

PART I

Cultural Authority
and Neoliberal 'Modernization'

CHAPTER 1

Cultural Aspects of the Neoliberal Crisis: Genealogies of a Fractured Legitimacy

‘... guiada verás de la pura ley
la mano del que sabe’

1.1. Crisis of a Hierarchical, Individualistic Cultural Model

1.1.1. Circuit of voices about crisis

At first, the ‘crisis’ was just one more news story, one more piece of information, one more topic of conversation in a world of news, information, and topics of conversation. Couched in the language of economists, the crisis appeared in the spring of 2007 as nothing more than an ‘expectation of a slowdown in economic growth.’ It was noted, however, that ‘the level of individual debt was very high due to mortgage rates’ and that ‘the real estate market had cooled.’¹ The following year, surveys and newspapers confirmed the bad news: ‘63% of Spaniards will have to limit their vacations to only one or two weeks, if that,’ ‘Spaniards Will Spend 15% Less on Seasonal Sales Due to the Economic Slowdown,’ ‘The Crisis Is Pushing Users Towards Buying Cheaper Drugs.’² Because, of course, at the beginning the crisis was already a threat to the fulfillment of individual desires in a world of individuals who seek to fulfill their desires.

From that implicit perspective on life, the media created stories that highlighted the crisis, adding information and showing its effects. They offered the life stories of young men and women who were affected by the crisis. The national newspaper *El País* quoted a number of them in their 2012 report ‘#Nimileuristas’ (‘not 1,000 euros’) on twenty-somethings and

1 See <http://www.elmundo.es/mundodinero/2007/05/24/economia/1179999308.html>.

2 See <http://www.que.es/actualidad/sociedad/vacaciones-light-para-tiempos-de-crisis.html>; <http://www.elmundo.es/mundodinero/2008/07/01/economia/1214920305.html>; <http://www.diarioya.es/content/la-crisis-potencia-el-consumo-de-drogas-m%C3%A1s-baratas>.

thirty-somethings who earn less than €1,000 a month and are desperate for work: 'If nobody gives me a chance, how can I get experience?' 'I've written up a new resume that says I only have a high school diploma.' 'I work three hours a day and earn 200 euros.' 'I have never turned down any kind of work' (*El País* 2012).

In the wake of this growing adjustment to 'the crisis,' and thus to an ever more precarious job market, the big media outlets kept repeating, summer after summer, 'This year there will be less post-vacation depression because of the crisis.' And the three or four people interviewed on the daily news shows confirmed, 'Having a job these days is a luxury!'³ Through all these years 'in crisis,' the social barometer readings of the Center for Sociological Research (CIS in Spanish) have accompanied these sound bites, consistently illustrating 'Spaniards' greatest worries': unemployment, always in first place and apparently insurmountable, followed by the economy, corruption, and politics jockeying fiercely for the succeeding positions. 'Corruption Unseats the Crisis, Pushing It to Second Place,' announced public television in 2013, sounding for all the world like an announcer trying to generate excitement at a horse race.⁴

But not everything has been numbers and surveys: from the start, the expert information has been accompanied, as is customary, by the less technical, more 'human' commentary of 'intellectuals' and 'opinion-makers' who dealt in the supposed language of 'the man on the street.' Columnists like Javier Marías were warning us as long ago as 2006 that 'from the perspective of *el hombre vulgar*,' with whom Marías claimed to be in agreement, 'Spain is being destroyed by the deceptions of real estate developers, mayors, sponsors of public works, and independent counselors' (Marías 2006). From the government, highly placed politicians like the President himself made statements designed to calm these kinds of fears, at the height of a 2007 that now seems so naïve: 'Since Spanish financial entities are international models of solvency, they are much less exposed to risks like those faced by the mortgage market in the United States.'⁵

In harmony with the government's reassuring and almost proud response to the threat of the crisis, there were other declarations of the legitimacy of the status quo, occasionally from the 'cultural world.' A case in point is an academic book published shortly thereafter with the euphoric title of *Más es*

3 See <http://www.abc.es/videos-espana/20130902/crisis-atenua-sindrome-postvacacional-2644909004001.html>.

4 See <http://www.rtve.es/noticias/20130306/corrupcion-se-dispara-ya-segundo-problema-para-espanoles/613609.shtml>.

5 Zapatero in an appearance with banker Emilio Botín in September 2007.

más: sociedad y cultura en la España democrática, 1986–2008 (Gracia and Ródenas 2009), which was still, in 2009, celebrating the recent transformation of Spain into ‘an ultramodern, post-capitalist society which above all has lost a good part of the collective inferiority complexes that defined part of its image and its very reality.’ Although, to be fair, in weighing the pros and cons, the book simultaneously lamented society’s excessive confidence in ‘a sector like construction, which is so prone to speculation’ (14).

Undoubtedly there were also many other voices that are more difficult to recover now: we well know that at the same time, in private or semi-private circles, infinite daily conversations repeated, translated, countered, and reworked those news stories, pieces of information, and comments. In homes, in workplaces, at cinemas, museums and other entertainments, in cooperatives and activist milieus, and increasingly in the public-private sphere of digital networks, many people (placed by the words of those like Marías in the position of ‘*common man*’) were anticipating or already suffering difficulties, and blaming culprits. They tried to understand the technical language of economics by referring—often with total incredulity or suspicion—to that new reality of information still in formation: ‘the crisis.’

1.1.2. Establishing and consuming reality

This whole cycle (formed by the media, experts, intellectuals, politicians, academics, and ‘the people’) was heavily influenced by the generalized custom in contemporary Western societies of accepting as ‘reality’ whatever is shown, explained, commented, and made visible with facts, images and stories. We could call this the ‘habit of visible reality.’ It is an indirect heir of the great transformation that occurred at the beginning of so-called Western ‘modernity,’ which was the cause, as Michel de Certeau notes, of a progressive change in the way people viewed reality. Little by little, they stopped believing that reality was an invisible nucleus surrounded by deceptive appearances. In its place, they began to accept the opposite perspective that reality was visible, but needed to be studied empirically to discredit unfounded beliefs. A big gap was also opened through which a large part of that reality was illuminated by what would be the great legitimized method of observation: science. The rest was left in the dark, waiting to be studied by means of authorized scientific procedures that would replace traditional knowledge now considered deficient (‘primitive’ or ‘popular’) by the new cultural elites.⁶

6 Lafuente and Rodríguez, in their book *¡Todos sabios!* (2013), propose a lucid historical explanation for the birth of this scientific paradigm, emphasizing its long

In a later (and more extreme) spin on this new paradigm, a new type of belief would spread: simply put, if something could be shown, made visible, it must be considered real. This is what de Certeau calls the ‘creation of reality,’ and this is how the mass media makes it work: representations, or simply visible ‘fictions’ or ‘simulations,’ are constructed which are assumed to be realistic, and which, by their very ability to make something visible, are taken as referents of reality.

Oddly, says de Certeau, this does not necessarily mean we believe that these fictions *are* reality. We know they are constructions, representations, and simulations. We don’t believe in them ‘directly’—what’s more, we often believe they are pure manipulation—but at the same time, we give them the status of reality, because we think they are ‘what everyone believes.’ It becomes a vicious circle, because ‘everyone’ believes that ‘*everyone*’ believes the media. Quoting ‘everyone’ thus becomes, according to de Certeau, the most sophisticated weapon for making people believe (or at least to get people to act *as if* they believe):

since it plays on what others supposedly believe, [the quote] becomes the means through which reality is established ... ‘Opinion surveys’ have become the most basic and passive form of this kind of quote. This perpetual self-citation—the multiplicity of surveys—is the fiction through which the country is led to believe *what the country itself is*. (189)

‘The Crisis Makes Us More Miserable: Spain Shows Sixth Greatest Decline in Happiness.’ This was the finding of a UN study, later repeated on the journal *20 Minutes* in September 2013.⁷

On the other hand, this establishment of reality by the media takes place, as de Certeau also suggests, within the framework of an organizational system of commercialized, production- and consumer-oriented practices. This means that the media not only ‘establish’ reality, but also organize its reception by giving it the form of a market of products consumed by individuals. This organization thus reinforces another central custom of our contemporary Western societies: relating to reality as if it were a market of diverse possibilities to fulfill individual desires. And that, it seems to me, could be a good extended definition of what we sometimes call ‘consumerism.’

In a documentary entitled ‘¿Generación perdida?’ (Lost Generation?), which garnered a record audience for the public television program *Documentos TV* (746,000 viewers on October 9, 2011), an analysis of the crisis

duration and, thus, the impossibility of establishing clear limits between what is considered science and what is not.

7 See <http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/1915941/0/felicidad/espana/crisis/>.

was presented that was very much in line with this type of organization of reality. The story revolved around seven young people who were not acquainted, and who represented very different ‘personal’ options in the face of the crisis. Thus, while one young woman left to live in the country, one of the men emigrated, a second woman protested at the university, another man spent his days at home on the sofa, and yet another man exerted himself to become a successful entrepreneur, and so on. The story centered much more on all those apparently individual responses to the crisis than on what the crisis itself might have meant for the family, social, local, or institutional environments in which these young people lived—never mind the possible collective responses generated from within those environments, the existence of which was obscure at best.

This type of reading—facing the crisis by focusing on some supposed individual decisions that led people to suffer through the crisis or face it according to their personal preferences (we could almost call it a kind of ‘crisis consumerism’)—has dominated media representations. Significantly, it is reproduced, for example, in an array of reports about young people in crisis, like the aforementioned report in *El País*, ‘#Nimileuristas.’ This was a sequel to material the newspaper had already published seven years previously about the ‘mieuristas’ (‘1,000 euroists’) (*El País* 2005): earning 1,000 euros a month only lasted a short time as a symbol of financial insecurity. In fact, in the seven years between 2005 and 2012, it became a coveted and unreachable goal for many. In both cases, the individual point of view was always given narrative pre-eminence. Furthermore, it was supported by basic assumptions, such as that society consists of a set of autonomous (in principal) individuals who form instrumental relationships among themselves, basically looking for work to gain access to the money that will allow them to fulfill their desires. The very labels ‘mieuristas’ and ‘nimieuristas,’ like the earlier and sadly famous ‘Ni-Nis’ (young people who ‘neither [*ni*] studied, nor [*ni*] worked’), are especially apt for this type of individualist and consumerist interpretation of reality (in the broader sense that I have proposed), since they attempt to name anomalies in a paradigm that views society as a group of autonomous individuals who work for money to be able to satisfy their individual desires.

1.1.3. The individualist fallacy

But as the geographer David Harvey explained in *The Urban Experience* (1989), understanding social reality as though it were essentially a supermarket of goods that individuals can acquire tends to disguise the material constitutive interdependence of human beings, and to exacerbate the competition between them. The philosopher Marina Garcés recently published her reflections

on this constitutive human interdependence in her book *Un mundo común* (2013). She understands all existence as a radically unfinished, vulnerable, and relational process, asserting, 'To exist is to depend ... Our bodies, as thinking, desiring bodies, are imbricated in a network of interdependencies on multiple scales' (67). This becomes increasingly obvious, in other respects, in our present globalized world: 'The experience of global union is, in truth, the real but risky interdependence of the fundamental aspects of human life: reproduction, communication, and survival' (21). Based on this experience, it is becoming increasingly difficult to believe in what Garcés calls the 'fantasy of individual self-sufficiency,' a fantasy that has dominated Western experience since liberalism invented the 'individual owner,' who would only enter into relations with others of his own free will and to exchange property.⁸

No one is an island however. The necessary network of resources (cultural and 'natural'), care, and mutual help that makes human life possible is an essential common heritage. This heritage, however, becomes hidden behind a veil of commercial transactions between individuals when social life is represented in the form of a market. Apart from that, to expect human subsistence to be based solely on these commercial transactions is extremely risky because, as the Spanish philosopher César Rendueles (2013) says, 'commerce is a type of competitive interaction in which we try to take advantage of our opponent.' He goes on to say:

Precapitalist societies thought it was crazy to base their material survival on the uncertainty of competition. For the same reason, we think a person who bets his or her only house at poker or plays Russian roulette is doing something not only risky but wrong: the imbalance between the risks and the benefits is too high. People always need food, clothing, care, and a place to lay their heads. Is it reasonable to subject these constant necessities to the whim of the market? (22)

8 With respect to the close connection between the paradigm of liberalism's legal individualism and commercialism, Garcés asserts, 'In the modern world, the relation of each individual to the abstract field of law guarantees the articulation of society ... the abstract subjectivity of the juridical, egalitarian, universal order is what allows us to think of society by assuming the premise of the individual freed of all community ties ... It is precisely the abstraction of that subjectivity, as guardian of equality and universality, that allows us to maintain human relations and concrete cooperation in terms of reciprocal indifference. Thus, juridical universalism is governed by the reduction of interpersonal relations to economic relations. "It is the universalism of businessmen," Barcellona clearly states. It is the form of togetherness that capitalism needs to develop and to function. We might add: together in the abstract, diverse and detached in the concrete' (26).

The relative commercialization of life that is inevitable in all societies that use some form of money is extended and multiplied in the capitalist West, where money is effectively coming to be used as ‘the measure of all social value.’ Consequently, we also find more prevalent in the West the establishment of what Harvey called ‘the money community,’ a form of social relationship that substitutes ‘objective’ dependency structures for personal ties.⁹ Likewise, according to the anthropologist David Graeber (2011), this type of commercialization of social relationships allows us to delude ourselves that we can settle our ethical obligations to others by paying our monetary debts.

When the crisis hit the Spanish state about 2008, it was inevitably mediated through this paradigm of establishing and organizing reality as a market of products for individuals who relate to one another according to the laws of the ‘money community,’ reproducing a consumerist ‘subjectivity’—a culturally constructed lifestyle.¹⁰

The crisis erupts, in fact, in a country integrated into a Western capitalism that tends to make money the measure of all social value. Moreover, the country has integrated an evolved, extreme form of capitalism that has been developing since the 1970s: neoliberalism. As Christian Laval and Pierre Dardot have noted, neoliberalism should be understood not only as an ‘ideology’ or an ‘economic policy,’ but as a true ‘way of life’ that would

9 Following Marx, Harvey states, ‘Money arises out of concrete social practices of commodity exchange and the division of labor. The grand diversity of actual labor processes given over to the production of all manner of goods of specific qualities (concrete labor applied to produce use values) gets averaged out and represented in the single abstract magnitude of money (exchange value). Bonds of personal dependency are thereby broken and replaced by “objective dependency relations” between individuals who relate to each other through market prices and money and commodity transactions’ (167). Money becomes the mediator and regulator of all economic relations between individuals; it becomes the abstract and universal measure of social wealth and the concrete means of expression of social power. Money, Marx (1973, 224–25) goes on to observe, dissolves the community and in so doing ‘becomes the *real community*’ (168).

10 Thus, concludes Rendueles, in our societies, consumerism becomes a way of making sense of all the facets of life in general: ‘[Consumerism] is a type of activity in which the ends are given and there is no room for discussion. It consists simply of choosing the means that I consider to be best suited to satisfying my desires. Adidas or Nike? Windows or Mac? In itself it is not such a bad thing. Our daily life would be impossible if we subjected all our preferences to constant critique. The problem is when this type of activity takes on a heavy symbolic load and becomes a privileged source of meaning, when it becomes how we forge our personal identity. ... In the market our interactions are simple, bounded, and easily conceptualized. Why not explain the rest of our life with the same precision and simplicity?’ (185).

carry capitalism's individualistic logic to extremes: 'it has as a primary characteristic the generalization of competition as behavioral norm, and of business as a model for subjectivity.' Or even as a 'standard of life' that 'obligates everyone to live in a universe of generalized competition, commands both the employed and the unemployed, subjects relationships to the ways of the market, impels the justification of ever-greater inequalities, and also transforms the individual, who from then on is called on to perceive himself and conduct himself as a business' (14).¹¹

1.1.4. Neoliberalism as the new way of the world

'Germans are all work, they don't take the time to chat as much as in Spain.' Javier, a Spaniard who emigrated due to the crisis, offered this opinion in the 'Expatriate' section of the *Huffington Post* ('Huyo de la realidad española' 2014). He continues, 'The important thing is to create a plan that lets you get to where you want to be in the future, and then follow it through.' Irene, another immigrant to Berlin, is also looking to the future: 'It hurts to leave my family, my boyfriend, my friends ... But I think it's what's best for me.' The vice president of the Youth Council, however, is not so optimistic about emigration. 'It is obvious that this process will imply, first of all, a substantial loss of human capital for the country,' he laments.¹²

The neoliberal conversion of 'life' to 'human capital' clearly has a counterpart in all the rest of humanity which does not seem so 'capitalizable,' and which frequently encounters many more obstacles to emigration. This other mass of humanity is spoken of in other sections of the newspapers, and with very different metaphors—such as the recently much-overused one of 'attack': 'Massive Attack of Immigrants on Spanish Borders' (*Euronews*), 'Around 1,000 Immigrants Attempt Another Unsuccessful Attack on the

11 Laval and Dardot take as their point of departure Michel Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism in his 1979 courses published under the title *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2010). In these courses, Foucault opens the door to understanding neoliberalism as a compound of technologies of power and technologies of subjectivation. His concept of governmentality is key here, because it expands the analysis of neoliberalism beyond the role (or lack of a role) of states, shifting the focus to a wider spectrum of ways in which people 'conduct the conduct' of others. He also clarifies the relations between classic liberalism and neoliberalism, notably revealing, as Laval and Dardot themselves recently underscored (Fernández-Savater, Malo, and Ávila 2014), that the 'homo economicus' of neoliberalism is not the same as the 'entrepreneur of himself' of neoliberalism, this second becoming not so much someone who seeks a balance between his efforts and his compensation, but, moreover, somewhat constantly looking for more, constantly trying to 'go beyond himself.'

12 See http://www.huffingtonpost.es/2012/10/13/jovenes-espanoles-emigran_n_1963468.html.

Ceuta Border Fence' (*El Mundo*), 'One Civil Guard for Every 64 Immigrants Waiting for the Attack' (*La Razón*).¹³

Neoliberalism permeates everything, from the microbusiness that is me to giant transnational businesses and their flow of cheap labor. Exacerbating these competitive tendencies, which only increase as they move from monetarized societies to capitalist ones, neoliberalism's success is immense, and it ended up becoming the real 'reason for the world' towards the end of the twentieth century, according to Laval and Dardot:

For more than 30 years, this rule of existence has dominated public policies, ruled global economic relations, and remodeled subjectivity. The circumstances of this normative success have been described frequently, be they the political aspect (the conquest of power by neoliberal forces), the economic aspect (the rise of globalized financial capitalism), the social aspect (individualization of social relations at the expense of collective solidarities, with extreme polarization between rich and poor), or the subjective aspect (appearance of a new subject and development of new psychological pathologies). (14)¹⁴

13 See <http://www.elmundo.es/espana/2014/03/04/53158197e2704e52238b456a.html>; http://www.larazon.es/detalle_movil/noticias/5757689/espana/un-guardia-porcada-64-inmigrantes-para-vigilar-la-frontera-de-ceuta-y-melilla#.UysNK43TYgc; <http://es.euronews.com/2013/09/17/asalto-masivo-de-inmigrantes-a-las-fronteras-espanolas-en-el-norte-de-africa/>.

14 As the Observatorio Metropolitano of Madrid—and in particular its member Emmanuel Rodríguez—notes in *Hipótesis democracia* (37–45), neoliberalism historically arises in parallel with the progressive financiarization of global capitalism. This financiarization, in turn, was the response to industrial capitalism's profit crisis, which emerged in the 1970s. Rodríguez asserts, after a quick history that covers the dollar's abandonment of the gold standard, the creation of big international financial markets, and the massive deregulation in that sector starting in the 1990s, that 'practically all social production is currently determined and negotiated through some type of financial instrument or value.' Thus, 'both the means of social security (such as pensions, access to higher education and, in some ways, to healthcare) and consumption itself (reduced because of salary stagnation) have become increasingly dependent on mechanisms of financiarized provisions' (41). This dependence has disastrous results, because financiarization in and of itself constitutes an unsustainable economic practice. Financiarization needs constantly to expand, but it always does so unsustainably, in the form of 'bubbles': 'As might be suspected, the increase in financial profit requires and forces financial expansion—in other words, a growing concentration of liquidity in certain financial assets, a noticeable increase in the creation of credit, and a price increase on those very assets. The convergence of this tendency with the basic structure of any financial bubble is total. The problem lies in the fact that these periods of financial expansion are always temporary' (42). With all regulation suppressed, and in trying

In twenty-first-century Spain, marked by the spread of neoliberal logic into all these areas (political, economic, social, or subjective), the crisis that began in 2008 was constructed as a media referent that filtered through a neoliberal lens the very real, prolonged, and increasing suffering of people who lost their homes, their jobs, and their hopes of finding a job; people impacted by cutbacks in basic public services for healthcare, addiction, or education, forced to emigrate in search of work, and a long and painful etcetera. As this media referent, the crisis was, again, primarily the story of an irritating situation that interrupted the ‘normal’ course of life, an obstacle to the possible satisfaction of individual desires in the reality market. It was constantly kept in the public eye through more surveys, more news stories, more facts and rumors that ‘the public’ could later use as fodder for conversations about ‘the state of the country.’ The crisis, we were told by the huge media corporations, keeps us from realizing our dreams, it makes life harder for us, it even causes ‘human drama’ (such as, notably, the ‘drama of the evictions,’ as the well-known journalistic formula goes).

1.1.5. Crisis of the system as crisis of a way of life

Regarding the causes of the crisis, the media presented two main hegemonic narratives, which were hinted at from the beginning. On one hand, it was suggested that the crisis was a technical problem, and as such, it had to be solved by experts (‘Experts Ask the EU to “Intervene” in the Spanish Economy,’ 2010; ‘An Expert Affirms that the Crisis Will Not End this Legislature,’ 2011; ‘World Bank Expert: Spain Has No Solution without Credit to the SMEs,’ 2013).¹⁵ On the other hand, ethical and political responsibilities were pointed out. For the most part, these were seen as responsibilities of the elites and of professional groups like those construction firms and mayors Marías called ‘the villains of the nation.’ But sometimes, the finger was

to overcome its constant ‘crises,’ financierization expands until it causes families and businesses to go into debt, but it is forced to find a limit to that indebtedness: ‘The main limit to financierization lies here in the limits on its expansion. With all legal restrictions eliminated, these limits rest on certain thresholds of family and business indebtedness, which are made especially patent at times, like the present, of collapse of equity bubbles and asset deflation’ (42). Financierization is therefore a dead end at the heart of neoliberalism. Or, as Rodríguez says, ‘[F]inancierization today is the social and economic form of capitalism and also an unviable solution to its medium-term contradictions’ (37). For an analysis that reaches similar conclusions from the perspective of feminist economics, see Pérez Orozco (2014).

15 See <http://www.abc.es/20100122/economia-economia/piden-intervencion-europea-espana-201001220845.html>; <http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/977971/0/>; <http://www.invertia.com/noticias/experto-banco-mundial-espana-no-tiene-solucion-credito-pymes-2910077.htm>.

pointed more generally at society as a whole, for ‘living beyond its means’ (‘Fátima Báñez: Spain Has Lived beyond its Means,’ ‘Rajoy: We’ve Bought Trips to the Caribbean on Credit,’ ‘Urkullu Claims the Basques Have Lived beyond their Means’).¹⁶

The crisis appeared, then, as a technical matter explained in the language of experts or as a moral question that the voices of authority should denounce, within that constant flow of stories channeled by the media. But the passage of time and the growing brutality of events they hoped to pass off as ‘economic crisis’ inevitably weakened the first narrative (crisis as ‘technical failure’ to be solved by experts). It also clearly showed that the accusation against the common citizens in general was perverse, and strengthened the version that pointed towards the guilty elites. The financial experts who were supposed to have solved the problem were not able to, so the crisis was probably something more than a ‘technical’ problem. For their part, the politicians in power in the halls of government had bet—and ultimately lost—almost all their credibility on those very same experts who supposedly had created a Spain ‘without an inferiority complex’ and with ‘international models of solvency.’ The citizens may have played a role in the disaster, but their actions were guided by the leadership of experts and politicians.

It is difficult to determine at what point the crisis of legitimacy that affected politicians and financial experts alike began to intensify, crossing a point of no return. The repeated corruption scandals in the political sphere were probably the last straw. A new incarnation of the ‘crisis’ phenomenon appeared. It was no longer merely a financial crisis, nor even a crisis caused by the moral irresponsibility of some social actors; now it was a ‘system crisis.’ Or perhaps we should say ‘system error,’ echoing the computer science language sometimes used by the 15M movement, which was one of the main defenders, but by no means the only one, of this ‘systemic’ reading of the crisis.

‘They call it democracy, but it’s not’ and ‘We’re not anti-system, the system is anti-us’ are slogans widely used by the political movement the mass media called *Indignados* (the outraged ones), but who generally called themselves ‘15M.’ Both slogans refer to an intensification of the crisis of legitimacy of something, generally known as ‘Spanish democracy,’ that is perceived as a

16 See <http://www.periodistadigital.com/politica/gobierno/2012/05/22/fatima-banez-espana-ha-vivido-por-encima-de-sus-posibilidades-muchos-anos-.shtml>; http://www.eldiario.es/lacrispacion/Rajoy-comprado-credito-viajes-Caribe_6_75652449.html; <http://www.elcorreo.com/vizcaya/20130713/mas-actualidad/politica/acuerdo-fiscal-entre-pnv-201307130008.html>.

'system.' This 'system' has imprecise contours, but it undoubtedly includes experts and politicians as prominent movers and shakers who make it work. It also has temporal dimensions: it includes all currently existing official institutions, and also reaches into the recent past of its own development (generally back to the 'transition to democracy,' which becomes a polemical process that requires reinterpretation).

There are various assessments that could be made of the 15M movement and its immediate legacy. Nevertheless, its attenuation or transformation into other processes does not seem to have dispelled the narrative that vaguely declares the crisis to be one of 'the system.' This being the case, the 'system' could not be saved simply by replacing the people who fill its structures. Rather, a transformation of the very 'rules of the game' is required.

But the real question is, What game are we talking about? Is it merely a game of institutional powers, or one of the experts themselves? Does it exclude from 'social games,' to continue the metaphor, those players who do not hold institutional or expert positions, but participate actively or passively both in the 'system of reality creation' to which I have referred and in the 'neoliberal reason' that articulates that reality commercially and individually?

I think it is more interesting to question whether the tough economic situation has produced an important erosion in the ways of thinking and living that also facilitate those social games that permeate life beyond institutional power. That is, has the 'crisis of the system' affected the very 'system of reality creation and consumption' that was presented as the hegemonic frame of the crisis? In this sense, I want to explore sociocultural processes in which it seems that what is shaky is not only institutional prestige or the validity of explicit political and social consensus, but rather a kind of life experience (a kind of 'subjectivity') that tacitly accepts the organization of reality as a market by the mass media, experts, politicians, intellectuals, and opinion-makers. At the same time, of course, this 'subjectivity' fiercely demands individual freedom to choose between the competitive options offered in the world created by those external instances.

In other words, I think it is legitimate (and even necessary) to recognize and explore in what sense, since 2008, is not only the Spanish 'economy' that is in crisis, but also a very entrenched way of life, one in which political and economic experts, together with other experts and 'intellectuals' in general, are expected to shoulder the responsibility for guaranteeing the means for each and every person to be able to follow his or her individual desires. That is, we need to acknowledge that what has entered into crisis—up to a point that makes it necessary to investigate—has been a culture that is technocratic and hierarchical, because it understands the establishment

of the social ‘rules of the game’ (politics and the economy) as technical or ‘profound’ matters to be resolved by experts and intellectuals. On the other hand, it is also a consumerist culture because it understands daily life as an individual’s election and attainment of a series of desired objects, in a process that is eerily similar to a business transaction.

These are the cultural dimensions of the ‘economic crisis’ that I want to explore. I should clarify that they are frequently isolated and considered contradictory: some people believe the cultural authority or hierarchy of experts, intellectuals, and the media clashes with consumerist individualism, which no longer believes in any authority. Those commentators say the great modern paradigms of the former have lost power in the face of the selfish postmodern nihilism of the latter.

There seems to be a certain truth to these proposals, and no doubt the technocracy or the prestige of the intellectuals are very different phenomena from individualist consumerism. Nevertheless, I note a certain convergence between these cultural models in neoliberal Spain, as well as a common genealogy, and later a crisis that is equally shared by both. The apparent centrality of the consumerist individual, as Laval and Dardot indicate, goes hand in hand with a ‘reason for the world’ that imposes competitive means of existence. I would add that it is also supported by forms of authority, hierarchy, and cultural inequality—especially those established by the modern technoscientific divide, including its heirs in the media world. Therefore, I do not think that the desire to understand together these diverse ways of organizing the meaning of life should be understood *a priori* as reductionism. That is, I would hope that we could at least concede the possibility of asking whether it is relevant to do so to understand a series of concrete historical moments.

1.1.6. The cultural dimension of the economy and its technification

To begin this broad genealogical contextualization, I first turn to a central tenet of the feminist economics tradition regarding the technification of the field—one that has had so many consequences for neoliberalism and its glorification of ‘financial experts’ and ‘markets.’ This central tenet will also allow me to clarify what I mean by ‘cultural impact of the economic crisis,’ since it articulates precisely the necessary interdependence of the economic and the cultural.

The feminist Italian economist Antonella Picchio reminds us that the so-called classical political economics of Smith, Ricardo, and Marx always kept very clearly in mind the cultural—ethical and political—dimension of economics, beyond its technical, quantitative, or specialized aspects. And that the field was originally presented as being in the service of the

common good or happiness, with the understanding that such happiness did not mean mere physical subsistence, but the possibility of a life worth living, a life that has value and meaning; in short, a ‘decent life,’ which included culture and sociability. Picchio shows that classicalists like Adam Smith never understood the ‘wealth of nations’ as something separate from happiness, customs, or social tastes, and definitely not separate from *how* those nations wanted to live. Smith says, in *Lectures on Jurisprudence and Wealth* (1776), ‘The whole industry of human life is employed not in procuring the supply of our three humble necessities, food, clothes, and lodging, but in procuring the conveniences of it according to the nicety and delicacy of our taste’ (2013, 160).

Thus, classical political economics proposed as necessary the pursuit of a life with dignity, firmly melding culture and economics as two sides of the same coin. There can be no material sustainability without a cultural understanding and elucidation of what we consider to be worth keeping in each case. (Of course, classical economics continued to reserve for itself the authority to answer from a privileged place the question of what is a life with dignity, since it was a field of knowledge authorized by its ‘modern’—read ‘scientific’—genealogy.) Only later, in a transformational process studied by Picchio, did the heirs of this field, specifically those who belonged to the so-called ‘neoclassical’ school, try to erase from economics that pursuit of a life with dignity. They argued the existence of purely economic matters that needed to be separated from cultural ones, adding that each individual should decide for him or herself how they wanted to be happy.

Picchio notes a key moment in this transformation: the appearance of the famous *Essay on the Nature and Significance of Economic Science*, written in 1932 by the British economist Lionel Robbins (1935). In it, asserts Picchio, ‘with the purpose of reaching his goal of redefining economics, he trades the analytical object of wellbeing—understood as effective living conditions—for the more general, abstract idea of utility as optimization of individual choices, under the bonds of scarcity’ (35). Robbins offers, in this sense, a definition of economics that has become famous: ‘Economics is the science of analyzing human behavior as the relationship between some specific ends and some scarce means that have a range of possible uses’ (16).

In proposing this definition, the British economist strengthened the belief—still hegemonic in the field today—that economics is a technical matter that supposedly asks about the means and not the ends. His proposal actually gave, implicitly, the following response to the great ethical and political question about a life with dignity: a life with dignity is whatever each individual wants to pursue within the rules given by the economic experts. What Robbins and the heirs of his definition of economics intended,

therefore, was twofold: that all collective cultural work necessary to constantly respond to the question about what is worth sustaining socially be broken down to individual desires; and furthermore, that it be subject to their decisions as supposed economic experts.

This refusal by the field of economics to consider the goals of a life with dignity has spread throughout the entire capitalist world. Determining a 'decent life' has become a simple mathematical calculation that attempts—unsuccessfully, as César Rendueles graphically demonstrates—to explain all human activity as instrumental behavior (98). But, as I will shortly try to show in greater detail, that same technoscientific aura had already involved, for some considerable time, a key element to bring the field of economics to the highest circles of power in capitalist societies. In Spain's case, two historical moments to which I will return in this chapter are essential in this regard.

I refer, in the first place, to the famous rise of the Opus Dei technocrats to power during Francoism, who configured a first 'liberalization' of the Spanish economy; in other words, an opening for the entry of foreign capital following Franco's autarchy. This opening was essentially a bet on tourism as a privileged sector. Sánchez León notes that it was during this time that an important perception of Spanish society as 'middle class' became established. This included the acritical acceptance of the power of 'experts' as part of a great process of civic depoliticization, perhaps uninterrupted on a large scale until the current crisis.

Second, hidden within that depoliticization and inheriting a primacy from the tourism/real estate economic sector they will never really be able to change—as López and the collective known as the Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid explain—in the 1980s, the protagonists of that other great moment of legitimacy and the triumph of the economic technocracy appear. The Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE)—which was called upon to complete the long-awaited 'modernization' and 'standardization' of the country after the dictatorship—institutes the Spanish version of neoliberalism (industrial reconversion, job insecurity, privatization, etc.), always with the leitmotif of being necessary adjustments for Spain to enter the European Economic Community (EEC 1986).

1.1.7. Collective elucidation of 'a life with dignity'

If there was ever a society inclined not only to accept but to enshrine the technocratic power of 'economics' and its experts, it was Spain's neoliberal society of the last three decades. In that time, according to Harvey, the transition from industrial to financial capitalism has occurred on a global scale. In the name of those famous 'markets' to which the financing of global

capitalism has given an almost limitless power, Spanish neoliberalism has built huge speculative bubbles like the one that initiated the economic crisis that recently left the country with almost 6 million people unemployed (some 26.7% of the active population), 8 million in poverty, and a loss of 700,000 to emigration since the crisis began. The cultural impact of the economic crisis in Spain has been so profound that it has affected this great assumption, the touchstone of neoliberalism: this confidence in the experts as organizers of the economy, and in essence, as authorities who decide what a life with dignity should be.

To give a well-known example, recently Spain's austerity policies, justified with technocratic plans, have recommended taking away a threshold of dignity considered necessary by many: free health care for everyone. Javier Fernández-Lasquetty, the Health Minister for Madrid, had to step down in 2014 in the face of massive protests because of his attempt to privatize the city's hospitals. He always tried to justify his policies with an economicist discourse, appealing to 'sustainability,' 'cost-cutting,' etc. That technical language, however, has not prevented the legitimacy of politicians like Fernández-Lasquetty from plummeting just like house prices in Spain (something experts always said would never happen). Politicians had relied on the expert words of economists to decide what has value, what Spanish society ought to take care of, support, and reproduce. With the crisis of confidence in experts, inevitably, collective processes of creating social value that are not based on technocratic estimates become visible or gain importance.

The feminist tradition, with thinkers like Picchio and another Italian, Silvia Federici, has also shown how domestic work and physical and emotional caregiving, despite being central to and indispensable for the social reproduction of a life with dignity, are made invisible and undervalued in neoliberal technocracies. Something similar happens with the cultural work performed daily by multitudes of nonexperts to collectively elucidate and propose the values and meanings of a life worth living. Collective cultural processes like the recent protests in defense of Internet freedom, the 15M movement and its subsequent mutations, have perhaps been, among other things, attempts to give value to all that unrecognized daily work and to intensify its democratic potential in the face of what the movements sometimes call 'the dictatorship of the markets.' In this sense, I will propose that they can be understood as processes of opening and support of spaces where people can meet as a community to pose anew the question about a life with dignity that classical political economics put on the table.

But before that, in this first part I want to study precisely that hierarchical, technocratic, consumerist culture characterized by presupposing the impossibility of collectively defining, with input from all walks of life, what

a life with dignity is. This impossibility is articulated in two apparently incompatible, but actually complementary, ways. On one hand, we have the necessity that it be experts—or those ‘in the know’ in general—who have the responsibility for making a life with dignity possible by making decisions about our social organization. On the other, we have an insistence on the individual as the supposed protagonist of human life, and therefore as the necessary author and ‘free agent’ of the decisions that affect his or her life.

Together with the contradiction implicit in turning over to experts matters that clearly pertain to that supposed sacred space of our individual liberty, these two approaches also exhibit a fundamental convergence: the tacit acceptance of a profound inequality in society. That is, the acceptance that first of all, we define ourselves as unequal individuals who either belong to the group ‘in the know,’ or to the group ‘in the dark,’ as it were, and who ultimately respond to an individuality that reproduces that fundamental inequality on a smaller scale. To wit: an individual is someone who knows about ‘what is good for me,’ without having to worry about the interests of others, while an expert is someone who knows about ‘what is good for all of society,’ in the face of the inevitable ignorance of the uninformed masses. It seems to me that studying the cultural impact of the Spanish neoliberal crisis must involve an examination of the validity, and at the same time, the weakening of the deep beliefs and practices founded on that radical conception of human inequality.

1.2. Enlightened Gardeners, or, the Power of Knowledge

1.2.1. Ordinary people and people who think

The clear weakening of the authority of technoscientific experts, specifically economists, together with the weakening of the credibility of politicians that has occurred during the years of the Spanish neoliberal crisis, does not necessarily imply the twilight of what we might call ‘cultures of inequality.’ This is because these cultures are the underlying foundation of the intellectual hierarchies of technocracy and consumerism. Neoliberal economists and politicians are not the only figures to embody the divide between those ‘in the know’ and those ‘in the dark.’ Nor are they the only ones responsible for the continuing reproduction of the individualist, consumerist model of life. Assuming a broad historical perspective, if we trace the specific genealogy of their expert authority beyond the origins of the field of economics and of the neoliberalism that empowers it, we can illuminate a broader context for that ‘culture of inequality’ to which they belong.

Going very far back in that genealogy, one could even recover the American anthropologist Paul Radin (1883–1959), as Zygmunt Bauman did in his

book *Legislators and Interpreters*. Bauman used Radin's work to research the existence of 'cultures of inequality' in premodern, precapitalist societies, and, of course, to investigate what might remain of them in the 'modern' (and 'postmodern') world. Without taking too seriously this American ethnographer and his studies of the cultures not only he, but modern science in general, considered 'primitive,' it is nonetheless interesting to consider a basic observation he made: the existence in all of those 'primitive tribes' of a division between 'religious' people, responsible for thinking, and other 'secular' people, responsible for doing. Bauman gives his own take on this universal division of labor described by Radin: 'In the beginning, there is an opposition between the great majority of ordinary people, preoccupied with their daily business of survival, "action" in the sense of the routine reproduction of their conditions of existence, and a small group of those who could not but reflect upon "action"' (10).

Of course, that minority with the privilege of thinking also needs to have the necessary conditions for its life (and its thinking) reproduced, and in this sense, it holds a parasitic position relative to the rest of the tribe, who guarantee that reproduction. But why would the majority accept this unfair situation? Why would they not only support those 'thinkers,' but also grant them the monopoly on an activity that is so basic and so important for human beings?

According to Radin, the answer is that these philosopher-priests serve the majority by confronting humanity's 'primary source of fear': uncertainty. The philosopher-priest postulates a privileged space from which he can supposedly confront uncertainty better than the rest of his people. This purported privileged space is often justified by a special familiarity the philosopher has with uncertainty itself (with chaos, fate, mystery). A familiarity that is 'shown' through rituals and periods of isolation, purification, and obsession, which, Bauman indicates, are not so different from those that grant legitimacy to the figure of the intellectual as he is understood by Western modernity.

And beyond the enormous differences between the shamans of precapitalist societies and modern intellectuals, what interests Bauman most among the lessons to be gleaned from Radin is simply the importance of the monopoly on intelligence and knowledge as a tool of domination. This is why he says that the mere appearance on the scene of a caste that attempts to specialize in the ability to reason produces at that moment a crucial segregation and social asymmetry: 'the doers now become dependent upon thinkers; the ordinary people cannot conduct their life business without asking for, and receiving, the religious formulators' assistance. As members of society, the ordinary people are now incomplete, imperfect, wanting' (12).

The dependence and the supposed ‘incompleteness’ of ‘ordinary folk’—of ‘just anyone’—would be intensified again and again, as new forms of domination were perfected and instituted, integrating and emphasizing that ‘intellectual’ element. Another crucial thing also happens: that particular intellectual element, and not the entire structure of domination, is charged with conceptualizing and naming the supposed weaknesses of the oppressed group. This is why it is not at all strange that the absence of intelligence becomes a classic attribute of this group:

Whether the oppressed are constructed as primitive, traditional, or uncivilized; whether the category construed is that of non-European cultures, non-white races, the lower classes, women, the insane, the sick, or the criminal—inferiority of mental capability in general, and inferior grasp of moral principles or the absence of self-reflection and rational self-analysis in particular, are almost invariably salient in the definition. (18)

1.2.2. Enlightened modernity as monopoly of meaning production

We offer now some words written by one of the most celebrated Enlightenment thinkers of Spain, Father Benito Feijoo (2014), from his essay ‘Honor and Benefits of Agriculture’ (1739):

Peasants are not people of reflection, nor of observation; from their betters they accept the bad and the good, and they insist on it, if no enlightenment comes to them from without. This is seen in several adages, which they obstinately retain; even if, however little reflection they might engage in, experience were to clearly demonstrate the falseness of these sayings. (XII, XVIII, 34)

How can we not see in this characterization of peasants a reworking of the classic construction of the oppressed as lacking in intelligence?—a construction performed, no less, by a member of the very group that reserves for themselves the right to use their intelligence.¹⁷ In this case, the

17 In the same text, Feijoo repeats one of the classic representations of the Republic as a human body in which this cultural hierarchy is made very clear: the peasants are the feet and the Prince is the head. ‘I cannot better represent to Your Eminence the importance of the application of Agriculture, than by taking advantage of an elegant and highly detailed allusion by the famous Englishman Juan Sarisberienese [John of Salisbury]. This wise Prelate compares the Body of the Republic to that of men, describing its parts thus. Religion, he says, is the soul, the Prince is the head, the Council the heart, the Viceroy the eyes, the Military the arms, the Administrators the stomach and intestines, and the Farmers the feet. Then he adds that the head

operation is articulated from that ‘modernity’ that is based on legitimizing observation as the source of truth and an antidote to unfounded beliefs (‘experience ... put before their very eyes the falseness of these maxims’), instead of using the theological legitimation. But the mechanism is the same: the negation of intelligence in those who are dedicated to ensuring the reproduction of material life, and the construction of a monopoly on authorized knowledge.

As de Certeau explains, oppressed groups, or those not otherwise ‘legitimized’ by the divide opened by the paradigm of modern knowledge, always develop tactics that allow them to survive and make sense of their life from the position in which they find themselves. In Feijoo’s words, that intelligence of the oppressed is glimpsed in those ‘adages’ used by peasants that he considers ‘obstinate’; likewise, his disciple, the Count of Campomanes, father of classical economics in Spain, considered that ‘the way their grandfathers taught them to work the land’ kept workers from learning the scientific advances of modern agriculture.

More than a discussion of the greater or lesser value of traditional knowledge versus scientific, erudite knowledge, what I want to highlight is how that traditional knowledge is denied the very status of *being* knowledge, since it is expected that those who inherit and cultivate it have a supposed inability to ‘reflect’ and ‘observe.’ I obtained the previous quotes from the work of the historian Jesús Izquierdo, who has analyzed how citizen status has been repeatedly denied to rural peasants by the Spanish cultural and political elites. They are also excluded from that other great phenomenon of modernity, what we could consider the distant origin of consumerist individualism to which I referred earlier: ‘the growth of an increasingly individualistic understanding of human nature that was considered to be embodied only in those who dwelled inside the symbolic walls of the city’ (2007, 632). From that individualist perspective, Izquierdo reminds us, the notion of the ‘modern citizen’ is created, and from it, he says,

We agree on (we experience together) a way of conceiving of ourselves—and of proceeding—as sovereign individuals in the determination of our personal interests, as entities whose moral compasses are autonomous, as subjects gifted with a *reflectivity* beyond compare that enables us to decide our identity and distance ourselves from the collective traditions and conventions that ensnared those who came

must be especially vigilant with regard to the feet; whether because they might stumble over many obstacles that may do them harm, or because they support and give movement to the whole body’ (XII, IX, 38–39).

before us. We experience our society as an aggregate of individual wills from which, when the moment comes, one can voluntarily back away. In short, we theorize our subjectivity based on our identification with an individual 'I' that we consider part of the natural order of things. However, despite this anthropologically ahistorical appearance, this identity and its attributes are discursive and historical constructions that operate by giving us the necessary certainty about ourselves—a personal identity in space and time—to act rationally in the world in which we live. (2007, 629)

Izquierdo shows that it was not only the men of the Enlightenment, but also later generations of learned 'progressive' elites who naturalized this individualist ideology as if it were the only one possible, thus denying the possibility of intelligence and citizenship to the rural peasants because they did not share this anthropology. Thus, we can trace this theme through time: Jovellanos wrote in the eighteenth century of the 'barbaric customs' of the 'crude and simple peasant'; then in the nineteenth century, we find the regenerationist Joaquín Costa characterizing farmers as a 'backward, imaginative, and presumptuous race' or a 'sick, juvenile people.' In fact, Costa tends towards an even stronger naturalization of these negative characteristics as inherent to the people, while the Enlightenment intellectuals considered them more a question of circumstances, the result of a 'corruption of customs.' Even in the writings of the Republicans, who would launch (ultimately aborted) Agrarian Reforms, observations about the 'childish mentality of the peasant' can be found.

In any case, I am most interested in the especially violent inflection that intellectual domination seems to be developing in modern times. This could be because we are living in a time when those who reserve to themselves the monopoly of meaning production seek, perhaps more than ever before, to be able to more than merely attenuate that 'uncertainty' that always stalks us. Rather, they want the power to defeat it once and for all, returning to a state of *tabula rasa* all of the knowledge and traditions that do not meet their needs.

For Bauman, one of the keys to the appearance of what he calls the 'modern power/knowledge syndrome' is 'the emergence of a type of state power'—i.e., absolutist—'with the resources and will necessary to give form to and manage the social system according to a preconceived model of order' (26). The emergence of this type of absolutist power capable of imposing a 'preconceived order' is certainly an extremely complex and enduring historical phenomenon, which marches in parallel with the entire process of disarticulation of the feudal forms of power that would open the

way to Foucault's 'disciplinary institutions' and 'bio-power.'¹⁸ But Bauman graphically summarizes this complexity with the metaphor of 'savage' societies and garden societies. The former are equated with feudalism, in which the rich and powerful did not intervene directly in the lives of their subjects, except to regularly extract most of the wealth generated by their processes of reproduction (like a hunter who takes his prey from a fertile forest). The latter are equated with modern societies: the power players are gardeners who want to directly arrange and organize every aspect of the lives of the dominated, to be able to extract their wealth more efficiently, and, of course, to insure that the production of wealth that they themselves can appropriate drives every aspect of the lives of everyone beneath them.

For the 'gardening' work or, rather, 'social engineering' required by the new absolutist states, bearers of the new scientific legitimacy would be needed. Thus, the enlightened men or *philosophes* like Feijoo and Campomanes (with less luck than their peers in other countries, which were more inclined towards experimentation) would become the managers of the new version of a pastoral and proselytizing power (heir of the Christian paradigm, as Foucault explained) that would define the modern social order. After them, says Bauman, a whole new tradition of 'expert administrators, teachers, and social scientists specializing in converting and cultivating human souls and bodies' were to continue their task as the 'gardeners,' consolidating a 'new structure of domination—the rule of the knowledgeable and knowledge as a ruling force' (67).

1.2.3. The origin of capitalism as dispossession of the cultures of survival

Bauman's explanation of the emergence of this power/knowledge syndrome resonates with Silvia Federici's analysis of the origin of capitalism in *Calibán y*

18 In his *History of Sexuality* (1990), Foucault explains how, since the seventeenth century, power in the Western world is exerted not so much through the threat of taking people's lives (or the grace of letting them live), but as 'a positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations' (137). He goes on to explain that this 'administration of life' is conducted in two different forms: the first is 'centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities ... the parallel increases of its usefulness and its docility, [and] its integration into systems of efficient and economic control' (139). The second form is 'focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes: propagation, births, and mortality ... life expectancy and longevity' (139). Thus, Foucault talks about a 'great bipolar technology— anatomic and biological,' which characterizes the way (bio)power works in Western modernity (139).

la bruja. For her, the central element of this process was denying the peasants access to the resources—i.e., that ‘fertile forest’ the feudal elites raided only occasionally—which would allow them to support and reproduce their lives with any degree of autonomy. This denial typically equates principally to the infamous enclosures of ‘common lands’ built at the beginning of agrarian capitalism—and to which Baumann also alludes. But Federici explains it in a much broader context: the appearance of capitalism implies the devaluation of all reproductive domestic work—caregiving, rearing, feeding, everything indispensable for subsistence and typically done by women—which is not directly compensated in the new wage system, and therefore becomes invisible and endangered.¹⁹

Together with all this reproductive work and caregiving, of course, much of the symbolic and intellectual wealth of the traditions and ways of life that nurtured what John Berger (1991) called ‘cultures of [rural] survival’

19 This emphasis on the crisis of reproductive work under capitalism (and its gendered consequences) is actually the basis of Federici’s criticism of Foucault’s theory of ‘biopower,’ which, in turn, is very important for Bauman’s own reading of the emergence of the modern ‘power/knowledge syndrome.’ Federici regrets the ‘mysterious’ quality of the emergence of biopower in Foucault’s account. For her, it is clearly the capitalist process of ‘primitive accumulation’ (which in Federici’s reading of Marx is actually not ‘primitive’ but perennial), and its need for the reproduction of the labor force, that motivates the appearance of biopower’s ‘fostering of life.’ We can find a similar argument in George Caffentzis’s (2013) criticism of Foucault’s understanding of the crises of social reproduction: Caffentzis claims that the role attributed to capitalism in Foucault’s explanation of modern societies is too vague, which prevents him from giving a satisfactory account of the crucial issue of social reproduction and its crises. For Foucault, the crisis of social reproduction seems to be a permanent condition of human history rather than a concrete effect of capitalism. But then, Caffentzis asks, ‘how did the regime of bio-power begin to reproduce itself?’ With Foucault’s shift to a sort of metaphysics of ‘biopower,’ ‘we are reminded,’ says Caffentzis, ‘of the Heracliteans of old, who, forced to explain the large-scale features of the universe, reverted to “harmonies in tension” and the Logos’ (286). On the other hand, Caffentzis states that the most convincing explanation of the crises of social reproduction is the one elaborated by Marxist feminists since the ’70s (including Federici). For them, the crisis is endogenous to capitalism because of ‘the conflict between the needs of capitalist production and the demands of those whose work is centered in the arena of the social reproduction of labor power. This conflict can lead to major crises of reproduction appearing as dramatically falling (or rising) birth rates, urban riots, or agrarian revolts’ (271). Despite this differences between Foucault’s theory of biopower and the Marxist feminist theory of social reproduction under capitalism, I still think that one can very fruitfully combine Bauman’s analysis of the modern ‘power/knowledge syndrome’ with Federici’s account of the origins of capitalism. I think they complement each other, because the latter adds historical specificity to the former.

also became invisible and endangered. Among these traditions and ways of life, as Federici notes, were those that would become stigmatized as 'witchcraft.' In this sense, we could recall those 'adages' Feijoo denigrated, now understood as representative of all the heritage of oral, practical knowledge—for example, natural 'remedies' for birth control—that was heavily devalued with the advent of capitalism, since they neither contributed to nor adjusted to the new domain of wage relations as the main source of survival. The capitalist system, therefore, puts the production of wealth that can be converted to money (especially through paid work) at the center, thus threatening the material and cultural reproduction of large sectors of the population that do not have easy access to that type of wealth. This also effectively separates these populations from the traditional resources and knowledges that previously guaranteed their survival.

Of course, as Berger himself said, keeping this transformation in mind does not mean glorifying the 'cultures of survival,' which undoubtedly had their own conditions of misery and exploitation, as well as their own cultural hierarchies, which were just as hard as, or even harder than, those that arose under capitalism: 'Nobody can reasonably argue for the preservation and maintenance of the traditional peasant way of life. To do so is to argue that peasants should continue to be exploited, and that they should lead lives in which the burden of physical work is often devastating and always oppressive' (xxvii). Even so, I think it's important to remember the process of dispossessing feudal peons of the resources that allowed them to manage their own subsistence at least in some degree, and relate it to their transformation into 'biopolitical' objects of a social engineering focused on maximizing the production of goods under capitalism. This connection becomes crucial for understanding the series of complex, interrelated, long-term historical processes known as 'modernization,' and in particular, the role the educated elite played in them by attempting to monopolize the intellectual dimension (or at least, the cultural hierarchization they have created).

In considering the monopolistic role of the elites, we might think that 'modernization' includes using a version of the human intellectual domain as a form of domination that denies, in a particularly virulent way, the ability of 'ordinary folk' (as Bauman called them), of those 'nobodies' dedicated to the reproduction of life, to produce meaning. In that sense, 'modernization' would perhaps imply a particular disconnect between the activity of thinking and that of supporting life (which includes thinking itself, although that is disavowed).

1.3. 'Transplanting People': Capitalist Modernization and Francoist Technocracy

1.3.1. Francoist implantation of a capitalism of 'experts'

In their seminal introduction to the collection of essays *Spanish Cultural Studies* (1995), Jo Labanyi and Helen Graham state that 'modernizing' processes include both the bourgeois political revolution and the economic implementation of capitalism. From these processes emerges the very notion of 'culture' that will go on to function as a form of legitimation and of exclusion in the service of those same historical processes: "culture" takes on its modern sense in order to define who does or does not "have culture," and to discriminate between the different forms of culture possessed by different strata of the population' (7). *Bourgeois capitalist* modernization—which, with the help of those modifiers, could perhaps leave behind those quotation marks that remind us not to take its meaning for granted—postulates the privileged point of view of those who promote political liberalism and economic capitalism. That point of view is called 'culture.' Everyone else is allowed to have second-class cultures: 'folklore,' which does not participate in modernization and which therefore is mere decoration or something to inspire nostalgia or feed the souvenir business.

Labanyi and Graham also point out a crucial fact: it was not until the Franco years that the Spanish state fully achieved the second of the two essential pillars of that two-pronged modernizing process: the implementation of capitalism. Francoism would leave the first pillar, the rise to power of political liberalism with its system of parliament and political parties, unconstructed. But it would develop more than any of its preceding regimes the necessary elements for the implementation of capitalism, such as urbanization, specialization and division of labor, and the creation of a consumer society. Graham and Labanyi add that, despite these changes, a third parallel process of transformation, 'cultural modernization,' together with incomplete political liberalism, was hindered. They are thinking in particular, and quite aptly, of the Modernist movement and the avant-garde in the arts; that is, 'aesthetic modernity.' But it is important to add nuance here: within the broad meaning of 'culture' (production and circulation of meaning, ways of life, creation of subjectivity), the capitalist implementation instigated by Francoism undoubtedly implies a complete economic revolution—but it also implies a cultural one.²⁰

²⁰ There had, obviously, been previous important developments in the complex processes of change that we usually call 'modernization,' and that Graham and Labanyi define as 'a recognizable process of capital-driven social, economic, political

In the vanguard of this revolution, which we cannot help but qualify as partially ‘modern,’ of course we will see neither avant-garde artists nor progressive intellectuals, as in other countries. After the first few years, when fascist rhetoric (which included clearly anti-capitalist positions) held sway, Francoism would exert its ‘gardening’ power; that is, its desire to design a pre-established order that it would then impose biopolitically on society, in the hands of the Francoist technocrats of Opus Dei.

and cultural change occurring at differential rates over the past 200 years across Europe and the US’ (10). There is an extended bibliography about pre-Francoist ‘modernization’ in Spain. An important part of it deals in one way or another with issues of ‘backwardness,’ ‘insufficiency,’ or ‘underdevelopment.’ The subject of the implantation of capitalism has traditionally been discussed in relation to problems of dependency on foreign capital and failed industrialization (see for example Costa 1983 and Nadal Oller 1978). Perhaps more pertinent to my argument here are the studies which attempt to map the cultural changes associated with the advent of national state power and capitalism in Spain in the passage from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Particularly fruitful is, for example, the contribution of Álvarez Junco (1995) in relation to the difficulties of the frail liberal state in the ‘Restauración’ period trying to reach the countryside, because besides lack of infrastructure, problems of education, and cultural differences, it also had to confront the semi-feudal reality of *caciquismo* (chieftainship). Álvarez Junco points out that the disconnect between state and rural areas, however, diminished at the beginning of the twentieth century, with an intensification of fiscal and military recruitment campaigns in the countryside. The colonial wars of Cuba (1895–98) and Morocco (1911–27) were key moments in the configuration of what could be deemed, following Federici’s and Harvey’s perspectives, the Spanish version of the machine of accumulation by dispossession that is modern capitalism. Catalan historian Josep M. Fradera (2005) has also used the colonial vector to interpret the main conflicts of Spanish modernity, explaining how the ‘loss’ of the Cuban and Philippine colonies marks a fundamental shift from a liberal state that had created space for assimilating Catholicism and cultural diversity, to a nationalist refounding of the state based in Castilian identity, which would exacerbate all those differences, finally leading to the civil war. In parallel to these processes of rural assimilation and colonial nationalism, there is of course a wide array of subjective transformations, such as those studied in collections by Larson and Woods and, once more, Graham and Labanyi—notably changes in representations of the modern and a progressive shift towards mass culture. Jorge Uría (2003) has presented a particularly useful account of this shift, which for him characterizes Spanish culture from 1875 to 1939, to the extent that, he claims, the failure of the Republic of 1931 can be attributed to the increasing right-wing influence that mass forms such as *cuplé*, sensationalist press, and cinema exerted upon its ‘social base.’ The continuation of this reasoning in the postwar period is presented by Jesús Izquierdo, whom I follow directly in his claim that Francoism was the only regime capable of completing the task of dismantling rural traditional cultures and substituting them with consumerism and ‘middle-class’ values.

Actually, this was happening even before the famous ‘Opus Dei technocrats’ appropriated the Franco administration with their motto ‘God and money,’ towards the end of the ’50s. From its very early days, Francoism had hoped to be an openly ‘technocratic’ regime as a way of avoiding the thorny question of ‘ideology,’ while at the same time maintaining a very strong theological component. In explaining the prominence of engineers during Franco’s regime, the historians Pires Jimenez and Ramos Gorostiza (2005) assert that ‘the “technical” was elevated to the level of an unquestionable social value. Thus, politics in the classic sense was replaced by the administration of public affairs by technicians and experts, in a supposedly objective and aseptic way, and without unnecessary delays or party or ideological biases’ (92).²¹

1.3.2. Colonization of the peasant world

The tradition of those ‘technicians and experts’ who would implement capitalist ‘modernization’ in Spain could be none other than that of the technoscience that makes its way into the West by trying to erase all other knowledges, which it considers ‘primitive.’ In this sense, Izquierdo (2005) believes that only Francoism had the ability to complete the program of transforming the traditional rural community-based peasant cultures that the intellectuals of the Enlightenment had wanted to achieve, to turn those beings of ‘barbaric customs’ (Jovellanos) into citizens adapted to liberal individualist ideology and its capitalist subjectivization. The great social penetration achieved by Francoism in a rural Spain ravaged by the civil war and its consequences allowed the regime to fulfill that modern dream, formulated under Francoism as ‘colonization,’ as the conversion of the rural peasant to ‘agricultural entrepreneur,’ and also, of course, as ‘modernization.’ Izquierdo explains:

21 This technocratic element was always combined with a strong permanence of religion as a source of authority. Foucault and Bauman, with their noted emphasis on the ‘pastoral’ character of modern biopower, provide an apt theoretical frame for understanding this somewhat contradictory combination of technoscientific authority and theological rule. We can find an extended account of the macro-politics of this paradigm in studies such as Botti’s *Cielo y dinero. El nacionalcatolicismo en España (1881–1975)* (2002), and the more specific characteristics of its educative model in works like those of Ferrándiz (2002) and García (1993). But perhaps, as in many other instances, the experiential, everyday life dimension of this paradigm of cultural authority can be best understood through the non-fiction works of writers such as Vázquez Montalbán in his *Crónica sentimental de España* (1986), Carmen Martín Gaité in her *Usos amorosos de la postguerra española* (1987), and also in the less well-known work by José María Arguedas, *Las comunidades de España y del Perú* (1968), to which I will come back in chapter 3.

Once the formally pro-peasant stage was over, Francoism began an agrarian policy that became synonymous with social standardization and with the assimilation of rural culture to the values represented by the city. Every means must converge to a single end: the transformation of the peasantry into rational individuals capable of speaking up on behalf of their own political interests—those of the Fatherland—without the mediation of third parties that might put them on a dangerous path. Furthermore, these peasants must also become entrepreneurs, true maximizers trained to contribute to the common interest of Spain's modernization. (2005, 20)

In this task, Francoism also had its own 'enlightened men,' such as the engineers of the National Institute of Colonization (INC in Spanish) or the sociologists of the Agricultural Extension Service. These men were likewise in charge of highlighting the peasants' lack of intelligence and their inability to learn through personal experience due to their 'habitual' adherence to traditions that could not be considered true knowledge. Izquierdo exemplifies this in the following quote from an engineer of the INC (Tudela de la Orden 1966):

[T]he peasant's concept of the land, of natural forces, of animals and plants, is not a concept he developed or acquired from his own experience. Rather, it has come down to him developed and proven through centuries in that same place where he lives, making it comfortably habitual. (10)

For Izquierdo, Francoist 'modernization' was extended to both external practices and subjectivities, and thus he considers the social change carried out by the regime in the rural world to be '*marginicidio*,' an assassination of the cultures of the marginalized. Perhaps one of the most spectacular examples of this type of totalizing transformation was the one that formed the so-called 'colonization towns,' those rural settlements built on newly irrigated land, thanks to the numerous hydraulic engineering works typical of Francoism. These towns were filled with 'colonists,' often brought from the very towns flooded by the reservoirs.²² The 'colonization towns' were one of the preferred

22 Of course, as Barciela and López Ortiz (Nadal Oller 1978) have studied in detail, 'colonization' was the perverted leftover of the Agrarian Reform undertaken by the Second Republic that Francoism itself had overthrown. As such, it was one more tool in the service of the policies that repressed the impoverished, rural peasants and defended to the death the rights of the large landowners who were the core of the Francoist agrarian system. It is no surprise, then, that of the newly irrigated lands created by the National Institute of Colonization (INC in Spanish), an average of 72%

objects of the propagandistic display of Francoist ‘modernization,’ as reflected in a typical example of a euphoric NO-DO (Noticiarios y Documentales) documentary entitled ‘La Provincia resurge. El Plan Badajoz’ (Macasoli and Martín 1957). In it, Badajoz is presented as a province that suffered the stigma of backwardness, but would be modernized quickly thanks to a new irrigation and colonization plan that would bring ‘progress’ and ‘economic expansion,’ according to the NO-DO’s characteristic voiceover, ‘with some of the most modern machines and equipment in Europe.’

The result was towns with an inevitable coldness and artificiality, with houses that shared similar floor plans and facades, and were, moreover, arranged in a geometric urban pattern. These towns were sometimes simply called ‘New Town,’ although local toponyms were also common, with the ending *del caudillo* (of the commander) tacked on. (Some of these towns still use that ending, despite the passage of the so-called Historical Memory Law in 2007.)²³ The colonists arrived from different places and maintained the identity of their places of origin for generations. This was just one more of the irregularities and habits developed over time that Francoism seemed to want to erase from those settlements with ‘cleanly designed streets, and dawns, and tidy houses’ (as the NO-DO says), and in the middle of which sat the house of the INC engineers, who controlled every aspect of the town’s productive life.

The ‘colonization towns’ are particularly interesting as an extreme example of the Francoist desire for biopolitical ‘leveling,’ which of course did not fail to encounter all manner of ‘accidents.’ Thus, oral testimonies recently gathered in Sodeto, one of the towns created by the INC in the Monegros Desert in Aragón, reveal a long-held local memory of disaster rather than success: when the engineers terraced and leveled the land, it caused saltpeter to rise to the surface, making the land all but sterile. This chance occurrence does not fail to have a powerful metaphorical reach: within the intended cultural erasure of this modernizing colonization, there revolved hidden layers that made any new ‘rooting’ impossible. One of those towns in particular, Puilato, had to be abandoned because of the sterility of the disturbed earth.

(and sometimes as high as 80%) remained in the hands of those landowners, while the limited remainder was given to new ‘colonists,’ who were chosen by Francoist authorities. Barciela also recalls how ridiculously small were the economic resources received by the INC considering the titanic task of ‘solving the problems in the country’ with which the Francoist state had charged it (8).

23 On February 18, 2010, Félix Población commented in the daily newspaper *Público* on the continued existence of at least nine Spanish towns that still kept the controversial suffix ‘del Caudillo’ in their names.

And that case was not unique. Hundreds of towns were drowned under Francoism's reservoirs, and others were deserted due to massive emigration. Despite being used by Francoist propaganda to symbolize Spain's roots, hundreds of thousands of rural peasants had to be 'transplanted' to the cities, and faced serious problems in trying to adapt. This whole story, the other face of Francoist 'modernization,' has yet to be told in all its depth and complexity. A particularly sensitive chapter of it is the massive spreading of the *paleto* (essentially a country bumpkin) stigma, which, as Izquierdo and Sánchez León remind us, took place right around the 1950s to become one of the main counter-models of the modern Spanish imaginary, and probably remains so even today.²⁴

1.3.3. Hypothesis of a 'middle-class' continuity

But how is that technocratic Francoism still generating the *paleto* stigma even today? Since I am trying to offer a general outline of how cultural authority is formed—that habit of dividing the world into 'those in the know' and 'those in the dark'—to help consolidate the neoliberal world that would be hit by the crisis in 2008, and which I have characterized (with Laval and Dardot) as an exacerbation of capitalism, it seems appropriate to connect that present to the moment of the big push to implement capitalism in Spain.

In this sense, again I agree with the historians Izquierdo and Sánchez León regarding the so-called 'second phase of Francoism': it was a key moment in the configuration of the society that would later make the institutional transition to a parliamentary system, but which had already been substantially changed during the years of the dictatorship. At the risk of oversimplifying, this change could be summarized as the effect of three lines of Francoist action: the marginalization and disarticulation of community-based rural cultures; the implementation of a middle-class, individualist, urban, consumerist social model; and finally, a significant part of that implementation, the launch of a whole series of liberal economic policies (opening to global capital, prioritizing the service sector, financialization, etc.) that will establish the foundations of the neoliberal model still to come.

Undoubtedly, these lines bring together extraordinarily rich, complex, contradictory, and protracted historical processes that it is truly a shame to have to summarize so generically. On the other hand, it seems to me that we

²⁴ Sánchez León says, 'cultural expropriation ... turned the country dweller into an increasingly exaggerated stereotype of "the country bumpkin" who was increasingly more excluded from the new civil status of middle class, [which] became one of the markers identified with backwardness and ignorance' (2010, 8).

are also dealing with barely told, considered, or studied pieces of a recent past that continues to affect the present of too many people to ignore it. Within the limited scope of this study, I want to contribute to the enormous task of making those connections explicit with my own small input related to the main theme of my study in this first part: the question about the genealogy of the type of cultural authority that leads from the creation of the modern power/knowledge complex to neoliberalism. In this sense, my intention is not to try to evaluate the extent to which it is or isn't appropriate to focus on those three grand lines to theorize Francoist developmentalism and its legacy to post-dictatorial society. Rather, I want to add some possible nuances to that broad outline.

If we accept the previously explained ideas of De Certeau, Bauman, Federici, and Labanyi and Graham, to help us understand capitalist 'modernization,' we could characterize the period of Francoist 'developmentalism' as the climax of a process of social engineering in which some elites, legitimized by their supposed monopoly on knowledge and intelligence, led the rest of society into adopting the standards of the 'money community' as the only possible form of social reproduction, depriving them of other forms that had previously guaranteed them a certain degree of self-management and self-sufficiency.²⁵

In bringing the entire population into the 'money community' and the culture of progress and modernization that legitimizes it, as Sánchez León says in 'Encerrados con un sólo juguete,' Francoism left 'off the map of protagonists of the traumatic twentieth century at least two-thirds of the people who lived it' (2010, 5). He further indicates that the other side of this

25 In this sense, the recurrent phenomenon of *enclosure* about which the philosopher George Caffentzis speaks is not at all foreign to the Spanish state. Today in Spain, what Caffentzis notes can still be seen especially clearly: 'Most people can find in their genealogy or in their own lives some point when their ancestors or they themselves were forced from lands and associated relations that provided subsistence without having to sell either one's products or oneself, i.e., they suffered *enclosure*. Without these moments of force, money would have remained a marginal aspect of human history' (2013, 218). A key moment in the history of *enclosure* for the Spanish subaltern classes was, of course, the civil war. An interesting account of this process of dispossession and its effects is provided by Antonio Cazorla Sánchez (2009), who uses oral and archival testimonies to document the everyday dimension of terror, hunger, poverty, displacement, capitalist 'modernization,' and migration—all processes that lead, in his words, to a collective 'exchange of freedom for some form of peace' (4). Cazorla provides significant data revealing the crisis of social reproduction that was provoked by the ruling classes during the civil war and the postwar years. He says, for example, that 200,000 people starved to death in Spain between 1939 and 1945.

operation of expropriation and cultural stigmatization is the construction of a new common feeling that acts as a kind of ‘single toy’ bequeathed by Francoist developmentalism with which Spaniards would be ‘locked up’ at moments of self-representation from then on. He talks about the model of

an individualist middle class, although with a dose of collective morality (even of solidarity) that was never excessively classist; an acquisitive and consumerist middle class, with the justification of being that way to contribute to development, institutionally well supported with social policies to guarantee its status and its mobility, essentially ‘civil’ and with an interest in politics basically limited to whether the administration will solve their problems adequately. (2010, 6)

The individualism, consumerism, depoliticization, and the ‘developmentalism’ of that urban ‘middle class’ consolidated under Francoism are, says Sánchez León, what will reproduce ‘the policies of the great socialist majorities of the eighties,’ thus establishing a fundamental continuity between Francoist society and that of ‘democracy.’ In other words, it would establish what we could call ‘the Francoist roots of the Transition Culture,’ taking up the concept coined by Guillem Martínez.

The cultural historian Germán Labrador recently suggested some illuminating qualifications to the hypothesis of the ‘mesocratic’ continuity proposed by Izquierdo and Sánchez León, pointing out the risk of falling into ‘sociological abstractions.’ Labrador asserts that this story of continuity leaves out a whole series of ‘alternative subjectivities’ that gained strength in the seventies and were never integrated into the paradigm of the depoliticized, urban middle class. To illustrate, Labrador brings to the scene what he calls the ‘transitional culture,’ which he has studied in depth in several exhaustive works that are essential for understanding Spain’s recent past. In his article ‘¿Lo llamaban democracia?’ (2014), Labrador explains:

That [‘transitional’] culture implicates the *realist* film of the transition, but this culture is not only filmic: it is constituted by other aesthetic forms already cited (documentary, counterculture magazines, political satire, urban art, graffiti, alternative theater, etc.) and other possible forms also characteristic of the time (graphic narrative, underground poetry, realist literature, and so on). These genres of the transition offer a look at an era of immense plasticity and great complexity. They show a world of subjectivities in formation and in a struggle that has nothing to do with the emptiness of the political scene or with the naturalization of its sociology. (28)

Nevertheless, it seems to me that the verification of this subjective plasticity during the seventies isn't incompatible with the observation of the continuity of a certain 'middle-class' cultural rigidity that comes and goes between the sixties and the eighties, and lasts even beyond that. Labrador himself effectively summarizes the area of the argument that most interests me to characterize this persistence of the imaginary and the practices of the 'middle class':

Sánchez León explores the interest of anti-Francoist political engineering in *homo mesocraticus* as a potential mitigator of class struggle, demonstrating how, from the social sciences, a utopia is configured for a future democratic society of middle classes. This political imagination becomes inscribed on the social body by producing a classless subject, split in half in the unsalvageable distance between what Marxists called *class itself* (sociological class) and *class for itself* (the sociological imagination of social class or social identity). (26)

In this sense, whether or not we run the risk of falling into a sociological abstraction in saying Francoist developmentalism creates a middle-class culture that will be—even with many counter-examples, breaks, and tears—the foundation of a later democratic society, I think it is important to emphasize the perspective that this middle-class culture is, precisely, a projection that comes from the social sciences—and from other positions of legitimized knowledge—to be 'inscribed on the social body.' In other words, middle-class culture itself is introduced into Spanish society more as the desire or the biopolitical project of certain elites than of the self-representation of the rest of society. Sánchez León (2014) finds that middle-class imaginary not only in the anti-Francoist social sciences, but also in the discourse of the Francoist bureaucracy (specifically of the Vertical Union), in the tradition of liberalism that understands property as a social goal (the origin of the 'society of property owners' that will reach all the way to the boom of the real estate bubble). He also sees that imaginary in the 'progressive' sociologists who, after Francoism, still consider the middle class as an essential key to the success of 'democracy.'

Just as in the case of the Enlightenment intellectuals who projected their images and desires of 'progress' onto the peasants, I again find it useful to understand that projection of social imaginaries onto large populations as a form of domination that hopes to monopolize the ability to think and to know. Enlightened men wanted the peasants to progress because 'they didn't know what they were doing.' Similarly, the Francoist technocrats and the anti-Francoist sociologists wanted Spaniards to be 'middle class,'

without worrying too much about Spaniards' opinion on the matter, and the technocrats and sociologists were willing to guide the population towards that goal with their authorized knowledges. It is the power/knowledge complex itself that incurs 'sociological abstractions,' projecting a 'preconceived order' that later tries to shape society. In the face of the cultural authority of that power/knowledge complex, those who are relegated to occupying the position of 'those in the dark' can either rebel—the garden is, in fact, a forest, and so there is always a multitude of things that don't fit, such as those found by Labrador—or they can accept the standards set by the elites.

1.3.4. 'Modernity' and inferiority complexes

What happens in any case—and here we borrow Picchio's economic terminology—is that most of the population is prohibited by the elites from participating in the collective process of elucidating the necessary conditions for a life with dignity. Obviously precapitalist cultures, or more specifically, those villages where Francoism would come in with its steamrollers, engineers, and sociologists, already had their own cultural hierarchies; that is, their own elites of people authorized to think for the rest—including leaders and representatives of the all-powerful Catholic Church. But again, perhaps what distinguishes capitalist technocratic ('modern') reasoning from other forms of cultural authority is the very small space the former leaves for any other intelligence or production of meaning, especially for one that makes collective subsistence its central tenet. So its ambition (which it deploys through its enormous disciplinary capacity) is to change everything, make every activity 'productive' in the sense of generation of private property and goods measurable by money. It works through substitution: it isn't enough, as with Catholicism, to demand compliance with a series of rites that may complement the labors and knowledges of the traditional, community-based cultures of survival. On the contrary, it wants to replace those labors and knowledges with its 'productivism' and its commercial individualism, which it considers to be the only possible form of a life with dignity.

In this sense, the understanding of the modern genealogy of Francoist cultural power can help us construct the question of how developmentalism creates a 'middle class,' calling attention to its especially devastating distribution of society between those 'in the know' and those 'in the dark.' Perhaps, moreover, in focusing only on implementing capitalism and slowing down the liberal transformation and 'aesthetic' modernity, Francoist 'modernization' was especially cruel to 'premodern' knowledges and traditions, which that aesthetic modernity could have helped to 'dignify'—as the avant-garde in the arts had already begun to do before the civil war (Lorca's case is paradigmatic in this regard)—and as some of

the countercultures of that ‘transitional’ world studied by Labrador were also going to attempt again.²⁶

The question is open in all its complexity. To illustrate the Francoist technocracy’s perception of the special ‘unworthiness’ of unauthorized knowledges, we could show the numerous cultural manifestations of the *paleto* stigma during Francoism and the democracy. For instance, it has appeared in graphic humor (studied by Cristina Peñamarín (2002)) and in commercial and art-house films (analyzed by Nathan Richardson (2002)). And of course its presence in the television humor of recent decades has been almost constant: from ‘Macario’ by José Luis and his puppets, to the jokes of Marianico el Corto; from José Mota’s rural characters to those of Muchachada Nui, they can almost always be interpreted as ‘a way of representing what we didn’t want to be, and at the same time, of differentiating it from ourselves’ (Peñamarín 2002, 361).

We could even recall details like the fact that right up to 2014 the Dictionary of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (DRAE) offered ‘uncouth, rough, attached to local things’ as a second definition for ‘rural.’ And so, we could go on constructing the hypothesis of the existence of a ‘neurotic’ subjectivity, of the extension of a kind of collective inferiority complex caused by an enormous and particularly rapid process of replacing ‘the old’ with ‘the new.’ This is in line with what Ángel Loureiro (1998), in his critique of exaggerated modernizing pride, called ‘manic Spain,’ or with Agustín Sánchez Vidal’s (1990) fabulous account of the ‘modernization’ of daily life in Spain in his essay *Sol y sombra*.²⁷

In this last work, we also find numerous examples of how that subjectivity made ‘neurotic’ by technocratic modernization redirects its desire towards the world of consumption, in which the subject must make his way the best he can. Even Franco himself, claims Sánchez Vidal, liked yogurt with Nescafé and Fanta brand soft drinks, in a country that proudly showed its first toilets to visitors, and whose school books still counseled students not to make ‘the regrettable mistake of getting into debt’ even at the height of the sixties, when buying on credit and the SEAT 600 car were very popular.

The ‘assumption at all costs of a mask of modernity’ that comes from a ‘sense of inferiority and shame’ (Loureiro 1998, 17) is also confirmed by the

26 In my doctoral dissertation, ‘Topos, vecinos y carnavales: derivas de lo rural en la transición española’ (Moreno-Caballud 2010), I also had occasion to study some of the revisions, appropriations, and ‘translations’ of rural culture made not only by underground or avant-garde cultures, but also anti-Francoist, regionalist, and even ‘mainstream’ ones.

27 Víctor Pérez Díaz (1987) also offers an analysis of the dismantling of Spanish agricultural cultures in the book *El retorno de la sociedad civil*.

data provided by historians Pere Ysàs and Carme Molinero (Martínez et al. 1999). They claim that Spain didn't actually become a true consumer society until the seventies, when nonessential expenses rose to meet essential ones (housing, food, clothing) (182). On the other hand, the illusion of the 'middle class' began to soar long before this, thanks to TV advertising. By the end of the dictatorship, 70% of homes had television, but even as late as 1970, say Ysàs and Molinero, only 2% of the population had a college degree; in 1973, only 20% could afford to take a vacation (and half of these visited their home towns); even in 1975, 80% of those born into working-class or peasant families remained in the same social stratum. The 'centrality of private consumption,' according to Ysàs and Molinero, had become an 'illusion of social homogenization' (207).

Meanwhile, as Cazorla Sánchez says, the realities of exclusion and strong social stratification persisted. The so-called 'Spanish miracle' of the '60s cannot be explained without remembering that Spain offered 'an excellent package to capital investment, comprising low taxes, a disciplined and inexpensive workforce, and a captive consumer market' (15). Amidst general conditions of exploitation of waged-work (not to mention the even harsher realities of reproductive work, which had been rendered invisible) and a very deficient 'welfare-state,' Cazorla concludes, 'the price of Spain's 'miracle' was mostly paid by those who went hungry, those who did not receive adequate social or educational services, those who had to migrate to survive, those who worked hard and consumed little, and those who were forced to buy whatever the protected economy put in front of them. They were the poor, and they were the majority of the Spanish population; they were, by definition, the 'ordinary' Spaniards' (16).

At the end of the dictatorship, as John Hooper (2006) has pointed out, these poor Spaniards may have been comparatively better off than in the postwar 'years of hunger,' but economic inequality persisted: 4% of Spanish families retained 30% of the national wealth. Departing from this extremely unequal situation, they had to face the economic crisis of the '70s, which brought, for example, a 17% increase in the cost of living in 1974. In this same year, Molinero and Ysàs explain (179), 51 families controlled half of the management boards of the most important Spanish companies. Around 1,000 executives could be pinpointed as the true oligarchy of the nation, participating in the management of the seven most important banks and many related businesses, all of them consolidated under the wing of the Francoist dictatorship.

Again, without wishing to eliminate all the complexity surrounding these questions, I believe that analyzing the Francoist technocracy's totalizing will, which was heir to the modern power/knowledge complex, can throw light on

the creation of the middle-class illusion, in which the stakes are not only what society is, but also who has the right to construct its representation. Along these lines, I would now like to highlight the importance of another type of cultural elite, beyond that of the Francoist technocracy: the intellectual elites responsible for the construction of a ‘normalizing’ ‘middle-class’ paradigm that became the hegemonic representation of Spanish society after the end of the dictatorship.

1.4. Pedagogy of ‘Normalization’ and Cultural Elites

1.4.1. Francoist roots of neoliberalism

To do this, I must first recall that together with the marginalization of rural cultures and the imposition of productivist, ‘mesocratic,’ consumerist values, the Franco regime also launched, as mentioned above, an economic liberalization that laid the ‘unquestionable economic foundations’ that would later form the backbone of the Transition Culture.

This has been explained very well by Isidro López and his colleague from the Observatorio Metropolitano, Emmanuel Rodríguez, both in the article ‘The Spanish Model’ (2011) and in their essential book *Fin de ciclo: financiarización, territorio y sociedad de propietarios en la onda larga del capitalismo hispano (1959—2010)* (2010). In these works, López and Rodríguez tell the story of the continuity between the ‘modernization’ of Francoism in the fifties and sixties and the neoliberal project of democracy from a macroeconomic and sociological perspective. They point out that with the arrival to power of the Francoist technocrats, Spain approached the Fordism of other countries, importing capital assets and equipment (machines, transportation equipment) without ever managing to make their industry self-sufficient, always subsidiary to foreign ones. The alternative that appeared to alleviate this problem was tourism (together with the money sent home by emigrants and foreign investment, but tourism brought in more than twice the income of the other two combined).

Tourism thus produced a rapid tertiarization (a growth in the importance of the service sector) of the economy. It also gave rise to the first real estate boom between 1970 and 1973, during which period 400,000 new homes were built every year. That same pattern would be reproduced later in the real estate bubble that preceded the 2008 crisis. This shouldn’t be surprising, since Spain’s entry into the EEC in 1986 simply served to confirm the guidelines created by Francoism: Europe didn’t want Spain to have a strong industrial base, and so it was decided in Brussels (the headquarters of the EEC) that Spain would continue to specialize in tourism, in services, and as an experimental playground for new forms of financial speculation.

In an article in the essay collection on the Transition Culture, *CT o la cultura de la transición* edited by Guillem Martínez, López (2012) indicates that the project of radical economic and social transformation set in motion by neoliberalism basically consisted of ‘recuperating the economic advantage of capitalist agents’ by dismantling the mechanisms for the redistribution of wealth that had been created by Keynesianism (progressive taxes, welfare state, full employment, etc.) (82).²⁸ Specifically, following the stipulations of the Moncloa Accords (1977), the Spanish state carried out its project by suppressing regulation of the financial world and worsening conditions in the labor market. At the same time, as successive governments of the PSOE (1982–1996) decreed, industry was dismantled and large public companies were privatized to allow the entrance of international capital. In exchange, still according to López, the European Union assigned Spain a clear role within the ‘international division of labor’ that had been being organized since the beginning of capitalist globalization:

a gigantic real estate and consumer market, through the promotion of financial and stock-market activities and of tourism, that bizarre activity that saved Francoism from the industrial crisis of the seventies, and through extremely heavy investment in transportation infrastructure. Banks, construction companies, privatized monopolies, the big mass media conglomerations, and the real estate developers would be the new leading sectors of Spanish capitalism, and they would be introduced in the new transnational order nourished by very generous doses of public spending. Meanwhile, in the rest of Europe a whole institutional framework was being constructed to prepare for the monetary union, which raised the doctrines of Atlantic neoliberalism to the status of laws. (86)

But López also points out something else, which is especially important for understanding the role played by the cultural elites in these processes. In the Anglo-Saxon countries that had had a welfare state, the redistribution of wealth towards the rich that neoliberalism implies was accompanied by an

²⁸ In this definition of neoliberalism, López follows the foundational work of David Harvey in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Harvey works with notions like ‘accumulation through dispossession’ and ‘production of scarcity,’ which are key to understanding the way wealth is redistributed under neoliberalism. The latter idea had previously appeared in his classic *Social Justice and the City*: ‘If it is accepted that the maintenance of scarcity is essential for the functioning of the market system, then it follows that deprivation, appropriation, and exploitation are also necessary concomitants of the market system’ (114).

ideology of disdain for the poor, stigmatized as supposed ‘freeloaders’ on the welfare system. Differently, the ideology that had enabled Spain’s neoliberal transformation was that of integration into European ‘modernity’ (among other things because the Spanish welfare state was too weak to pretend that someone might ‘take advantage’ of it). As such, a revolutionary economic doctrine that would bring the country to the brink of an economic bubble never before seen and then to the brink of a probably irreversible economic depression, was introduced together with an ideological paradigm strongly founded on Spanish cultural tradition: the progressive, ‘modernizing’ Europeanism of the intellectual elites that has been cultivated since the Enlightenment.

1.4.2. Pro-European ‘standardization’ from the elites

Sánchez León explains that the ‘modernizing’ discourse associated with these intellectual elites has been, of course, the source of meaning from which ‘the dominant accounts of the transition to democracy’ have been constructed. To illustrate this idea, he quotes a genealogy of educated, modernizing cultural elites offered by Manuel Vicent in a 2009 column in the newspaper *El País*, which relates the history of the newspaper itself to the Spanish transition as a moment when

the most noble dreams of the Second Republic, destroyed by the war and all the aspirations of modernity that were floating about in the air during the dictatorship [finally came true]. Giner de los Ríos’s regenerationism, the Free Institution of Education, Ortega y Gasset’s theories, Azaña’s policies, the laity, liberty, democracy, and Europeanism ... a historical heritage [to which] was added the disposition of an enlightened bourgeois minority and the most avant-garde creativity of the younger generations.

Essentially, what was called Spanish ‘democratic normalization’ can be considered the apotheosis of a system for establishing and organizing reality. This system is supported by the authority of experts and intellectuals who are heirs to the long tradition of cultural elites who pedagogically guide the people towards ‘modern progress.’ In a clear continuation of this tradition, such ‘progress’ has often been called ‘Europe,’ since, as noted above, to be ‘progressive’ is to be ‘European.’

Let us take a more or less archetypal example of the discourse of ‘democratic normalization,’ prepared from the satisfied position of someone who thinks it has already been achieved: the article ‘La normalization de España’ by the sociologist Emilio Lamo de Espinosa, published in 2001 in

Claves de razón práctica.²⁹ We find that he uses characteristically totalizing language:

1998 was the year when Spaniards realized that we had completed a great national political project, that of Spain's modernization and entry into Europe, whose origins we must date back to the humiliating days of our defeat in Cuba and the Philippines. Faced with the romantic, derogatory idea of a different Spain, savage, orientalized, authentic, but amodern, we wanted a Spain that was fully European, and even in its vanguard. We wanted to stop being the ugly duckling of the European countries, stop being different and unique, and make Spain normal and equal [to the rest of Europe].

As we saw, this was not a project for one political party or one social group, nor even a project for the elites. Everyone from all walks of life, from different social classes, different geographical regions, and different political ideologies threw themselves into this national effort. Bourgeois or proletariat; socialist or conservative; people from Cataluña, Madrid, Valencia. It was the national attempt to deal with modernity, the Enlightenment, and the reason from which we had been separated by the Napoleonic invasion and consequent schizophrenia between patriotism and modernity, between being Spanish or being enlightened, between nation and reason, a schizophrenia that was the inheritance the Napoleonic invasions left to half of Europe. (2001, 12–13)

Leaving aside for the moment all the other problems that could be laid on that vague national 'we' (and which even seems to include a certain colonialist pride), I would like to highlight the self-representation of a project originated by intellectual elites in those terms of 'national project,' of 'everyone from all walks of life and different social classes.' To explain the history of that supposedly inclusive project, Lamo de Espinosa himself essentially resorts to an inventory of a series of intellectual and political elites who were dedicated to promoting the 'modernizing pro-European dream': the Enlightenment scholars, the regenerationists, the Generation of '98, the Generation of '14, and finally, the parties and institutions that wove the transition to democracy. This important methodological decision to focus on an analysis of the elites helps to make clear that a project for everyone is

29 As an interesting side note, Emilio Lamo de Espinosa Enriquez de Navarra, father of this Emilio de Lamo, had been one of those 'experts' who, in the journal *Revista de Estudios Agrosociales*, talked about the necessary transformation of peasants into businessmen (1962, 103).

not the same as a project for some elites who obtain the acquiescence or the approval of most of the people, always within the boundaries of a society strongly affected by that ‘gardening spirit’ that characterizes the modern power/knowledge complex based, as Bauman says, on ‘the new appreciation of the fact that human conduct could not be left to individual discretion if it was to lead to social order’ (48).

Ever since the Enlightenment when, according to Lamo de Espinosa, the ‘pro-European dream’ began to be conceived, this appreciation for the necessity of not leaving human conduct to its fate made it appropriate, according to the cultural elites, to undertake the immense and essential development of the tool of ‘education.’ At the beginning of the modern period, asserts Bauman, education went much further than the institution of school itself, it permeated everything: ‘in no way was education a separate area in the social division of labor; it was, on the contrary, a function of all social institutions, an aspect of daily life, a total effect of designing society according to the voice of Reason’ (49).

Education had to penetrate every corner of life for most people, who were perceived to have been ‘poisoned in the past by wrong, irrational laws and the superstitions they bred’ (69). Therefore, education was constituted in modernity as that system of ‘objectification of the imperfection of the human individual,’ which Jacques Rancière called, in *Le Maître ignorant*, ‘pedagogical society,’ in terms very similar to Bauman’s.

1.4.3. Pedagogy as perpetuation of inequality

It is worth pausing a moment on one of Rancière’s seminal books to question the supposed unity of elites and masses in the ‘modernizing’ project laid out by Lamo de Espinosa. *Le Maître ignorant* is a study of Joseph Jacotot, one of those *philosophes* designated part of the new, modern ‘power/knowledge’ complex, to replace ‘primitive’ knowledges with those legitimized by scientific modernity, and thus to increase the ranks of teachers whose responsibility it was to alleviate human imperfection through ‘the pedagogization of society.’

A strange *philosophe*, however, because in his later years, Jacotot renounced all of that, suddenly taking a surprising path. After the return of the Bourbons to post-revolutionary France, Joseph Jacotot (1770–1840) had exiled himself to Louvain to be a reader at the university, and there he expected to spend ‘peaceful days.’ But when a group of Dutch students asked him to teach them French, it occurred to him to initiate a small pedagogical experiment whose result would change the course of his life. Jacotot gave them a bilingual version of *Telemachus*, to see what they were capable of doing on their own. To his surprise, months later they gave him essays written in perfect French.

This anecdote led Rancière to follow Jacotot in a radical questioning of pedagogical principles, beginning with the very notion of the need for teachers. The teacher, says Rancière, is justified as someone who must 'explain' to someone else things the latter doesn't know, so that he or she can learn them; but in reality, no explanation at all is needed in order to learn. 'To understand,' according to the pedagogical myth, would be 'to give the reasons' for something, when actually, understanding is always something more like translating. Human intelligence always works by feeling its way, repeating and relating, as can be observed in children learning to speak, and as Jacotot's students demonstrated by learning French by themselves out of a book. 'What children learn best is what no teacher can explain to them: their mother tongue. It is spoken to them, and it is spoken all around them. They hear and retain, imitate and repeat, make mistakes and correct them' (Rancière 22).

However, the pedagogical myth negates the value of this way of learning, and claims that, when we are older, we can only learn if someone 'explains' to us what we don't know. This contradiction, asserts Rancière, caused Jacotot's great revelation:

The revelation that rocked Joseph Jacotot focuses on this: it is necessary to invert the logic of the explanatory system. Explanation is not necessary to remedy an inability to comprehend. On the contrary, this inability is the fiction that structures the explanatory conception of the World. The explainer needs the unskilled person, not the other way around; it is the former who constitutes the latter as unskilled. To explain something to someone is to first show him that he cannot understand it on his own. Rather than being the act of a true teacher, explanation is the myth of pedagogy, the parable of a world divided into wise souls and ignorant ones, mature souls and immature ones, skilled and unskilled ones, intelligent and stupid ones. (23)

The pedagogical myth, according to Rancière, has important social repercussions that carry far beyond the four walls of a school. In reality, what it does is change society into a school where people are denied the ability to learn for themselves, where constitutive inequality is instituted between 'those in the know' and 'those in the dark.' Only by yielding to the authority of those in the know can the rest 'progress.' And so what Bauman predicted has come to pass: most of the population becomes dependent on the knowledge elites and sees itself as incomplete and unable to provide itself with the intellectual resources it needs to live.

Rancière calls this 'the circle of impotence': those who are considered ignorant by society cease to trust in their ability to learn for themselves

(an ability in which we all necessarily believe when we are children: no one 'explains' language to us, we learn it for ourselves), and accept that they will always need the guidance of those who do know. The end result is that we essentially cultivate our own inability to a certain degree, and our own ignorance. Large social groups appear that consider themselves incapable or incomplete; they internalize the contempt. 'Those who are excluded from the world of intelligence endorse the verdict of their own exclusion' (Rancière 34). And it is precisely this self-exclusion that is so often used as a justification to assert that 'people are uncouth,' that 'the problem of society is the lack of education,' or even that 'human nature is barbaric,' etc. The belief in the intellectual superiority of a few has the corrosive effect of extending what Rancière calls 'the passion for inequality': a refusal to fully explore one's own abilities because one believes that one will never be able to attain the intelligence that is the exclusive patrimony of exceptional beings, and because, at the same time, one guarantees the prerogative of making one's own intelligence unattainable and exceptional for others too, who may be 'at a lower level than me.' In the words of Rancière:

Unequal passion is the vertigo of equality, laziness in the face of the infinite work that this demands, fear in the face of that which a reasonable being owes to himself. It is more comfortable to compare oneself, establish social exchange as that barter between glory and disdain where each one receives superiority in counterpart to the inferiority that he confesses. (106)

The pedagogical myth and the passion for inequality it promotes are especially prone to spread in modern societies; they have replaced classicist and theological paradigms with that of progress. The ideology of progress, asserts Rancière, is a fiction of inequality more potent and more dangerous than the ideology of classicism, because it lends itself more to pedagogy, which is always progressive: 'you have to learn, you still don't know enough, you still don't understand, etc.' (150). The ideology of progress is, in fact, the ideology of pedagogy turned into a law of society.

The collective of historians known as *Contratiempo*, to which Sánchez León and Izquierdo both belong, has explained how this pedagogical myth is articulated in relation to Spanish 'modernization,' in what they call the 'meta-story of Spanish modernity.' They describe

the assumption that the forces of progress in Spain have always been embodied by educated, cultured minorities that promote the projects of political citizenship and economic modernization, before whom are situated on one hand certain traditional powers, and on the other, an

immense, uncouth population that can thus be manipulated and is only turned into a historical agent capable of promoting modernization when its action is duly channeled by illustrious progressive minorities. (Contratiempo, historia y memoria 2014)

1.4.4. The determinist story of 'democratic modernization'

From here it seems that we can construct a more convincing explanation of how the 'unity' of Lamo de Espinosa's supposed pro-European 'project of everyone' was articulated. It refers to a project that may have affected everyone but in which, ultimately, in no way is everyone equal. In short, it is a pedagogical project, strongly impregnated with the 'passion for inequality' due to which a minority appears as the vanguard of a progress which the majority would be unable to attain on its own.

The genealogies of the educated minorities whom we must thank for that 'progress' are repeated over and over in texts that justify Spanish 'normalization' as the price of integration into European modernity. The cultural critic Jordi Gracia, coeditor of the aforementioned *Más es más*, to which I will return, explained 'normalization' in *Hijos de la razón: contraluces de la libertad en las letras españolas de la democracia* (2001) as 'an unprecedented and lasting reconciliation between the logic of reason and the tortured logic of our contemporary history' that had its distant origins in 'a minority sympathetic to Erasmism.' He then continued with that minority's historical line of descent 'slowly and laboriously enlightened,' then later with 'the exile of the Romantic liberals,' Krausism, positivism ('capable of liberating Spaniards from their most harmful and sterilizing mental baggage'), and modernism, which leads him to the tumultuous twentieth century in which, after the 'eclipse of reason' that was Francoism, 'Spain intertwines itself definitively, following the same harmonic melody, with the European theme. A dream unfulfilled by successive generations of Spaniards throughout the 1800s and 1900s, and which has finally come to pass at the turn of both the century and the millennium' (16).

It is interesting to note that Gracia uses language that borders on determinism in introducing this small genealogy of generations of 'reasonable' Spaniards:

Reason as an instrument of civilization knew how to silently reestablish its validity as an instrument of coexistence and of human understanding, as well as of transformation, like the intermittent forge of a time that, despite all regrets, had to come and would come according to a very ancient historical hope. (16)

Without wishing to over-interpret what might otherwise be a somewhat disproportionate rhetorical emphasis, it seems to me that there is something significant in this reading of ‘modernization’ brought by educated elites as something that ‘had to come and would come.’ And the tradition that defends this ‘modernizing’ discourse doesn’t seem overly inclined to consider the very possibility that things could have been different, that perhaps ‘modernity’ could have meant other things, that the relationship of the enlightened elites to the vast cultural territory not occupied by them could perhaps have been articulated another way, including, at the extreme, that those elites could have come to consider their culture not by definition superior to any others, or at least that there was no reason for it to be the only authorized one.³⁰

30 It is important to at least mention the centrality of one particular intellectual in the configuration of not only the ideological components of this quasi-determinist and elitist intellectual Europeanism, but also the institutional, material conditions of its reproduction. I am referring, of course, to José Ortega y Gasset. About him, intellectual historian Gregorio Morán stated: ‘There is no intellectual figure in the Spanish twentieth century that can compare to him. There may be different opinions about his stature as philosopher, as essayist, as cultural promoter, as writer, as politician, as journalist, etc., but he is the most influential figure ... He has been recognized as a master to generations.’ In his book about Ortega, *El maestro en el erial* (1998), Morán explained the philosopher’s connivance with Francoism, causing an intense controversy which was perhaps as interesting as the book itself, because it showed the persistence of the figure of Ortega as a model of the intellectual for many in Spain. Eduardo Subirats (1993) had already analyzed his symptomatic centrality as a link between the ‘ancient regime’ and the new cultural elites of the democracy: ‘Ortega was, for many reasons, the ideal voice. First, politically speaking, he was in an ambiguous position. He appeared to be a thinker who was open to ‘Europe,’ to humanism, to modern philosophy. He appeared to be a liberal thinker. At the same time, however, he had adopted a radical distance from the Spanish exile and its more eloquent signs’ (62). Besides the ethical and political responsibilities which Morán and Subirats point out, I think it’s interesting to note Ortega’s position as the perfect example of the subject ‘in the know,’ as the model of what a member of the ruling intellectual class should be in a ‘modern’ capitalist disciplinary and pedagogical society. Born into a family of the high bourgeoisie, the son of the director of an important newspaper, he inherited a vast cultural capital—including the job as director of his father’s newspaper—which he was able to multiply exponentially, through his access to the highest circles of intellectual prestige, notably the German philosophical tradition and university. He became an essential figure whose influence in the intellectual Spanish field is still very much alive, reaching institutions like the university, journalism, scholarly journals, and the publishing world in general. To use Bourdieu’s concept, he was not only a founder and transformer of visible institutions, but also a crucial creator of ‘habitus’: of ‘systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their

Labanyi and Graham asserted that using the concept of ‘modernization’ ‘is made particularly problematic—beyond frequent lack of precision in definition—by the unacceptable normative and determinist baggage loaded onto it’ (10). I think it is very important to point out that the power of the extraordinarily useful concept of ‘Transition Culture’ depends on a not insignificant amount of that ‘normative and deterministic baggage’ carried by the discourses of ‘modernization’ and its close relative ‘standardization.’ In this sense, I think the acritical ‘cultural consensus’ that Martínez says is formed around the post-transitional state is justified not only because of the threat of possible social instability, but also (as hindsight shows us from the comfort of a Spain already distanced from those turbulent years surrounding the end of the dictatorship) by integrating the state within that normative and deterministic power of modernizing discourse.

Again, the prototypical victorious claim of ‘normalization’ proposed by Lamo de Espinosa is a perfect example:

What was gained through the PSOE was that immense, historical national project of modernization and Europeanization that had first inspired Enlightenment intellectuals, then the regenerationists, and then the Generations of ’98 and ’14, only to be driven underground for 50 years. But then, at last, it had its historic opportunity. Spain voted in the socialists as executors of that grand project. Its very slogan, ‘For change,’ was its summary and its synthesis. For the voters and those elected in 1982, the change was to modernize and democratize; and to modernize was to become European. (13)

Of course, one of the keys of this linear and teleological retelling of history is its constant omission of the central role played by the capitalist project, and likewise, of the neoliberal derivation of this project. In Spain’s case, this omission is particularly important, since it avoids the inconvenience of having to acknowledge that it was the Francoist technocrats who completed one of the three great tasks of ‘modernization’: the conversion of subsistence economies into capitalist economies. The elites who had

outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them’ (1990, 53). Below that conscious level to which Bourdieu alludes, I think it is Ortega’s influence in the construction of ‘habitus’ for the intellectual Spanish class that explains his omnipresence in Spanish culture, his ability to thrive in different political regimes (both as living human being and as posthumous figure), as well as the fact that, as Morán mentioned, he had disciples on both sides of the Civil War, and, as Subirats points out, he was recovered as a model figure in the post-dictatorship period despite his ambiguous political past.

considered themselves the vanguard of the other two modernizations—the political and cultural (or aesthetic)—would have to accept the company of those Francoist technocrats in their privileged space if they acknowledged the centrality of capitalism in the modernizing project. But in addition to this, there is another problem, perhaps even more profound, as I have tried to explain: the hierarchical, naturalized structure of the elites' (both technocratic and 'pedagogical') very leadership itself.

Obviously, this is not a purely Spanish problem, since it has its roots in the necessarily hierarchical functioning of the modern power/knowledge complex, which is articulated through the development of 'modernization' plans preconceived by the elites. This leaves the rest of the population to either assume a passive role and accept these plans, or, at most, try to join the ranks of the elites who design them by submitting to the 'educational' processes the elites consider necessary. This means the loss of the experiential, egalitarian, and creative potential present in all human beings: the possibility that anyone can invent valued ways of life to which anyone else can add value.

In Spain's case, as I will try to show in the next chapter, the late arrival of political and cultural 'modernization' that has historically accompanied capitalist 'modernization' has perhaps made the latent elitism of the modern power/knowledge complex of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries especially virulent. The political and cultural post-Francoist 'vanguards' considered the heirs of that long tradition of 'modernizing' elites enjoyed a particularly solid legitimacy, which caused them to carry to extremes their inability to recognize other sources of knowledge and value, thus naturalizing their exercise of power as a necessary and desirable 'normalization.'³¹

31 There has been a recent and very important contribution to the analysis of this 'normalization': Luisa Elena Delgado's *La nación singular. Fantasías de la normalidad democrática española (1996–2011)* (2014). It uses tools from Lacanian psychoanalysis and theories of cultural hegemony to shed light on the collective internalizing of the paradigm of a 'normal,' 'consensus-based,' and 'united' democratic nation. Working with an extended and plural archive of cultural objects (ranging from op-ed articles to commercial campaigns, as well as literary and essayist production and cultural policies), this book illuminates some important links between cultural, economic, and political power in Spanish democracy. Unlike my line of work here, Delgado's investigation tends to focus more on the right-wing version of 'fantasies' of normalization (notably, Spanish unity), perhaps because of the period she chose for her analysis, while I veer more towards the study of the 'progressive' (Europeanist, allegedly social-democrat) foundations of the same 'normalized' society she studies.