SUMMARY

In the paper "Evolution of the Psychology of Work and of Accumulation" Professor Corrado Gini anticipates for this Review an essay on his most recent researches in the field of the sociology of labour, a subject dealt with in a book now in the press (Economia laboral. Ojeida historica y primeras lineas teoricas con aplicaciones a la sociedad americana. Editorial Labor, Barcelona-Buenos Ayres).

The author accepts the psychological criteria of differentiation of social groups and depicts the evolution of society and of the spirit of accumulation in relation to the changes that have occurred in the psychology of man the worker, throwing into relief the main stages of this development. The importance of the last stage — that of spontaneous and pleasurable work, of which the United States represent the most advanced type among the Caucasian peoples — is such as to induce the author to suggest once again the need for an economic science wider and more comprehensive than "bourgeois" economics, which he calls Integral Economics; this should be based on a more general theoretical outline covering the whole of the historical development of human psychology and institutions.

The problem of unemployment is today the most worrying aspect of the economic recovery of Italy and it is being specially studied by Italian economists in relation to its structural character and its dynamic basis, which is due to demographic pressure.

The great interest aroused in Italy by the "Keynesian revolution" has, however, resulted in most careful consideration — also in public investigations — of the diverse schemes for full employment policies, from the standpoint of their possible practical application to Italy at the present time. This has brought out the basic conditions which differentiate the Italian economy from those economies where the full employment policy was originally worked out; the conclusion seems to be that there is a possible, but distinctly limited, field of application in this country.

In his paper entitled "Some Aspects of Italian Economy and the Theory of Full Employment", Professor Vittorio Marrama illustrates with statistics these basic conditions and limitations.

In the paper "Italian Foreign Trade in the Framework of World Trade" Professor Guglielmo Tagliacarne gives a comprehensive statistical survey of the movements of Italian foreign trade from 1881 to the present day, illustrating certain fundamental aspects of Italian economy and its international relations. This analysis brings out clearly the process of industrialisation within the country, the changes in the standard of living of its people, the effects of the autarchic policy pursued in the years preceding the second world war, and the dislocations that have taken place in the sources of supply and the outlets for production.
Evolution of the Psychology of Work and of Accumulation

by CORRADO GINI

1. The most highly developed forms of wealth, civilisation, art and military power as well as all the other conquests of mankind are, broadly speaking, the result of work, including in this term not only manual labour but also intellectual activities. This is an undeniable and universally accepted fact. It is strange however that people should have taken so long to deduce from this fact a truth which is its natural corollary, namely that the changes in man's propensity to work are the main cause of human progress. This is a logical consequence of the first truth; inasmuch as the more valuable human qualities are to the species, the more they are affected by natural selection, which might have been particularly persistent and intense in the effect it had on man's propensity to work.

It is quite useless, therefore, to try to find evidence of the evolution of the human species in shades of pigmentation or in the ratio between the length and breadth of the skull, between the breadth and height of the nose or between the size of the trunk and the limbs. These traits are of no value or at most very little importance for the survival of both individuals and groups, so it is not surprising if, in these respects, the human species has remained practically stationary. It is on the contrary in the changes occurring in psychology of work that we must look for evidence of mankind's past and present evolution.

2. It is easy to find in facts convincing confirmation of these logical deductions. If we study the populations that are still at the lowest cultural level and who, as regards some fundamental traits, are held to reflect the original state of mankind, it soon becomes apparent that such peoples are to be found among all the great races of mankind.

They include all the Pygmies of Africa, Asia and Oceania, all the Bushmen and other Pigmy races in India and Indonesia, many Negro races and, in Australasia, the Tasmanians, Australians and several Melanesian races; they also include the Pale-Americans of Tierra del Fuego — Yams and Alakuls — and their neighbours the Onas — neighbours geographically, but of a markedly different race — as well as those of the Brazilian forests and California, the American Indian races of the Amazon Valley and Mexico, almost all the hyperborean peoples of America and Asia, and, lastly, the Ainu, who are representatives of the Caucasian race.

The somatic characteristics of these peoples differ widely, as do most radically their social systems, religious beliefs and practices, ethical and social rules and the regulation of the relations between the sexes. We find among them patriarchal and matriarchal systems, peoples that are strictly monogamous, others that are polygamous and some that have no monogamy at all; we find monotheists and polytheists and animists; sun-worshippers and moon-worshippers; cannibals and peoples that abhor human flesh; warlike tribes and peace-loving tribes; meek races and savage races.

Also the intelligence of these peoples differs widely. The civilised peoples of the world had built up a theory flattering to their pride, according to which mankind was divided into two categories: on the one hand, the primitive peoples with a pre-logical, almost pre-human mental development; on the other, themselves — the civilised peoples — endowed with a logical and experimental mentality. But the objective studies of ethnographers and sociologists, who have lived in close contact with primitive peoples, have demolished this flattering construction. The truth is that among primi-
tive as among civilised peoples, intellectual qualities vary considerably, but, taken as a whole, it can hardly be said that there is a radical difference in raw material between one category and the other. Undoubtedly the primitive peoples are deficient in some of our qualities and, particularly, in the power of abstract thought; on the other hand, however, their power of observation surpasses ours. Incredibly obuse, as a rule, where arithmetic is concerned, their geometrical sense is superior to that of the civilised peoples. An impartial study of the question compels one to conclude that it must be a matter of different adaptation to different systems of life. As a matter of fact, while the primitive peoples would undoubtedly be at a disadvantage in our environment, we should be equally at a disadvantage in theirs. In fact, a civilised man would die ten times a day under conditions in which a primitive man has no difficulty in getting along, and he would hardly know how to find means of existence for himself alone where the primitive man is able to support a large family. Nor can this be attributed to the greater keenness of the senses of primitive man, since that generally does not exist, or to his greater strength and resistance; it merely depends on the fact that the primitive man is better able to take advantage of circumstances of time and place of his environment and of the habits of animals.

But where all the primitive races differ radically from the civilised is in their psychology of work.

The following anecdote gives a clear picture of the psychology of the primitive races.

On taking possession of an estate he had acquired in Mexico, a wealthy American was horrified at the starvation wages paid to the labourers and, when Saturday came round, he informed them of his decision to raise their wages to a proper level and, as a proof of his good intentions, he gave them double pay. Needless to say, his generosity was welcomed with great rejoicing and manifestations of gratitude and the American spent a very happy Sunday, congratulating himself and dreaming of wonderful plans for a solution of the thinly agriculture problem in Mexico. But on Monday, none of the labourers turned up — not a single one of them. Amazed, the American questioned his stewards. — Had there been some misunderstanding? Perhaps the labourers had not understood his decision properly? He had doubled their wages. And the labourers had seemed delighted. — Certainly, certainly, replied the stewards. — Not only had they seemed delighted, they actually had been so. Never within the memory of man, anyone been so popular as the American gentleman. The labourers would most certainly return to work — there was no doubt about that — but only the following week, for, as their double pay enabled them to live for another week, they would only need to work again the week after. This psychology is common to all peoples at a low cultural level. However different they may be as regards race, social systems, religion, morals and customs, in one thing they are all alike: they refuse to work more than is absolutely indispensable for getting a living. They are what may be described as the animal level of production.

3. — Only the coercion of a dominating exploiting race can succeed in raising them above this level. Thus, from the animal stage of production, society advances to the stage of enforced labour.

Many savage races are now at this stage and many have lived through it in the past, forced to work more than was necessary for their livelihood and this for the benefit of other groups by whom they were subjected and enslaved. This was the stage that had been reached by the society of classical antiquity. The Greeks were in the habit of justifying slavery by asserting that, if the people were free, it would be impossible to get them to work. If this coercive system be interrupted after a comparatively short time, the enslaved peoples fall back into their former primitive way of life. This is what happened to the Guaranis in Paraguay, who were organised by the Jesuits. The Jesuit Missions won the admiration of the Europeans for the orderly way in which they were run and the prosperous appearance of the native population, for its regularity and the economic yield of the concern. The natives do not seem to have shared this enthusiasm, for they often ran away, saying that the work they were compelled to do was unbearable. When the Jesuits were expelled, the Missions broke up, leaving no noticeable trace of their beneficial influence on the psychology of work of the native races. Likewise the peoples subjected to the Inca races and organised under an iron rule of enforced labour, returned to their former primitive conditions as soon as the empire fell, when attacked by Pizarro.

4. — But if this system of enforced labour lasts for a long period of time, as it did in Europe, where it obtained for thousands of years, the continuous selection of such elements as least refractory to work and, later on, of those who most willing to work, which automatically placed in a servile society, finally results in perpetually modifying the attitude of the people towards work. Slowly a new and ever more numerous class of persons arises and differentiates itself from the labouring masses, a class for which work is not such a terrible effort and which is therefore ready to work more than is absolutely necessary for a livelihood. When access to power is precluded, this extra work can only be directed to the satisfaction of less urgent needs. And thus the future bourgeoisie is prepared which, after the French revolution, was to dominate European society and set its mark on the whole of the XIXth century. This new psychology of work produces work without production; consequently slavery and servitude are abolished and the stage of free work takes the place of that of enforced labour.

The limit of the less urgent needs which people are willing to work for varies greatly from one people to another. To a great extent, it depends on the greater or lesser severity of the system of enforced labour to which the peoples were subjected in the past. When it was less severe, it was generally the case in the more fertile regions and warmer climates, we find a psychology that is satisfied with the first economic conquests. On the other hand, where a less genial Nature and a colder climate rendered harder work both necessary and possible, we find that people are ready to make a greater effort with a view to obtaining goods which others would look upon as mere luxuries, if not superfluities. Thus, as between one bourgeois society and another, there is a wide scale of propensity to work and, of course, also in one and the same society there are radical differences from one group to another and from one person to another which tend to place them on one economic level rather than on another.

5. — But from the working masses another, shoot was to spring from which a further stage in the psychology of work was to develop.

The more adventurous and enterprising of the seasonal workers took advantage of the new means of communication and crossed the sea to seek their fortune in the new countries on the other side of the Atlantic. In the United States, the bourgeoise and the gentility that had first landed there, and had organised an independent State, were submerged by the ever increasing flow of immigrants. The hard work deals the latter had been through at home and the spirit of enterprise that had led them to emigrate, together with the attractions of a pioneer's life, the stimulating effect of the new climate, the abundance of farm produce that this virgin land placed at their disposal, and the development of machinery which made production less laborious, further contributed to reduce the hardships of work, thus facilitating the rise of a new psychology which looked on work as a normal manifestation of one's personality and therefore, within certain limits, as pleasurable. Thus the stage of voluntary work started.

The society which sprang from it and which, in opposition to European capitalist society, I have called la bourgeoise (2)

has many characteristic traits which differentiate it from bourgeois society no less than the latter differs from the servile society. Not that work is looked upon as a pleasurable activity by all members of the labourist society, just as, in the servile society, there were people who were ready to work more than was strictly necessary for their livelihood, and in the bourgeois society is not as prevalent either, but only from a preceding stage — who are refractory to work and others — forrunners of the future stage — for whom work is a pleasure. But in each of these three types of society, the representatives of the psychology of work that characterizes it, were and are the most important, if not the most numerous.

One of the first things that strikes Europeans on landing in the United States is the paradox of activity everywhere: people seem to live for their work rather than for work to live for a living. The revolts of convicts, when they are given no work to do show that the hardest punishment in the convicts and bourgeois society, used to be forced labor, the now entwined idleness in America's new laborist society. Over there, the civil servant or the professor who, in Europe, still longs for the day when he will be able to retire on a suitable pension, dreads the "endless holiday" awaiting him when he reaches the age limit and which, frequently, we are assured, shortens his life (3).

6. — In the United States, the labourist psychology has spread above all among directors and managers on whom the high yield and regularity of production depend. Now it is important to note that in Europe also this psychology is gaining ground among the captains of industry, showing that an evolution is taking place towards the stage of a laborist society has already begun.

The fact is that a vertical selection, very similar to that which occurred horizontally when the most skilled workers emigrated to America, has taken place, inasmuch as, under other conditions being equal, such workers were more easily able to climb the social ladder and reach the top. One of the circumstances, which particularly favoured the growth of the labourist psychology both in Europe and in America during the nineteenth century, was the great increase in population, which led to the keenest competition among the industries. In view of the rapid progress of technology and to a lesser extent the expansion of markets due to the improved means of communication, the successful enterprises were those that managed to develop most. Consequently the smallest possible part of the entrepreneur's gains was assigned for consumption and as a large part as possible reinvested in the concern, leading to an insatiable crescendo of activity and production.

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only economic, but also social, the goal being to lessen class distinctions which were accentuated by the growth of the party hierarchy. During the last war, this double purpose induced all the belligerent States to mobilise their workers, both to avail themselves of their full working potential and to remove from the working classes any pretext of discontent towards the upper classes.

Quite apart from exceptional war requirements, the social service system installed in Rumania in 1938 deserves to be mentioned; unfortunately it came to an end after only one year as a consequence of domestic and international events.

In Rumania, social service did not refer to manual labour but to intellectual work. For a period of some months intellectual workers had to take part in the activities of cultural centres which, founded in every village and divided into four branches: public health, organisation of labour, agricultural and co-operative technology and moral and intellectual education, gathered together the intellectuals' (teachers, priests and civil servants) and the peasants' representatives in order to place at the disposal of the people all that they needed in the four spheres considered. This service was compulsory for all pupils of both sexes attending primary schools, frequenting colleges or universities and their alumnati, as well as to make the intellectual classes aware of the poverty and unacceptability of farm life and to test their capacity for satisfying the needs and raising the standard of life of the peasants.

This system, whose purpose is to make manual work properly appreciated, takes into account the fact that, in order to appreciate it, one must be able to understand it and that in order to understand it, one must come in close touch with it. On the one hand, it has not the drawbacks of the German system which, by enforcing manual labour, in many cases causes people to hate it, instead of having a higher opinion of it. Nor should it be forgotten that the members of the intellectual classes very often have not the physical resistance required for manual labour and, in any case, lack experience which is only acquired through practice, so that in reality this periodic labour service with the lower classes weakened rather than strengthened the social hierarchy that so many other measures were trying to consolidate.

Lastly, life in common with the lower classes, who are certainly more backward at regards the morality of family life, was fraught with dangers for young people and particularly for girls.

In any case, the Soviet system as well as those of Bulgaria and Peru, the German and Italian systems as well as the Rumanian, are all evidence of the greater esteem in which manual labour is now held by public opinion.

On the other hand, however, the constantly falling birth rate and the consequent weakening of the urge to accumulate property which, in bourgeois society, came from the wish to transmit one's property to one's children, were undermining the foundations of this society and lead one instinctively to seek the urge to production in another source (6).

From various practical requirements, from a number of ideologies and, opposing systems, forces are converging to promote the passage of economic organisation from the stage of free work, characteristic of bourgeois society, to that of voluntary work, characteristic of the labour society.

7. — Obviously the picture I have given here of the evolution of the psychology of work is schematic. Further it is restricted to the European races and their ramifications on the new continents, among which the main current of civilisation has developed during the last thousand years. It is not at all improbable — it is even quite likely — that, under the pressure of similar factors, a similar evolution or at least certain stages of a similar evolution may have repeatedly occurred among other races. This has been certainly the case in Japan.

(6) See on this subject the author's lecture Die Kreis des Volksbrauches und der Gesellschaftswandel in den modernen Staaten held at Berlin on February 8, 1939, under the auspices of the "Deutsch-italienische Stattstifung" and published in Germany in the "Zeitschrift für nationale Brauchkultur", 1939, p. 2, 10, 113, and, with some slight additions, in Italian with the title La civiltà borghese e il comport mento dei regimi costituzionali, in the "Archivio di Studi Corporativi", VII, 1942, nos. 2-3, 1942.


In ancient Egypt also, where manual labour was first looked upon with the utmost contempt (7), we are assured by competent persons that a stage was reached later in the psychology of work, when it was considered a pleasure and the reward to which one aspired in another and better life (8). But later on this psychology disappeared (probably, I imagine, as a result of the infiltration and ultimate occupation by foreign races which, originally imported for labour or military service, ended up by getting the better of the autochthonous dynasties) so that it was to have direct influence on the subsequent evolution of civilisation.

There is also no doubt that, in the harsh ordeals of life and especially through hard soil in the fields, there must have existed a selection among the European races themselves, apt to promote the aforesaid evolution in the psychology of work. It is more than likely that in such cases the acquired qualities of labouriousness and thrift were advantageous to the race and contributed to place above its neighbours — the Romans were an outstanding example of this. But these particular tendencies were subsequently absorbed by the general tendency, so that they do not disturb the synthetic picture I have given here of the preceding pages of the main thread of the evolution of the psychology of work.

8. — It is tempting to shape the first theoretical schematics of the organisation now arising. For the traditional political economy that developed during the formation of the bourgeoisie and became a systematic scientific organism just as the latter was already a public opinion, is essentially a bourgeois economy. It is not suitable for formulating the economic laws at the stage of enforced labour insufficiency: at the present it excludes us. Nor is it suitable for formulating the economic laws at the stage of voluntary work as its explicit premise is that work is not pleasant. An inclusive economic science, what might be called an integrated economy, would have to be based on a more general theoretical scheme, of which the servile and bourgeois and labourist economy would be particular cases (9).

A study of servile economy is of great scientific interest to the historian and ethnographer; the study of the new labourist economy is also of great scientific interest and of great present importance, if it be true that mankind is heading towards it as stated here. I have already traced the outlines of the special labourist society that has come into being in the United States in a former chapter (10), but the subject deserves to be taken up again from a more general and theoretical standpoint.

Here I shall merely complete the general picture I have already traced of the evolution of the psychology of work with a similar survey of the evolution of the psychology of accumulation.

The evolution of the psychology of accumulation is taking place side by side with the evolution of the psychology of work, since the esteem in which wealth is held is closely connected with the esteem in which the work producing wealth is held. At the animal stage of production, there is really no accumulation. Many primitive races are quite unacquainted with this concept; they live from hand to mouth. This is usually the case among peoples inhabiting equatorial or tropical regions where the seasons are hardly felt or, at any rate, where there is, if not the same abundance, at least the possibility of a livelihood the whole year round. In these regions, moreover, the hot and often damp climate would make it difficult to preserve food. Like certain reptiles, primitive man under these conditions seems to get all the food he can when the (9) The subject is dealt with in detail in the article: Unklau, p. 101, "Della scienza economica? Un tentativo di coordinare i vari concetti di economia politica e di impugnare l'evoluzione in un'ottica di scienza politica". A more extensive publication of this paper was published under the title: "Alla base della scienza economica" in the volume in memory of the 50th Anniversary of the "Casa di Studi" of the Accademia dei Georgofili, 1941, pp. 69-117. In the last of the book, the subject is further dealt with in particular the last book, "Delle società lavorative".

(10) See the articles mentioned in note (7) and particularly the last, and most inclusive, "Una società lavorativa"
opportunity presents itself and then slowly digests it while resting for several days to come. It is said of some peoples that, in times of famine, they extract the seeds of the fruit eaten at the time of the crops from their excavations; the Indians of California, who used to follow this system, called it the "second crop." This is undoubtedly the most primitive and involuntary form of saving and puts one in mind of the coprophagous habits of rabbits and guinea-pigs.

In temperate and cold climates, where putrefaction is slower, there is no need for food to be consumed immediately and in excessive quantities, and primitive man, who has killed a large animal or caught an exceptional number of fish, need not overload his stomach, but can put something aside for future meals, just as many animals do under similar circumstances. This brings us to the "formation" of season reserves, representing the first form of planned saving.

As a general rule the changing seasons are accompanied by a periodic modification in food sources which, should they happen to be scarce or lacking at any time, would make it impossible for the population to survive without forming adequate reserves. Even the most primitive peoples, therefore, are in the habit of setting aside a part of the available food for the dead season, just like a number of animals.

It is too soon as yet, however, to speak of accumulation in the true sense of the word, for these reserves are not meant to be accumulated but are certain to be used up within the year. It is only when savings are made in consideration of indeterminate or at least uncertain needs, such as illness, invalidity or old age, or for the needs of one's descendants, that we can really speak of accumulation.

10. — The economy of prestige does not stop at this stage, however; it continues and develops during the subsequent stage of free work. As soon as this stage begins, prestige, which was the attribute of the upper classes, grew to the aspiration of the lower classes who were no longer able to make their way. There were several ways in which they could conquer it: military bravery; magic powers; among some peoples, eloquence and, among others, a saintly life; among all peoples, wealth. Not everyone can become a magician or a saint, a hero or an orator, but everyone or almost everyone can work and accumulate wealth.

Thus, during the first phase of the free work stage, wealth becomes the motive power of social organisation, not yet for its own sake but as a means for obtaining prestige. It has remained such for many peoples who, through enforced work, have risen above their original primitive level, but who have not yet reached the further stage that characterises bourgeois society. Although it is less efficient from the point of view of accumulation and progress than the bourgeois organisation, the organisation of free work based on prestige usually works satisfactorily, varying in form from one country to another. These variations are often most interesting.

Particularly interesting is the description of a form of this organisation given by a British writer who spent many years among the savages of the New Hebrides. Here, man works more than is strictly necessary, not to consume the goods produced but to use them for gifts to private persons (especially to a certain person who is his rival throughout life) or to distribute them collectively at public festivals so as to acquire or increase his prestige. The person who receives a present must repay it as soon as possible. If he does not, he will become ashamed in the presence of this other; his wife may even hint that he is no man. Public donations are, proof of a man's social progress. Villages compete in the same way. It is not prestige that helps to conquer wealth, but wealth that helps to conquer prestige. The actual measure of value is a matter of convention. In the New Hebrides, the social organisation is based on pigs. With pigs you can buy women, pigs are women's main occupation; a man's prestige depends on the number of pigs he owns and they are the means by which he acquires himself on feast days and ascends the social scale. Pigs are power. Pigs are lent out and interest is paid on them. A man's age is not calculated in years, but in pig's progress. Pigs, however, are not desired for their flesh or for the other material uses; in fact pork is seldom eaten. They are used because of their tusks which, if the corresponding top canine teeth are taken out, grow in spirals. When the spiral completes its first coil, the tusk and the pig acquires a great value; which becomes very great when the spiral completes its second coil; but the tusk without the pig or a magnificent-looking pig with a small tusk, as well as the dead pig with the tusk or the pig's skull are without meaning. Only a live pig is of value with its tusks and because of its tusks. If one of the tusks is broken, the pig loses most of its value, however good the other tusk. A sow is worth nothing. The interest on the loaned pigs corresponds to their increased value due to the growth of the tusks. Measured by this quite conventional unit of value, all production is organised on the basis of a series of reciprocal donations between persons and between villages, donations which give rise to emulation, thus stimulating production by means of a social device that works beautifully (11). This is a typical "economy of prestige" based on free work.

In the nearby Bank Islands a similar organisation is in force. But, as a matter of fact, when one examines closely the organisation of primitive societies, it will always be seen that in reality they are more or less clearly and completely founded on prestige. This is not only to relatively developed peoples, where there are different social classes and where the accumulation of wealth has brought into being an economic organisation, but also to peoples who still live in what we have called the animal level of production, in which there are as yet no social classes and no systematic accumulation of wealth and in which social prestige derives from bravery, magic powers or other personal gifts.

It is the psychology inherent in this system that we can understand the strange behaviour of certain populations, brought to our notice, but not usually explained, by European explorers and ethnologists. It is worth while devoting some words to this.

It is said of the Fuegins that, although each has a right to private ownership of what he produces, they are all of such a generous disposition that it would seem the only pleasure they find in property is to be able to give it.
to someone else. It is easy to understand how, under such conditions, the foreigner who keeps his instruments, provisions and clothes for himself must cut a sordid, miserly and horribly selfish figure, so that a hostile collective reaction is practically unavoidable. This is probably what led to the growing hostility against, and finally to the massacre of, the first Protestant missionaries among the Fugings. — What? These foreigners preach of brotherly love and Christian charity and yet they are not willing to give away their clothes, their axes and their trinkets and all the wonderful things they have brought with them? Why, before anyone who even touches them! How is it that we believe in the sincerity of their Christian ethics? It should be added that the missionaries lived apart, whereas the Fugings' homes are open to all and sundry. Moreover — and this was really unheard of — they had not brought their women with them (women's presence — it should be remembered — is always a guarantee of peaceful intentions among savages). The natives could hardly be blamed for feeling most suspicious. With regard to many other peoples also — the Andamanese, the Veddas, the South-eastern Australians, the Bushmen, the Selissa Indians and those in the North of Central California, the reindeer-owning Kamchatka Tjokes and those of Western Greenland — travellers and ethnologists stress the fact that they love giving and lending and are in the habit of lavishing gifts on one another — indeed this seems to be the main reason why they pay visits. Certain ethnologists — wrongly, as has since been admitted — interpreted this altruism as an indication of the collective nature of property; others instead see it as a manifestation of the innate goodness of primitive man. But the question is: is this really altruism or is it not rather the wish to affirm one's prestige? It is not difficult to penetrate this primitive psychology by following our own. Actually these customs still survive in the presents we make on certain occasions, for weddings for instance. They also survive in entertainments, very often of a public nature, or in donations on the occasion of births, marriages and deaths. We all know that these presents, entertainments and donations are inspired far less by affection or altruism than by strict etiquette and careful consideration of one's economic conditions and, in the case of presents, the person who is to receive them as also of presents previously received. The mere fact that there is an obligation to return a present shows clearly that the system of present giving is based on prestige and, in fact, the present is not suitable, the giver is criticized and the person who receives it considers himself slighted. In this we do not differ from the primitive races. Very often an unsatisfactory present leads to disputes and quarrels in occasion of the collective visit of one village to another that are customary among the Andamanese. With reference to quite another people, an amusing story is told by a Danish explorer who married an Eskimo. The latter, having received her marriage become the outstanding female personality in native society, was most indignant at the insignight gift one of her acquaintances continually made to her. One day she made up her mind to give this woman a good lesson and, with preface exaggerated thanks, immediately loaded the unfortunate creature's arms with rich gifts, on top of which, as a thing of no importance, she placed small gift she had just received. With bowed head, the woman left the house. When her husband came home, he was told what had happened by the villagers, and lost no time in giving his wife a lesson of a still more painful nature. The following day the presents were returned with the humblest apologies, but the ignominy was so great that the disdained family had to depart from the community and look for other hunting grounds.

The traditional power of prestige explains how, when wealth first made its appearance, it was often subservient to prestige and sometimes was even sacrificed to it.

The white men who first came in touch with the various populations of Australia, often made them gifts of objects that they seemed greatly to desire; but, to their surprise, they discovered that a few days later none of their gifts were to be found in the village or in the neighbourhood. — Where had these things gone? — Obviously they had been passed on to other people — but why, since they were such coveted objects? — They were coveted, it is true, but how could one let such a wonderful opportunity escape for assuring one's prestige? As the magnificent gift was passed around, the whole island must have exclaimed: "Look what X has received. Look what he has sent us. He must undoubtedly be a great chief!" It is not only in bourgeois society, but even more so in societies ruled by completely opposite principles, that the heads are intent on élever le bourgois! Primitive man — it has been well said — is a peacock.

Quite in keeping with the concept of wealth as an instrument of prestige is the destruction of important property carried out by the chiefs of some Indian tribes on great occasions as an ostentation of grandeur, or the hecatombs of slaves effected for the same purpose by the kings of Guinea amid the rapturous admiration of their subjects. A pale reflection of this may be found in the very often considerable expenses that in many European countries have to be borne by the local gentry — if they do not wish to be accused of avarice — for public illuminations, flower, festivals and so forth and so on. While on this subject, it should be mentioned that peoples which technologically are certainly the most advanced in the world, but which psychologically retain manifest traces of primitive, such as the Americans, never neglect to bestow on ostentatious complacency of the large sums they have spent or donated.

The distribution of the property of the deceased among a number of primitive peoples is also in keeping with the foregoing concept. The custom among civilised peoples in times gone by — and of which something still remains — of burying attributes of authority, arms, horses and even slaves and other marks of social prestige with their owner, is probably a survival of the above.

12. It was not everywhere, though, that the stage of enforced work led to an "economy of prestige." Where the dominant classes were more numerous or more energetic or radically different as regards rage, beliefs and customs from the subject masses, so that the latter could never hope to rise in the social scale or to use such property as they might accumulate to acquire prestige, wealth could only be used to satisfy material needs and consequently it was for this purpose that it was accumulated. Therefore, whereas the upper classes continued to be influenced by the psychology of prestige which also regulated their relations with the lower classes and dictated the conduct of the State, which was under the ascendency of the ruling classes, the lower classes were guided more and more by principles of gain.

There thus came into being a composite economic system, which may be considered as an economy of gain dominated by an economy of prestige. In Europe this economy took the form of feudalism and even to-day most of the reigning houses and many of the noble families in Europe are guided more by principles of prestige than by principles of gain in their economic conduct. As a matter of fact, however, the feudal system was not peculiar to Europe; in a number of other countries, Abyssinia and Japan for instance, the same system was adopted.

In the Ottoman empire, where the ruling caste was too small to govern with its own demographic forces and too exclusive to admit the subject races, this composite economic system took a different form. Instead of the aristocratic regime that generally characterised feudalism, therefore, an absolutist form of government had to be established and the charges usually falling to the nobles under feudalism were entrusted to officials, who were often recruited, as children, from the subject races, born in their families and brought up in the Seragio. They rose in the bureaucratic or military hierarchy according to their personal prestige with the Sultan and were entirely dependent on favours. The Sultan did not pay regular salaries to his subordinate, but made them presents; in return his subordinate paid homage to the Sultan making him gifts which furnished the Imperial treasury. Relations between the various categories of officials were on the same basis, the result being a system which for centuries — judging at least from the expansion of the Empire — worked efficiently. Meanwhile the lower classes, formed mainly by the subject races, followed the urge for gain in their economic life.

13. The ultimate fate of these composite forms of economy varied from one country to another.

In some of the poorer countries not yet
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reached by modern economic currents, like Abyssinia, the system continued and actually exists still.

In most other countries, sooner or later the subject classes, having increased in number owing to the fact that they were more prolific and their system of money-making more efficient, overthrew the dominating classes, but the outcome of this was not the same everywhere.

In the East, probably because of the much blander form of coercion applied by the dominating classes, the subject classes felt the urge to work less strongly. At the same time religious motives, a deep respect for traditions and the greater numerical importance of the descendants of the old dominating classes kept the system of prestige alive; so that a mixed system came into being at the basis of which are both gain and prestige.

In the West, instead, the system of gaining money prevailed so completely that nothing has remained of the system of prestige, but some quite negligible vestiges in the reigning houses and among the high nobility. This is the result of a combination of circumstances: the reaction against the contemptible life of the religious orders under the Reformation, which culminated in exaltation of work and also, in some Churches, in the sanctification of wealth as a token of divine benevolence; some inventions such as the more suitable type of harness for draught animals and the rudder on ships which, by enabling men to make a better use of the animal strength of traction and of the propelling power of the wind, rendered the last remains of slavery and servitude superfluous; the more efficient system of communications by land and sea deriving herefrom and the subsequent important discoveries of new commercial routes and new continents which rapidly developed trade exchanges and increased the power and prosperity of the merchant classes and of other professions of a strictly lucrative nature; and, last but not least, the exceptionally high birth rate among the middle classes which increased their importance as compared with the nobility and — this phenomenon is probably connected with the high birth rate and is of outstanding importance — the strength of family ties which led people to identify the needs of their descendants with their own, so that their urge to work and save money was much greater.

These circumstances not only determined the triumph of the bourgeoisie in Western Europe but, some continuing and some increasing, they contributed to its demographic, economic and political expansion. One of the main reasons why the system of money-making proved more efficient than the system of prestige is undoubtedly to be found in the fact that it is easier and safer to accumulate material goods than the immaterial advantages on which the latter system is mainly based. Consequently, in the long run, the system of gain spread from Europe all over the world, penetrating, stirring, if not upsetting, societies based on other systems and setting its mark on national economy in the century that was aptly termed bourgeois.

This was certainly not the first time in history that the system of gain prevailed: Athens and Rome are well-known historical examples.

In Athens and in Rome, however, the system did not get a firm footing, because the public life and — probably an unavoidable consequence of this — a drop in the birth rate, loosening of family ties, a breaking of solidarity with the generations to come and, therefore, not only an end to accumulation, but the consumption and dispersion of wealth already accumulated. Serious reasons lead us to fear a similar degenerative process in our present bourgeois society and many think it has already started.

15. — This sketch of the evolution of the psychology of work and of accumulation is a general one and many quite important details remain in the shade from which perhaps they may never emerge; many others are the result of a process of intuition rather than of well-founded proofs which may never be supplied. Except by intuition, it is indeed impossible to penetrate the psychology of the working classes in pre-historic times, and even very difficult to penetrate it in more recent times, particularly in the face of the fact that for centuries these classes lived in the background of history. But, in any case, I hope this sketch will be found interesting and suggestive enough to justify its presentation.

(12) A Spanish translation of the study, entitled: Economia laboral - Oeveda historica y primeros lineas teoricas con aplicaciones a la sociedad americana, is in the press, published by Editorial Labor, Barcelona and Buenos Aires. An article summarising some results, had appeared during the war in the Revista de la Sociedad de Ciencias Humanas y Artes, under the title Primera linea de una economia laboral, and then reproduced, together with another article, in a pamphlet entitled Deseo de economia laboral, published by the Diputacion Provincial de Sociedades, Consejo Supremo de Investigadores Cientificos, Madrid.