

THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE IN THE CRISIS OF THE OLD REGIME

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INTRODUCTION

DIMENSION: A smaller world is perceived but at the same time a larger world. In the years 60 - 70 of the eighteenth century important areas of the planet are unknown. It is really ignored or unknown what was the population that existed or inhabited the planet, there are no censuses, so you have to move through hypotheses. It is stipulated that it could be 1/3 of the subsequent population. This population is concentrated in very certain zones or areas, extensive and important zones are uninhabited for reasons such as the climate, the endemic diseases of certain regions or the existence of an economic model based on transhumance livestock. From this it follows that there are very few populated areas, tending to produce agglomerations. At the same time it is a larger world, because for man the world is unattainable, unapproachable, due to poor rudimentary and insecure communication systems. Normally man is born, grows and dies in the same place with few exceptions. The individual knows almost everything.

• **RELATIONS:** More balanced relationship between the continents. America is controlled by European countries, it is a projection of Europe - western culture. Relations with Africa are minimal, it has been limited to coastal areas, mainly the north - Mediterranean Sea. The continent is a practically closed continent, almost hermetically, to the outside. In the case of Asia, there have been trade relations, exchanges since ancient times (trade in spices, silk, jewelry or manufactures). At the historical moment we are dealing with, the trade balance would be favorable to Asian countries over Western Europeans, they import more and more expensively.

With the revolutions these conceptions begin to change, the American continent becomes independent and Africa, which was the greatest unknown, has been explored and occupied by the different European powers. Something similar happens with Asia, a continent that is practically subjected except for some civilizations such as China that resist. This colonialism will lead to a profound change in the productive structures of these regions. Which will be dedicated to producing raw materials for the metropolis in exchange for manufactures - PRODUCTIVE DISMANTLING.

The world that emerges is much more unbalanced than the previously existing one. That world is controlled by European countries.

1.1 **ITS REALITY:** Europe is an eminently agrarian continent, both because of the number of people who live from agriculture and because of the extension of the land dedicated to it. There are countries like Russia or the Balkans where 97% of the population is dedicated to agricultural tasks. Even in countries with a long urban tradition, there are large percentages of the population dedicated to agriculture. England at ½ century the urban population is less than the agrarian, this data is significant if we think that it is the country cradle of the Industrial Revolution. Large cities at this time do not exceed 100,000 inhabitants except for Paris - 500,000 inhabitants and London with approximately 1,000,000 inhabitants.

We are in a time when agriculture has enormous weight. The first school of economists that emerged in the eighteenth century - THE PHYSIOCRATS, establish that the basis of wealth is in the land and its production. Property continues to be, therefore, a symbol of wealth and social prestige - PRIVILEGED ESTATES. It is one of the great supports of the privileged classes. It is a land subjected to a traditional activity, both in its products (cereals, legumes, fruits and some industrial plants such as flax), as well as in its productions, which are self-sufficient, consumed in their own environment, impossibility of a business due to the precariousness of communications. The Physiocrats would claim that the land and its production are the basis of wealth. According to its postulates, it must be liberalized and rationalized.

Rural areas continue to be eminently rural, where it is difficult to modify, since it is a settled population, attached to a way of life. It is in urban areas where greater concerns and certain desires for change are perceived, partly due to the strong rise of the bourgeoisie - economic power. In urban areas a new figure appears that becomes relevant, the MERCHANT. Which is the embryo of what will be the industrial. They are middle classes that come to join the intellectuals and liberal professions. Currents of change and transformations begin to appear within it. The merchant's role is in transition to what was later called the industrial revolution. Manufactures predominate, made in the houses - DOMESTIC SYSTEM. Certain pieces in a specialization process, where each family makes a specific part of the product, being the merchant who collects such pieces to sell them.

Finally, it should be noted that in Western societies a strong process of population growth is taking place, this will lead to or generate greater demand, greater needs, which will require turning agriculture into a more profitable and active mode of production to accommodate to that demand. There is therefore an increase in manufactured products and therefore trade.

1.2 YOUR IDEAS: The middle sectors will define a series of issues that will become the basis of rationalist philosophy in the eighteenth century. Characterized by pragmatism and rationalism. It is an individualistic ideology that rejects any obstacle to the development of the individual and freedom - Formal. They criticize magic, the structuring of society and its organization or hierarchization is produced by inheritance, that is, *ius sanguinii*. There is a development of individual initiative as the key to economic progress - Rationalism. In theory, all free and equal men have the same possibilities and capacity, but in reality it will be an ideology supported and promoted by a series of certain sectors, which although they support the equality and freedom of the entire population in their theories, in reality they are theories properly expressed for further development of these specific sectors in their identity and initiative - A new model of bourgeois society is emerging

- POLITICAL SYSTEM: Seated at this stage the Absolute Monarchies in Europe, which are legitimized in tradition or in the support of the nobility or the church, begins to develop within these Monarchies certain assumptions supported by rationalism, these theories of a universal nature arises promoted by certain social sectors called ENLIGHTENED DESPOTISM. These traditional monarchies are going to promote the material development of their states to promote individual wealth but at the same time state and, therefore, monarchical. To materialize and consolidate this state development, they cannot settle in the nobility or church due to their mentality or approaches. That is why these monarchies, in order to obtain these greater benefits, must rely on these sectors, which will promote economic change.

Therefore, new links with the monarchy are established, with a double meaning, on the one hand, support for development and, on the other, the elimination of obstacles to trade and economic development. In no case will the monarchs consider ending the existing structures. His objective was not to dismantle the stately framework or at any time to give up his own power. But when certain processes of change are set in motion, it is really difficult to parcel out what is interesting to maintain or discard, which is what Western monarchies tried to do in principle.

It will happen that these monarchies find themselves pressed between two fronts, the forces of change - innovations or transformations, and the forces that represent tradition, which do not accept any type of change. They are mutually exclusive forces, which are playing a fundamental role prior to the start of any modification.

An external factor will operate that tips the balance, this will be the foreign conflicts that will focus on two countries, England and France. These conflicts will serve as a trigger for the entire process, by acting as promoters of a series of measures adopted from power, which are at the base of the outbreak of the mobilizations in the United States and France. That economic subtraction will be put in danger.

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• **FORCES OF CHANGE:** If a change is taking place at the demographic level, which causes or generates greater demand at all levels, this will introduce new proposals for change, more verifiable in manufacturing production and urban commerce. This change is reinforcing the position of the middle strata and based on these changes, a new mentality is defined with new objectives or goals. This new mentality will take shape from an ideological point of view through certain schools of thought to become an alternative to models that are beginning to be invalid for a series of sectors.

The monarchies to achieve greater economic development, as well as greater and better finances and fulfillment of their ultimate internal and external objectives, will weaken their own structures due to the support they give to the new sectors.

The straw that breaks the camel's back, that is, the situation that serves as a trigger will be the pressure or needs generated by external conflicts, being the engine to launch the entire liberal-bourgeois revolutionary process.

October 28, 1998

• **THE AMERICAN CASE AND ITS INFLUENCE IN EUROPE:**

- War of liberation or independence against England.
- Internal social, political and ideological revolution.

We must carry out a double assessment, since its content and its achievements were double. It is precisely the internal process of social, political, and ideological change in American society that largely led to that decisive step of war against the metropolis. It is a complex case as we have anticipated due to the nature it takes, with the aspects that are configured being enormously linked.

The process that is taking place in North America will have great transcendence abroad since it is the first great triumphant revolution, that is to say, that it achieves this double objective. It is the first great movement that did not experience a counterrevolution, quite the opposite of what happened in the European revolutionary movements. It becomes, therefore, a driver, an influence on other types of movements that will take place not only in America but also in Europe.

MOMENTS: • **ORIGINS (1763 - 1776):** In the colonies of North America, when analyzing their model of society, we will find a different model from the one existing in Europe, due to its historical development and because we speak of a colonial situation, therefore, we do not we are going to find ourselves with a class society, since there is no hereditary nobility, the church does not have such an important role as in Europe, on the contrary we will find certain social sectors, which are to some extent comparable to the European model, there is thus a sector of inherited - landowners who have a strong prestige, a group of merchants who constitute an advanced and active sector within society, an urban social base made up of workers and peasant or agrarian and a strong or important contingent of population slave, with an important weight in certain sectors of the American economy.

- Its legal or juridical framework also differs because it is a colony.
- They do not have their own institutions.
- They depend on the London parliament, on the rules or laws issued by the British crown.
- They lack instruments by which to channel their demands or needs.

When the process is launched, the great aspiration will be to achieve national sovereignty and the institutions underlying it. A desire that will not be shared 100% of the entire American society. The most reluctant are the sectors that do not share this approach, in fact in the war a kind of internal civil war takes place and therefore when independence is achieved these people who did not support the movement were forced into exile (generally to Canada) .

Underlying a series of tensions experienced and developed within society, which will be manifested both in rural areas, where they will come fundamentally between the landowners and the small owners confronted by the property and possession of the land, in the urban sectors they will be they will produce confrontations between owners and workers, because in a process of economic change, it is producing an important development of these two nuclei as well as a process of concentration of wealth and concentration of wealth and resources in a few hands this will cause the "collapse" of the economic security of the middle and lower sectors of society.

The economic crises that take place in the decade from 1760 to 1770 will affect these tensions, where there is a deterioration in the levels or situation of the middle and popular sectors. The response will not be long in coming, there will be frequent mobilizations, the level of social unrest will grow. All these years are periods of intense agitation with a peculiar characteristic and that is that the mobilizations in rural areas will be quite well planned, with very well defined objectives. Urban movements will be more spontaneous, less planned or anarchic, which in the old continent is or is the opposite. In rural areas, what is basically proposed is land ownership and communal tenure, while urban demands are aimed at lowering prices and jobs. In both cases, for the middle and lower sectors, the culprits are the landowners or merchants who are the ones who control the resources.

This internal situation is affected by what happened externally. In 1763, the peace of the war of the 7 years between England and France is signed. The importance of this war in particular and of any armed confrontation in general are the tensions it causes, as well as the high cost not only materially but also economically and humanly. This war has put the finances of these countries to the test, being from this moment when the British parliament decides to apply a series of measures on its colonies, the difference with respect to France is that the latter imposes greater fiscal pressure on its citizens while England does it on its colonies. These measurements are:

- Control and stoppage of the march to the west.
- Limitations on internal trade between the colonies.
- Prohibition of installing new factories. Limit economic development.
- Direct taxes: They create new tensions in society. The main affected are the wealthiest sectors. Perhaps one can speak of these measures as the trigger for the declaration of war against the metropolis. Its maximum exponent was the STAMP LAW (for the symbolic), it was a tax that came to record all publications, which caused great social mobilizations. There will also be other taxes such as increases in customs fees.

All this led to the riots and demonstrations in Boston in what was called the TEA riot. The authorities would quickly ridicule his position in the face of these mobilizations, but the war had begun.

From these socially accommodated sectors, a certain ideology begins to be generated that will be the basis of what happens later. It takes part of the theory developed in England of what was called THEORY OF TYRANNY AND FIGHT FOR FREEDOM, which had previously caused a revolution in that country. These sectors feel they are heirs to this ideology, stating that the British authorities want to encircle freedoms and American society, undermine the equality and freedom of men. This ideology is based, therefore, on the RATIONALISM of the 18th century. There is a fundamental basis of the ideology of the eighteenth century, becoming clear in the declaration of independence. Ideology that is gradually taking shape. At the same time, the middle and popular sectors, an ideology that as such they do not have. What they do harbor are claims and reasons for discontent or discomfort, each one manifesting itself in a different way. The middle sectors through imports and trade, the popular base, however, will demonstrate against the scarcity of food or social precariousness. For these sectors, without falling into redundancy, the enemies are the upper classes - owners.

Therefore, the resistance of American society and the intransigence of the British government are perceived.

In 1774 the CONGRESS OF PHILADELPHIA is convened, in which representatives of the 13 colonies will meet, it is in this convention where a DECLARATION OF RIGHTS will be elaborated, in which the rupture or suspension of all types of relations with the metropolis is manifested, as long as the situation prior to 1763 is not restored.

- WAR (1776 - 1783): On July 4, 1776, the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE made by THOMAS JEFFERSON is promulgated. Being the first political text that responds to the rationalist ideology of the eighteenth century, it shows that man has the right to life, the search for happiness and freedom.

In the origins of the declaration we find clear influences from the theoreticians of the great schools of European philosophical thought (Diderot, Rousseau). It is the first time that a political text collects all these influences, being a precedent to the DECLARATION OF MAN AND THE CITIZEN (1789 - FRANCE).

The basic idea of this document and that legitimizes the declaration of war is the NATURAL LAW by which men are free and equal and therefore have a series of rights acquired through it. Governments and rulers are created and elected by the people. In this way, it breaks with the monarchical conception of divine origin. The principles that prevail in these

declarations are those of responsibility and obligation to care for and meet the demands of the people and ensure that society enjoys these natural rights. A government that does not respect these rights, that acts despotically, will not have the right to occupy those positions, breaking all links between the rulers and the ruled.

WAR: The situation is enormously complex, we find ourselves with a totally divided society, in the first place there are the wealthy classes (patriots), ready to break all ties with the metropolis. On the other hand, we find ourselves with the popular base, being a moment of great agitation and social mobilization. But as we have previously indicated, this popular base sees the powerful classes as the enemy, in fact a British commander went so far as to say that "the patriots had more problems subduing the popular sectors, almost than fighting against the British." Continuing to analyze the structure of society, we find a sector that declares itself opposed to independence, loyal to the crown. There is also a strong element of slavery, being reluctant mostly to independence and finally certain indigenous tribes. Therefore, we do not find ourselves in a totally divided and confronted society.

The patriots, who do not have a regular army to face the English armies, will have to seek support in the great social mass, initially reluctant to their ideals. The strategy to follow will be to convince society that the enemy and all its problems come from English colonialism. Against whom you have to fight is against the troops sent by the metropolis. In this way, these differences will be undermined, producing an ideological transfer, being an element of the utmost importance in the course of the contest.

But we must not forget the support that comes from abroad, with the participation of France and to a lesser extent Spain (which, without knowing it or wanting it, is launching the process of independence of its own colonies).

The development of the war with the overflow or support that the patriots will receive will end up tipping the balance on the side of the independentists, so that in 1783 the PEACE OF VERSAILLES is signed, by which England withdraws from the North American colonies. • POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT (1783 - 1789): It will not be easy, due in part to the national configuration. There are 13 colonies. At first, it is proposed that each colony become a state, that is, to draw up a constitution for each colony. Therefore, there is a need to coordinate the situations of the different states, to plan the political process that is beginning. The difficulty lies in uniting these 13 states, even though each of them has a high percentage of self-government through a single federal constitution, common to all. Therefore, in 1787 the FEDERAL CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA was drawn up, which came into force in 1989. It is a constitution in which, as in any other, nationalist elements underlie, the problem it poses is to define the sense and above all to eliminate the internal contradictions, this will cause a fracture in the constitutional model, since there are strong differences not only ideological, but also economic or cultural, there are, in short, a series of conflicting interests, that while the problem is not resolved The country did not develop completely, this was overcome with the secession war, by which a single model was established with hardly any internal contradictions.

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