the same aspects of producing, distributing, trading and consuming objects of a material type or whether it forms part of the processes of acculturation and social learning when related to economic, cultural, social and political activities of an immaterial type. As a consequence, the trend towards a standardisation of the space-time of the multiple economic activities driven by the structuring force of the ICT and the globalisation taking place at the level of the instrumental rationality of capitalism no longer fit in with the forms of management, governance, reflection and decision-making belonging to a past that, despite its representing the "glorious past of capitalism", is tending towards extinction or already has great difficulties in continuing to exist.

These structuring aspects of the ICT have profound and systematic consequences in the cognitive and emotional forms of adaptation and reaction on the part of the actor/labour factor of production, whenever this person is performing his or her tasks and functions in the context of the work process and the organisation of work directly related to the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services. For this purpose, it is essential to reflect upon and identify the quantitative and qualitative diversity of the gigantism of the signs and signifieds generated by the ICT, bearing in mind the contingencies of the stimuli and the adaptive and reactive responses of the actor/labour factor of production in relation to his or her probabilities of accessing and categorising the information, knowledge and human energy that forms part of the automatic, complex and abstract mechanisms of the ICT. In this way, when we write or talk about the ICT, we are undeniably talking about an almost infinite probability of enjoying access to the knowledge, information and human energy that previously was polarised into the socio-professional profiles of the *know-how* bound up with the tasks and functions previously performed by engineers, lathe-operators, millers, electricians, weavers, joiners, carpenters, mechanics, cobblers, locksmiths and stonemasons, who embodied the urban-industrial civilisation that is now in decline.

Meanwhile, most, if not all, of this *know-how* has been progressively displaced and integrated into the automatic mechanisms of the ICT. As a result of the new structure offered by the ICT, the energy, information and knowledge that were directly related to the *know-how* of each profession of the industrial sector, as well as the space-time of the process of work and the organisation of work limited to the gestures, times, movements and pauses of the actor/labour factor of production linked to that sector, to the services sector and the agricultural sector, have been subjected to a drastic reduction, or, in most cases, rendered extinct.

Nowadays, any human being, or, more concretely, any actor/labour factor of production, who wishes to become fully integrated into the process involved in the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services generated by the ICT and globalisation must, first of all, have the cognitive and emotional competences that enable him or her, in a suitable and timely manner, to categorise the information, knowledge and energy directly related to the functions and tasks that it is incumbent upon him or her to perform. Secondly, any actor/labour factor of production wishing to be integrated into this process cannot simply react or adapt to the stipulations laid

down by the structures and functions of the organisation of work that prevail in any transnational company and in other companies associated with this. In order to be able, in a suitable and timely manner, to decode and encode the flows and networks of information, knowledge and energy that pass through the mind, psyche and body of the actor/labour factor of production as an open system, his sense organs must be creative, free and spontaneous. At the same time, as an open system, the actor/labour factor of production cannot simply be analysed on the basis of his intrapersonal identity, or, in other words, on the basis of his singularity and his cognitive and emotional potentialities, which may eventually enable him to become positively integrated into the normative framework of the instrumental rationality of capitalism.

The stimuli-responses, whose structuring causes and effects are specifically located in the automatic, complex and abstract mechanisms of the ICT, being a historical product of billions of human beings, are an immense living work bringing together and storing information, energy and knowledge that needs to be freshly produced, distributed, traded and consumed at every second, minute, hour, day, week and year of the social and biological trajectory of the actor/labour factor of production. This actor only exists and persists historically as a commercial instrument or means of efficiency and efficacy within the parameters of the normative evolution of capitalist society. As regards the cognitive and emotional competences that are required of each actor/labour factor of production applying and competing for a hypothetical job and employment in a complex and abstract market, it becomes necessary to understand the specificity of this competition set in motion by the ICT and the globalisation that is taking place at the territorial level and at the level of the space-times of the localities, regions and countries that currently make up contemporary societies.

Thus, when we situate ourselves within the context of this coincidence between virtual space-time and real space-time, the space-time of the everyday life of each actor/labour factor of production is a concrete singularity that is subject to an enormous array of complex and abstract, analytical and symbolic stimuli originating from the structuring action of the ICT and globalisation. Given the current competitive environment, it is a process of learning and acculturation that occurs within the bosom of the family, in reference groups, at workplaces, in other possible space-times and territories of the biological and social trajectory of the actor/labour factor of production. To this end, this actor is called upon to demonstrate communicational and affective competences in each of the space-times mentioned. Immediately, between parents and children, between men and women, between young and old people. These are concrete and intrinsically interpersonal relations based on each glance, each way of talking, feeling, thinking and acting, although they are nonetheless socialised by the structuring importance of the stimuli-responses originating from the affective and communicational capacity of the images, signs and signifieds produced, distributed, traded and consumed through the structuring action of the ICT and globalisation.

Basically, in any circumstance, it is a space-time with non-linear probabilities of emerging as an actor engaged in effective learning through the exchange of knowledge that is inbuilt into social relationships of a spontaneous and informal nature. However, these relationships, which potentially allow for the development of an effective learning at the workplace, are, at the same time, submerged in and infiltrated by flows and normative networks of information, knowledge and energy, simultaneously generating an unprecedented level of interpersonal competition, both between colleagues who have the same qualifications and earn the same wages and between bosses and their subordinates with different qualifications, earning different wages and exercising different kinds of power**.** The urgency of the stimuli-responses limited to the performance of each task or function implies a timely and appropriate communication and socialisation of emotions, being expressed, in this way, as a

form of unbridled competition at the level of interpersonal relations. In view of the contingencies of the ICT and globalisation in the process of work and the organisation of work, interpersonal relations have ceased to be determined by the coercive and normative action of the leadership capacity of those in charge, or of the normative qualifications related to the performance of the tasks of the subordinates and to the normative decisions of the decision-makers, since each actor/labour factor of production is subjected to a systematic learning process as a learner of the appropriate means for the communication and socialisation of emotions through the ICT, at the time of his or her integration into the process of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services.

If we place ourselves at the level of the intra-group, inter-group and intra-organisational social relations in any company or organisation, the abstract and complex character of the space-time of the competition of the actor/labour factor of production progressively increases, just as there is similarly a gradual increase in the process of the institutionalisation and formalisation of his or her sense organs, while these, on the contrary, are constrained in order to make it possible to encode and decode the languages that have their origin in the stimuli-responses induced by the ICT and globalisation. In this sense, when we consider the contents of globalisation, we must think about the structuring action performed by transnational companies. We have to understand the contents and the forms of the complex and abstract network that integrate their existence at the level of the virtual space-time coinciding with their existence at the level of the real space-time. The interlinkages and interdependences of that network are thus prolonged, based on a subcontracting agreement entered into by the transnational companies with a series of companies integrated into the formal economy at the local, regional, national and continental level. Also, and especially because of their deviant and perverse effects, this does not prevent the global systemic implantation of the structuring effects of the ICT and globalisation in the already mentioned network from taking place through their structuring capacity in relation to the market and the companies that operate in the world market of the informal economy.

We can therefore recognise, straight away, a structuring inevitability that has had immediate repercussions on the present-day crisis of capitalism. Unemployment, just like the precariousness of job tenure, in the emblematic sectors of industry, can be explained not only by the inclusion of the information, knowledge and energy of the labour factor of production in the structure of the production costs in the sectors of automobiles, chemicals, steel, textiles, agro-food, cement, iron and glass, but also through a progressive increase in the structuring role played by technology and science in the development of the integration and automatisation of information, energy and human knowledge in the ICT. It is an inevitable structuring process of systematic and profound changes that always evolves in the same direction, with clear effects on the structuring of problems and challenges in relation to the individual and collective action of the actor/labour factor of production in the current context of the instrumental rationality of capitalism: a) the progressive and irreversible increase of his or her lack of qualifications, unemployment, precariousness of job tenure, poverty, misery, social exclusion, deviance and crime; b) the progressive and irreversible increase in the demands for competences, the non-linear probabilities of employment, the non-linear probabilities of job tenure, and, consequently, the non-linear probabilities of not getting caught up in the spiral of poverty, misery, social exclusion, deviance and crime.

On the other hand, the ICT have introduced new forms of causes and effects in relation to the contents and forms of socialisation of economic, social, political and cultural activities. We are no longer thinking, reflecting and acting as we did in the past, in the period of the “thirty glorious years of capitalism”, centred on the emblematic example of the industrial sector. The raw materials (“inputs”) to be transformed into (“other”) goods are no longer

exterior to the human condition, as were (and still are) a substantial part of the natural resources in extinction, the water and oxygen that are to be found in the animal and plant species that have managed to survive on planet Earth. When we interact with the ICT, when we decode and encode their languages, we are the fundamental raw material that has or does not have cognitive and emotional capacities to transform information, knowledge and the energy generated ("inputs"), in a suitable and timely fashion, into goods and services ("outputs"). We are a behavioural reality that imports and exports information, knowledge and human energy. We are a concrete open system, whose causes and singular effects of the interaction, decoding and encoding of the analytical and symbolic languages of the ICT are exclusively information, knowledge and human energy. These are raw materials that are both internal and external to the condition-function of the actor/labour factor of production within the framework of the instrumental rationality of capitalism. They are a non-linear probability of learning cognitive and emotional competences, of learning communicational and affective competences, based on the five (5) sense organs, with special emphasis on the role of hearing and sight in the space-time confined to the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services.

We have therefore left the production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods with material characteristics, generally referred to as current consumption goods, in order to enter into another space-time of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of immaterial goods, or, more concretely, analytical and symbolic goods and services. However, there is a great difference between the two realities. While the space-time of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of commercial goods observable to the naked eye, as is the case with automobiles, chemicals, steel, iron, cement, glass and textiles, obeys and is perfectly compatible with short, medium and long-term space-time logics, the same cannot be said of the space-time limited to the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services.

This historical trend not only makes the non-linear probabilities of competition of the actor/labour factor of production more complex and more abstract, within the framework of the instrumental rationality of consumption, but, at the same time, it also forces him or her to irreversibly evolve along two possible paths: a) a lack of qualification, unemployment, precariousness of job tenure, poverty, misery, social exclusion, violence, deviance and crime; b) effective learning of skills, stable job tenure, employment, high wages, non-linear probabilities of individual and collective identification with the prevailing social order.

However, unemployment and the precariousness of job tenure, like all of the structuring substitutes that I have listed, are, in my view, the result of the fact that more than ¾ of the world's population do not have the cognitive and emotional capacities that are required for an effective learning of skills that involve the non-linear probability of decoding and encoding, in a timely and suitable manner, the languages of the ICT and globalisation, consequently limiting themselves to playing a series of routine roles, invariably marked by gestures, movements, times and pauses related to expertise and intuition centred upon the energetic know-how of the actor/labour factor of production. These are roles that merely react and adapt to the contingencies of the automatic mechanisms of the ICT, emerging and functioning as mere functional appendices of these with regard to the creation of energy, information and knowledge linked to the process of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services that form part of the world market of the current process of industrialisation and urbanisation of contemporary societies.

Because of its social plasticity and incidence in contemporary societies, it shows itself to be an irreversible process of competition, the results of which are clearly visible in the drastic increase in the rates of unemployment, the precariousness of job tenure, poverty,

misery, social exclusion, crime and deviance at the world level. The normative reality and the rational expectations of the "thirty glorious years of capitalism", have, as they collapsed, gradually created a series of fears, age-old atavisms, insecurity, everyday anguish and frustration, with profound repercussions upon the world population, and, above all, amongst those who potentially aspire to benefit from stable employment and work. Both of the factors referred to have each become a "kind" of mirage or historical curse in relation to the emotional and cognitive stability of any accultured individual within the parameters of the present-day capitalist society. In the broad sense of the term, there only exists employment and work, in order to hypothetically control or eradicate the deviance, crime and violence caused by the perversions and dysfunctions of a global social system marked by an everyday life that is filled with death impulses. In fact, there continues to be an irreversible trend towards increasing the volume of employment and work at a world level. However, the only work and employment that increases exponentially is based on the effective socialisation of the death impulses of the multiple socio-professional groups in crisis, whose *raison d'être* can only be experienced on the various war fronts that exist at the local, regional, national and continental levels.

These are types of war that are embedded in an everyday life without any sense in view of the ignorance of the contingencies of the ICT and globalisation. At the same time, they are types of war resulting from the historical powerlessness of the actor/labour factor of production to arrange work and employment in the macro-societal space-time and the micro-societal space-time. The struggle for work and employment is an extremely violent one, but it has profound and systematic effects at the level of the individual and collective imaginary of each actor/labour factor of production who currently inhabits planet Earth. As a logical corollary, crime, deviance and violence begin by being a dilemma or a psychic, mental and physical problem whose central *locus* is intrapersonal.

The civilisational unease therefore begins in any individual and spreads to all the others who have ceased to be producers of meaning through the fact that they cannot historically continue to subsist without work and employment. Such a reality immediately effects all the intrapersonal emotional and cognitive stability of any individual that aspires to be a normative actor within the framework of the instrumental rationality of capitalism. Several symptoms appear one after another. Suffering, frustration, insecurity and fear are frequently expressed in the deviance and crime perpetrated against the individual person, as is the emerging case of the suicide rates of the socio-professional groups that compete in the performance of functions and tasks that are directly linked to the socialisation of death impulses in the process of work and the organisation of work at the transnational companies and at other companies that are associated with these.

This civilisational unease is the result of the instrumental role played by the actor/labour factor of production in the context of capitalist society. Whenever he fails to be transformed into an effective commercial object, he does not form part of the process of production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods and services and is consequently marginalised or excluded. For all of these actors, all that remains to them is to engage in the interindividual civil war that exists at the planetary level. As has been said, despite the fact that its main *locus* essentially lies in intrapersonal factors, the generalised spread of this war has a privileged space-time in interpersonal relations. In the space-time of the family, of the primary reference groups, as well as in the space-time of the workplace and public places, there emerge a series of deviances and violent crimes, whose social plasticity in relation to the typologies of interpersonal social relations becomes increasingly visible in the relations between men and women, between parents and children, between members of the same group, between work colleagues, or between any individuals who frequent public spaces.

This interindividual civil war spreads through a series of social networks, of an intragroup, intergroup, intra-organisational, interorganisational, intra-societal and inter-societal nature that, because of the structuring nature of their interdependence and systemic complementarity, naturally and spontaneously emerge through the coincidence of the virtual space-time with the real space-time. Once again, we can see that these social networks result from the structuring effects of the ICT and globalisation. They enable and stimulate social relations of a complex and abstract nature, thus creating infinite social networks, without the need for each individual belonging to them to assume for this purpose his psychic, mental and physical nature in a concrete space-time mediatised by physical co-presence and interknowledge. Not being producers of meaning within the framework of the instrumental rationality of consumption, the emergence of the coincidence of the virtual space-time of complexity and abstraction with the real space-time of complexity and abstraction potentially transforms any individual into a deviant actor/labour factor of production who can easily end up following a life of crime. It is these death impulses that feed and reproduce the interindividual civil war into which we are now plunged.

3. Final considerations

In my opinion, the infamous and troubled crisis that inflames the minds, psyches and bodies of those who still wish to reform or save a moribund social system is a crisis of widespread ignorance. Of course, it is a crisis of the capitalist system at the world level, affecting in particular the financial, political, economic, social, cultural and civilisational systems.

Contrary to the Schumpeterian theses that saw in the destructive vocation of capitalism an innovative and creative historical function, in my opinion, in the present-day world, capitalism has few chances of reversing the path that its very negation has been generating. This first conclusion may seem paradoxical, but it isn't.

As a response to the crisis that it is passing through, the only possibility remaining open to it consists of moving in the opposite direction to that of the destruction of the organic market, which implies the production of oxygen and water, vital for reconstituting the soils, mountains, rivers, oceans, forests, animals and plant species that help to form planet Earth. To this end, it is crucial to transform everything that is inorganic into organic matter. Once again, in my opinion, as a consequence of these imperative changes, it is crucial to destroy all the urban-industrial systems that have gone beyond the limits of self-sustainability and territorial, environmental, administrative, political, social and civilisational self-organisation. To this end, it is fundamental to clean and reconstitute mountains, forests, rivers, seas and oceans. To destroy everything that has to do with factories, slaughterhouses, motorways and the agro-food industry that still remains from the urban-industrial civilisation, which, as I have said in this text, lives at the expense of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of the enslavement and death of the animal and plant species.

As a second conclusion, the current crisis of capitalism results from the gap between the economic activities circumscribed to the real space-time and the economic activities circumscribed to the virtual space-time. Between the production, distribution, trade and consumption of material goods and the production, distribution, trade and consumption of immaterial goods. As it happens, the actors intervening in the interstices of this process are purely and simply, in most cases, in a situation of omission and behavioural dissonance, productive inefficiency and ignorance in relation to the space-time of the production, distribution, trade and consumption of analytical and symbolic goods and services. If there is no production of meaning on the part of the actor/labour factor of production, there is

nothing to produce, distribute, trade or consume. With actors that do not possess analytical and symbolic behavioural skills, there is no production of meaning and consequently no maximisation of profit. In these circumstances, the current crisis of capitalism is personified by an immense ignorance of information, knowledge and energy on the part of the actors who form part of this process.

As a third putative conclusion and possible response to the crisis of capitalism, it can be said that underlying capitalism is the imperative historical need to put an end to the interindividual civil war based on processes of socialisation and sociabilities marked by death impulses. In this regard, for individuals to be able to regain a new probability of becoming transformed into producers of meaning, it is crucial that the intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, intra-organisational, interorganisational, intra-societal and inter-societal relations should evolve along the lines of cooperation, freedom, creativity and responsibility. To this end, faced with the contingencies of the ICT and globalisation, it is crucial that these relations should be intrinsically spontaneous and informal, that direct democracy should emerge, along with self-organisation, in the space-time of the process of work and the organisation of work. Evolving in this direction requires a reversal of the civilisational and historical process of progress and reason, which culminated in the institutionalisation and formalisation of the actor/labour factor of production in the form of a mere commercial object within the framework of the instrumental rationality of consumption. It immediately implies embarking upon a systematic and profound process of learning and acculturation, whose historical meaning culminates in the construction of a new civilisation without leaders or subordinates, without any division of work and without any formal hierarchical authority. It is a global systemic process that begins in the family and spreads to all the space-times of the everyday life of the individuals who currently form part of the human species and of the contemporary societies of planet Earth.

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