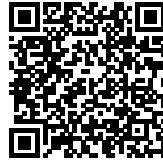




# DEFENDING WHAT WE ARE: IN PRAISE OF IDENTITY

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The anthropological presupposition of the [new spirit of capitalism](#) is easily identifiable: man behaves rationally only when he is free of prejudices and superstitions and is, therefore, in the optimal conditions to be able to pursue his own private interest as homo oeconomicus. From this follows syllogistically the demand—always reaffirmed by the order of discourse—to abolish everything in the sphere of customs, laws, traditions and other spheres of the spirit (religion, art, philosophy) that hinders such rationality, elevated to the only possible source of meaning. It is, therefore, of vital importance, for the prevailing cosmo-mercantilism, to make *tabula rasa* of any figure of boundaries, whether traditional or rational, moral or religious, juridical or ethical. In all spheres, the competitive individualization of society must prevail, unrestricted, and be redirected to the "unsociably sociable" sphere of the cash nexus: the liberal philosophy ignores mutual fidelity as a motivation, resolving everything in the [mercantile relationship](#).

As Michéa [has stressed](#): "liberal logic leads to the destruction of any human community," other than the one built on the basis of mercantile exchange. The private contract becomes the ultimate truth of any human relationship, lowered to the rank of the nexus between buyer and seller. In the whole horizon, the anthropological profile of Robinsonian man—the selfish and calculating individual, cynical and agent, exclusively focused on procuring his own private profit ([business is business](#))—must prevail unquestionably. Such an individual must metabolize the ultra-mercantilist imperative of flexibility, conceiving his own life as a nomadic series of changes and ruptures of all stability in relationships, projects and commitments. Therefore, he must be stripped (and be convinced that this is progress) of all material and immaterial ties, and become a globetrotter atom available for total mobilization connected to the [processes of value valorization](#).

From its auroral point of view, capitalism must favor the meeting of men in the market and, at the same time, discourage any other form of communitarian relation; and this, according to a trajectory that runs from Adam Smith's brewer to the "therapeutic" capitalism of Covid-19, whose foundational principle—"social distancing"—marks the apotheosis of the [neutralization of any communitarian instance](#) different from the "unsociably sociable" and intrinsically ephemeral, of mercantile exchange.

It is evident that such [an anthropology is incompatible](#) not only with the preceding figure of the urban factory proletariat, antagonistic and bound to the alienating monotony of Fordist stability. It is equally incompatible with the old bourgeois world "à la Hegel," with the State and the sphere of stable community ethics, or "à la Balzac," with its characters filled with nationalist prejudices and religious values, patriarchal traditions and existential stability. As I have tried to [clarify elsewhere](#), reflecting itself in the commodified world without residues, capital becomes speculative; being becomes, without

exception, the *speculum* in which turbo-capital contemplates itself, no longer seeing, on its own reflecting surface, any [other disturbing element](#), such as religions and ethics; not even the two classes, bourgeois and proletarian.

Speculative capital (or turbo-capitalism) can now ubiquitously contemplate itself alone in pure form, as a freely circulating commodity, in the triumph of the omni-merchandization [conversion of everything into a market and goods] of being, of things and animals, of nature and of the human. This also explains the fusion of the two preceding antagonistic classes into a single multitude of consumerist plebs, devoid of identity and consciousness, which I have proposed to qualify as the "precariat" (in my [Historia y conciencia del precariado](#) [*History and Consciousness of the Precariat*]). It is also, and not secondarily, for this reason that capital, in the time of "glebalization"(Sic) and "[unhappy identity](#)," in order to fully realize its concept, must annihilate not only the old proletarian world, but also the preceding bourgeois order. It must, in fact, reconfigure itself in a post-bourgeois and post-proletarian form, polarizing the whole of humanity into two qualitatively related and post-identitarian groups (integrally marketized stateless consumers), quantitatively differentiated by the exchange value they possess and by the objective position occupied on the immanent plane of production (financial aristocracy on the one hand and precarious plebs on the other). The struggle against identity cannot but occupy a central place in the program of reorganization of the world of life (*Lebenswelt*).

To become "absolute," that is, perfectly "complete" (*absolutus*), the nihilism of the commodity form must be "freed from" (*solutus ab*) all material and immaterial limits. On the material plane, the dialectical dynamics of capital's self-realization coincides with its saturation of the planet (globalization), with its neutralization of national sovereign states (de-sovereignization) and with the redefinition of every link in the form of a private contract between sellers and buyers (commodification of the world of life).

In the sphere of the immaterial, the self-realization of capital—its passage from the dialectical to the speculative—occurs through the residue-free colonization of consciousness and the imaginary. Like the Kantian *Ich denke*, the commodity form must accompany all representations of globally alienated men. Identities, linked to culture or to nature, to the individual or to peoples, thus become the equivalent of sovereign nation-states on the level of consciousness; that is to say, in the disordered post-1989 order they stand as the last bastions, as the extreme critical spaces, with well-defined borders, capable of [resisting the alienating rhythm](#) of omni-merchandization.

The material abatement of frontiers and the ideal dissolution of identities thus appear as two different

aspects of the same logic of the absolute self-development of capital, which, in order to become unlimited, must necessarily annihilate every limit, saturate every material and immaterial space and dissolve any reality that contradicts it. The de-sovereignization of consciousness proceeds at the same time as its disidentification, with the emptying of all content that is functional to the integral reoccupation of consciousness and minds by the nihil of the commodity form. The globalization of markets imposes itself insofar as it destroys the national sovereignty of States and the cultural sovereignty of national-popular and class identities, making it difficult for all their determinations to survive what has been defined as [cultural identity in the age of globalization](#).

On the one hand, by redefining politics as a neo-cannibalistic art of protecting the markets and the strongest, the new world order refunctionalizes the States themselves in a liberal key, de-sovereignized and called upon to "govern for the market" (and for their reference class), without any residual possibility of "governing the market" in a [democratic and socialist sense](#). On the other hand, it dissolves the identities of peoples and individuals; it produces amorphous masses of post-identity and interchangeable subjects, emptied of all content and ready to assume cadaverously whatever the order of production wants to impose on them. The coexistence of these two dimensions in the process of globalization of the material and the immaterial emerges with a clear profile, if we consider hyperglobalist and post-national entities, such as—among many others—the European Union and the UN. Even if in a different way, they yet provoke a technocratic governance, devoid of references to cultural and spiritual identities, which, at the same time, is able to place itself [beyond the decisions](#) of parliaments and national *δῆμοι*.

From this point of view, the European Union (EU) has favored—rather than prevented—the irruption of market globalization in the spaces of the Old Continent, still replete with social rights and political, national and [constitutional limitations](#) to the free market. The old European capitalism, strongly controlled by the State and limited by the historical conquests of the working classes, had to be redefined according to the new figure of the turbo-capital *absolutus*, on the model of [absolute American competitiveness](#). And this was the essence of the EU as the axis of the post-1989 liberal revolution in the Old Continent. Consequently, as shown in my study [Il nichilismo dell'Unione Europea](#), the EU, with its techno-bureaucratic autocracy, has positioned itself no longer as a response to the globalized society of Atlanticist matrix, but as a step that has accelerated the [transition towards the latter](#). It has [favored the shift of decision-making centers](#) from national parliaments to very private post-national bodies, such as the European Central Bank.

That the EU, that is, the new German empire nominally governed from Brussels, is a very concrete exemplum of cosmopolitan liberalism and market globalization is accredited both by the "[revolt of the liberal elites](#)," which thanks to the technocratic governance of the EU have been able to unleash their counter-attack against the working classes (through dis-emancipatory "reforms"), and by the [identitarian post-homologation of plural cultures](#). The latter, which represent the essence of the Europe of the peoples, are more and more clearly annihilated by means of the European capitalist integration, managed by the gray technocrats of Brussels. They eliminate the Europe of the Greek temples and the Christian cathedrals, in order to install the new neutral and asymbolic space of the banks and the hubs of liquid-financial capital [[which I examined thoroughly](#)]. The cultural and spiritual roots of Europe are cancelled in favor of the uprooting and homologation proper to the [global-capitalist paradigm](#).

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[Featured](#): *Factory workers going to work at the Mather & Platt, Manchester, in the snow*, by L S Lowry; painted in 1943.

