GOLDEN AGE PIRACY AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: PREFIGURATIVE COMMONING AGAINST PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

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ABSTRACT

GOLDEN AGE PIRACY AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: PREFIGURATIVE COMMONING AGAINST PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

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This study aims to analyze the golden age of piracy as a movement that resisted against and constituted an alternative to capitalist social relations. In this sense, the study analyzes the emergence of capitalism and the economic, legal, cultural, and political transformations that have accompanied it with a special emphasis on primitive accumulation not just as a historical phenomenon but also as an ongoing process inherent to capitalism. In connection, the study posits that the struggle for the commons is as relevant as primitive accumulation for contemporary movements. The pirate movement in the golden age constituted a commoning movement in the sense that the pirates could do in common by way of collectively owning the pirate ship and abolishing wage labor, could govern the ship collectively by way of a nonhierarchical organization and a decision-making process based on direct and horizontal democracy, and could constitute a new subjectivity as the pirate as commoner. Furthermore, insofar as the commoning movement in question did not only reject capitalist social relations but also constituted an alternative society as the actualization of the ideals in the present based on direct action and means-ends equivalence, it was a prefigurative movement. The analysis

of the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement shows that the movement is an inspiration for the contemporary movements and represents a crack on the surface of capitalism that was closed in time yet produced a memory to look upon to as well as offering some lessons for contemporary movements.

Keywords: Golden Age of Piracy, Primitive Accumulation, Commons, Commoning, Prefiguration

ÖZ

BİR SOSYAL HAREKET OLARAK ALTIN ÇAĞ KORSANLIĞI: İLKSEL BİRİKİME KARŞI PREFİGURATİF MÜŞTEREKLEŞTİRME

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Bu çalışma, kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilere karşı direnen ve ona alternatif oluşturan bir hareket olarak korsanlığın altın çağını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu anlamda çalışma, kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışını ve ona eşlik eden ekonomik, yasal, kültürel ve politik dönüşümleri, yalnızca tarihsel bir olgu olarak değil, aynı zamanda kapitalizme içkin, süregelen bir süreç olarak ilksel birikime özel bir vurgu yaparak analiz etmektedir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak çalışma, müşterekler mücadelesinin çağdaş hareketler için ilksel birikim kadar alakalı olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Altın çağdaki korsan hareketi bir müşterekleştirme hareketi oluşturmaktadır zira korsanlar, gemilerinin mülkiyetine kolektif olarak sahip olmak ve ücretli emeği ortadan kaldırmak yoluyla müştereken eyleyebilmişlerdir. Hiyerarşik olmayan bir örgütlenme ve doğrudan ve yatay demokrasiye dayalı bir karar alma süreci yoluyla gemiyi kolektif olarak yönetebilmişlerdir. Dahası, iştirakçi korsan olarak yeni bir öznellik oluşturabilmişlerdir. Ayrıca, söz konusu müşterekleştirme hareketi, yalnızca kapitalist toplumsal ilişkileri reddetmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda doğrudan eyleme ve araç-amaç denkliğine dayalı

olarak ideallerin şimdiki zamanda gerçekleştirilmesi anlamında alternatif bir toplum oluşturduğu ölçüde, prefigüratif bir hareket anlamına gelmektedir. Altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak analizi, hareketin çağdaş hareketler için bir ilham kaynağı olduğunu ve kapitalizmin yüzeyinde zamanla kapanan ancak bakılıp hatırlanacak bir hatıra üreten bir çatlağı temsil ettiğini göstermenin yanı sıra çağdaş hareketler için bazı dersler sunduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Korsanlığın Altın Çağı, İlksel Birikim, Müşterekler, Müşterekleştirme, Prefigürasyon

To Captain "Black" Sam Bellamy, may his contempt for the rich live till there are rich no more.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
...Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!
Drink and the devil had done for the rest—
...Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum![1]

These verses written by Robert Louis Stevenson as a sea song for his novel *Treasure Island* summarize the fate of maybe not all but most pirates. Alcohol and drunkenness, of course, were an indispensable part of the pirate society. Yet, the devil in these verses took another meaning when looked closely at the life of the sailors, in the late 17th and early 18th centuries as they were "caught between the devil and the deep blue sea: On one side stood his captain, who was backed by the merchant and royal official, and who held near-dictatorial powers that served a capitalist system rapidly covering the globe; on the other side stood the relentlessly dangerous natural world."[2] Thus, the devil "who had done for the rest" was not the devil in a literal sense, but the captain who embodied the state and capitalism onboard. The pirates attempted to change this fate declared war against the devil, along with declaring "war against the whole world."[3] The declaration of war against the whole world was, of course, connected with the fact that pirates have been accepted as the common enemy of humankind at least since the time Cicero wrote "…*nam pirata non est ex perduellium numero definitus, sed communis hostis omnium; cum hoc nec fides debet nec ius iurandum esse commune*" translated as "…for a pirate is not included in the number of lawful enemies, but is the

[1] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island*, (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1884), 7.
[2] Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 5.
[3] Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates, From Their First Rise and Settlement in the Island of Providence to the Present Year*, ed. Arthur L. Hayward. (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 144.

common foe of all the world; and with him there ought not to be any pledged word nor any oath mutually binding."[4] In the same manner, pirates were regarded as "*Hostis humani generis*, a common enemy"[5] so much so that a prosecutor could dehumanize pirates during trials:

> *yet the Laws of all Nations, that have setled into regular Governments, define & declare a Pirate to be an Enemy of Mankind. And therefore he can claim the Protection of no Prince, the privilege of no Country, the benefit of no Law; He is denied common humanity, and the very rights of Nature, with whom no Faith, Promise nor Oath is to be observed, nor is he to be otherwise dealt with, than a wild & savage Beast, which every Man may lawfully destroy*.[6]

The dehumanization of pirates, the stripping of them from their rights of nature and the benefit of law are all connected to the fact that piracy was considered quite a serious offense by the state. On the one hand, the victims of piracy, read the merchants and the captains of their ships were regarded public officials who conveyed "Blood into the Veins of the Body Politick" so attack against these officials were counted treason and "every State or Government is threatened from the Combinations, Conspiracies and Confederacies of Profligate and Desperate Wretches."[7] And on the other, the wretches in question "dared at last not only to infest our Coasts, seize our Ships, & put a full stop to our Commerce, but to enter our Harbours."[8] Therefore the serious offense involved not only a political threat but also an economic threat against both state and capital. Both of these threats were not imagined threats as the pirates of the period called golden age of piracy could create an alternative society, an alternative that proved to be against both state and capital. Even in the Roman times, "piracy might be so threatening as even to offer an alternative to civilization."[9]

Before delving deep into that alternative society, however, the golden age of piracy should be defined in a clearer manner and the definition of the pirate should be

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[4] Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Officiis*, trans. Walter Miller (London: William Heinemann, 1913), 387.
[5] Johnson, *A General History*, 593.
[6] Trials of Eight Persons Indited for Piracy, (Boston, 1718), 6.
[7] Trials of Eight Persons, 7.
[8] Trials of Eight Persons, 7.
[9] David Braund, "Piracy under the Principate and the Ideology of Imperial Eradication," in *War and Society in the Roman World*, ed. John Rich and Graham Shipley (London: Routledge, 2002), 195–213, 197.

given. The term pirate itself is a politically loaded one in fact. Philip Gosse, in this sense, states that deciding who was a pirate and who was not was a great difficulty for him while writing his book *The Pirates' Who's Who: Giving Particulars of the Lives & Deaths of the Pirates & Buccaneers* and while Sir Francis Drake was acknowledged as a patriot by the English, he would be certainly and without hesitation labeled as a pirate by the Spanish.[10] In this line, Gabriel Kuhn argues for a wide definition and narrow definition for the pirate.[11] The pirate, in a wider sense, "was, and is, someone who robs and plunders on the sea."[12] The narrow definition, on the other hand, "considers pirates only those sea robbers who carry no license by any legal authority, who target all ships, regardless of the national colors they fly."[13] The narrow definition is also confirmed by the solicitor Sir David Dalrymple's definition during his speech at the Trial of Captain Thomas Green and his crew:

> *A Pirat is in a perpetual War with every individual every state, Christian or Infidel. Pirats properly has no Countrey, but by the nature of their Guilt separates themselves, and Renounce on the matter, the benefit of all lawful Societies: They are worse than ravenous Beasts, in as far as their fatal Reason gives them a greater faculty and skill to do Evil; And whereas such Creatures follow the Bent of their Natures, and that promiscuously, Pirats extinguish Humanity in themselves, and prey upon Men only, especially upon Traders, who are the most Innocent. The Crime of Piracy is Complex, and is made up of Oppression, Robbery and Murder committed in places far Remote and Solitary*.[14]

The latter definition, then, indicates that piracy was not "merely robbery committed at sea."[15] Their dehumanization by the state officials as illustrated above in two different trial records also indicate that it was more than robbery at sea. Yet, since piracy has existed since seas began to be used as a means for travel and trade, especially

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[10] Philip Gosse, *The Pirates' Who's Who: Giving Particulars of the Lives & Deaths of the Pirates & Buccaneers,* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1924), 15.
[11] Gabriel Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger: Reflections on Golden Age Piracy*, (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2010), 7.
[12] David Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates: The Romance and the Reality*, (London: Abacus, 2002), 6.
[13] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger,* 7.
[14] *The Tryal of Captain Thomas Green and his Crew*, (Edinburgh: Printed by the Heirs and Successors of Andrew Anderson, 1705), 48.
[15] Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), v.

when piracy is defined in the wider sense, the period of piracy, the golden age of piracy, this study is based on should be defined. When taken as sea robbery, piracy can include many historical instances: the Vikings of the 8th and 9th centuries, the Irish pirates of the 15th and 16th centuries, the Chinese pirates of the 19th century[16], and even the Somalian pirates as a contemporary example. The golden age of piracy roughly covers the late 17th and early 18th centuries, or the period between 1650 and 1730. The exact periodization varies from historian to historian. Although various historians periodize the golden age differently, such as 1690-1720[17], 1695-1725[18], 1650-1730[19] or 1715-1725[20], the study, in fact, focuses on the pirates who operated between the years 1716 and 1726. Following Marcus Rediker, the golden age of piracy can be divided into three generations: the buccaneers who operated between 1650 and 1680, the pirates who operated in the Indian Ocean in the 1690s, and the pirates who operated between 1716 and 1726, who were the most numerous and successful of the three… who attacked the ships of all nations and created a crisis in the lucrative Atlantic system of trade."[21]

Before moving on to the significance of the pirates of the period between 1716 and 1726, however, the two other terms, buccaneer and privateer, used in order to depict robbery at sea during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, should be presented in contrast with the pirate as a common enemy of humankind. To start with buccaneers were "originally castaway colonists (usually French or English) on Hispaniola who survived by hunting or raising livestock, and then smoking it (*boucanier*), to sell meat and hides to passing ships."[22] "The majority of them were at first probably French, and originated in Normandy, but their numbers were soon swelled by English indentured servants from Barbados and elsewhere who, when their term of service expired, found

[16] Chris Land, "Flying the Black Flag: Revolt, Revolution and the Social Organization of Piracy in the 'Golden Age'," *Management & Organizational History 2*, no. 2 (2007): 169–92, doi: 10.1177/1744935907078726, 171.
[17] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger,* 1.
[18] Hans Turley, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality, and Masculine Identity*, (New York and London: New York University Press, 1999), 3.
[19] Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age*, (London: Verso, 2012),, 8.
[20] Peter Earle, *The Pirate Wars*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 163.
[21] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 8-9.
[22] Shannon Lee Dawdy and Joe Bonni, "Towards a General Theory of Piracy," *Anthropological Quarterly* 85, no. 3 (2012): 673–99. doi:10.1353/anq.2012.0043, 678.

themselves free but landless."[23] Lacking organization at first, they later formed a loose organization known as the Brethren of the Coast. These brethren often joined forces and carried out raids. The most famous of these raids is the 1671 Panama raid led by Henry Morgan.[24] The buccaneers were crucial for the golden age of piracy as the organization of the pirate movement in the golden age is traced back to the buccaneers of the 1640s, and their code of conduct that was called Custom of the Coast or Jamaica Discipline: "The Tortuga buccaneers began to call themselves the Brethren of the Coast about 1640. To become a member of this democratic confraternity a man vowed to subscribe to a strict code called the Custom of the Coast."[25] Privateers, on the other hand, were pirates employed by states in order to attack other states. "Privateers were generally commissioned by a head of state to disrupt the trade of hostile nations and seek plunder and wealth for the crown. They were agents of a form of primitive accumulation based upon the monarchic state."[26] Shannon Lee Dawdy and Joe Bonni also define privateers as "Pirates who operate with a legal license from a state government to attack enemy ships and ports during wartime, keeping a contractual share of seized goods."[27]

The year 1713 marks a crucial point in the history of Atlantic piracy since the Treaty of Utrecht that ended the War of the Spanish Succession was signed that year. The war had begun in 1701 and provided employment for many privateers. In addition to the privateers the mobilized navies of the belligerent nations, Britain, France, and Spain had provided employment for sailors. Yet, with the end of the war the navies were demobilized whereas the employment opportunities for privateers decreased, which resulted in the reemergence of piracy. The British Royal Navy in particular plunged from 49,860 men in 1712 to 13,475 just two years later."[28] The demobilization of sailors, in this sense, resulted in a surge in the numbers of pirates. Following the end of the war, "Caribbean piracy reaches previously unknown heights with New Providence,

[23] Edward Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea: Pirates and Piracy*, (New York: Paddington Press, 1978), 146-7.
[24] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates,* 8.
[25] Jenifer G. Marx, "The Brethren of the Coast" in *Pirates: An Illustrated History of Privateers, Buccaneers, and Pirates from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, ed. David Cordingly (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 41.
[26] Land, "Flying the Black Flag," 171.
[27] Dawd yand Bonni, "Towards a General Theory of Piracy," 678.
[28] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 23

Bahamas, as its headquarters."[29] Yet, in 1718, a governor who was a former privateer, Woodes Rogers was appointed to New Providence in order to eradicate piracy. In addition to the sending of three war ships, a general pardon was offered to the pirates on the island. Despite the fact that there were pirates who accepted the pardon, "others debark, vowing not to bow to any government authority and waging war on the whole world instead." [30]

The significance of the pirates who operated between 1716 and 1726 lies in their declaration of war against the whole world and explicit rejection of the state along with their abolition of wage relation. In this way, the pirates of that period could commonize the ship that belonged to either in capital embodied in the merchant or the state embodied in the captain and transform it into the pirate ship that was collectively owned by the pirate crew. The collective ownership of the pirate ship corresponded to the challenge to the separation of the producers from direct access to the means of subsistence/production, which subjects the producers to wage labor in order to ensure their means of subsistence.

In this regard, this study takes primitive accumulation in the sense of separation of producers from their direct means of subsistence as an ongoing force of capitalism. More precisely, the capitalist social relations require the separation of producers from means of subsistence in order to exist, yet, at the same time the separation in question is also required for the reproduction of capitalist social relations. Therefore, once established, capitalism had to reproduce the separation of producers from means of subsistence "as the premise and innate necessity of its concept."[31] The reproduction of the separation, on the other hand, usually is ensured through the economic laws of capitalism as "the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws."[32], however, when the reproduction in question faces any kind

[29] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger,* 15.
[30] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger,* 15.
[31] Werner Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy on Subversion and Negative Reason* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 81.
[32] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. / Vol. 1.* (Harmondsworth: Penguin in Association With New Left Review, 1990), 900.

of challenge, the extra-economic forces come into surface attempts to reproduce the separation. Massimo De Angelis explains this point in a more precise manner:

> *divorce embedded in the definition of primitive accumulation can be understood not only as the origin of capital vis-à-vis precapitalist social relations, but also as a reassertion of capital's priorities vis-à-vis those social forces that contest this separation. Thus, precapitalist spaces of autonomy (such as the common land of the English yeomen or the economies of African societies targeted by slave merchants) are not the only targets of primitive accumulation strategies. Enclosure strategies also target any given balance of power among classes that constitutes 'rigidity' – that is, a resistance against the further process of capitalist accumulation, or a reversal of that process. If we conceive social contestation as a continuous element of capitalist relations of production, capital must continuously engage in strategies of primitive accumulation to recreate the 'basis' of accumulation itself.*[33]

Against the ongoing character of primitive accumulation, the struggle for the commons can be posited as an ongoing struggle as well. In Silvia Federici's words, "commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[34] In this regard, this study takes the golden age piracy as a moment on that thread and connected to our time, as a movement that fights for the commons, as part of the history of the class struggle. Furthermore, insofar as the fight for the commons "is not only a matter of *preventing* enclosures (and thus an entrance into capital's time) but to actually *expanding* the commons into new areas of social life (and so exiting capital's time)"[35], the fight for the commons has a prefigurative aspect, meaning "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal."[36]

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[33] Massimo De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed: Capital and the Continuous Character of Enclosures," *Historical Materialism* 12, no. 2 (2004): 57–87, https://doi.org/10.1163/1569206041551609, 69-70.

[34] Silvia Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," in *The Wealth of the Commons: A World beyond Market and State*, ed. David Bollier and Silke Helfrich (Amherst: Levellers Press, 2012), 45–55, 47.

[35] George Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," in *In Letters of Blood and Fire: Work, Machines, and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Oakland: PM Press, 2013), 82–95, 90-91.

[36] Carl Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," *Radical America* 12, no. 1 (1978): 99–122, 100.

Thus, the pirates by abolishing the separation in question also abolished the wage labor on their commonized pirate ships. In addition, the pirates who nearly exclusively had been employed in the merchant or navy service and experienced the hierarchical order imposed by capital and state on the merchant and navy vessels, devised an alternative government of the ship that was rooted in the Jamaica Discipline and that was based on a horizontal, democratic and egalitarian decision-making process. Therefore, the pirates of the golden age created an alternative society onboard, that was both against capital and state. Yet, the alternative in question was not a "backward-looking" alternative, it was an "outward-looking" alternative in the sense that the movement of the golden age pirates was a prefigurative commoning movement, in the sense that the movement not only rejected state, capital, and wage labor; but also created an alternative society that prefigured the ideal society the pirates dreamt of onboard their commonized pirate ships.

The importance of the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement is manifold. On the one hand, this study aims to indicate that capitalism is not inevitable and is not without alternatives. Firstly, the emergence of capitalism was the byproduct of class struggle occurred between the peasants and the landed nobility in England. In connection with that, the ongoing character of primitive accumulation, which this study aims to show, also means that the commons and the struggle for the commons are relevant in the present and have been relevant throughout the history of resistance against capitalism. The relevancy of the commons, in turn, brings forth the commons as an alternative to capitalism so much so that "it allows us to identify the broad essential question that any discussion on alternatives within the growing global anti-capitalist movement must pose: the issue of the direct access of the means of existence, production and communication, the issue of commons."[37] In line with this, the golden age of piracy corresponds to a period in history when agrarian capitalism had emerged, mercantilism was on the rise, and industrial capitalism had not yet emerged. Yet, both shipbuilding industry and the ships used in maritime trade and circulation could be seen as a precursor of factory and sailors were among the first collective wage

[37] Massimo De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation: The Continuous Character of Capital's 'Enclosures,'" *The Commoner*, no. 2 (2001), 22.

laborers. The study of the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement against primitive accumulation in the sense of separation of producers from means of subsistence, then, indicates that the alternative in question could be constituted in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The fact that this movement was eventually defeated does not matter since the pirate movement could create a "crack" on the surface of capitalism and through that crack, "We are left with the inspiring memory of something beautiful, we have caught a glimpse of a possible future."[38]

In this regard, the dissertation seeks to answer whether the golden age piracy could be analyzed as a resistance against capitalism, specifically as a prefigurative commoning movement against-and-beyond capital and capitalist social relations that leaves room for inferences for contemporary movements and struggles against capitalism. In a more general sense, the study aims to investigate the assertion that capitalism is without alternatives. In this sense, the dissertation seeks to question whether the struggle for the commons, which is generally considered a relic of the pre-capitalist history, constitutes an alternative to capitalism. In connection with that, the study explores the ongoing character of primitive accumulation taken as both a prerequisite for the historical foundation of capitalism and a requirement for the reproduction of capitalism. Moreover, the dissertation aims to demonstrate that the struggle for the commons was prefigurative in character. Building on that, the study examines whether the golden age piracy could constitute an alternative to capitalism and whether this alternative could be considered a prefigurative struggle for the commons.

In order to answer this question, the study engages in comparative historical research based on available primary sources and, when the primary sources are not available, on secondary sources. The non-availability of and the restricted digital access to primary sources on golden age of piracy such as trial records or Colonial State Papers proves to be a limitation for the dissertation, which the dissertation attempts to counter by using secondary sources. After examining the historical background on the emergence of capitalism and the organization of the golden age piracy through historical analysis based on a perspective that centers on history from below, the study builds a theoretical framework by engaging with conceptual analyses of the commons and

[38] John Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, (London: Pluto Press, 2010), 73.

prefigurative politics. Lastly, the study gives a comparative analysis of the golden age piracy utilizing the concepts developed within the theoretical framework in order to demonstrate that the golden age piracy was a prefigurative commoning movement.

In the light of these, the second chapter aims to present and discuss the emergence of capitalism and the various instances of resistances against capitalism and transformations that have accompanied. Firstly, then, the chapter presents the developments and transformations that have accompanied the emergence of capitalism, and the resistance and struggle against capitalism. In this regard, the chapter focuses on these developments and transformations under four main sections, economics, law, culture, and politics. Firstly, the wage labor relation which was made the only way to access means of subsistence for common people through dispossession is explained. Secondly, the redefinition of property as well as the redefinition of crime along the lines of emerging capitalism is presented. Thirdly, the attempts at disciplining the poor and eroding idleness are demonstrated. Fourthly, the political transformation that accompanied capitalism in terms of state centralization is presented and the emergence of maritime state in England is examined. Then, the unique labor conditions at sea are briefly explained. And finally, the resistance and struggles against dispossession, wage labor, labor discipline, redefinition of property and state centralization are analyzed. These instances of resistance in the seventeenth century were followed by sailors' resistance, which connected the golden age piracy, sailor strikes, struggles against impressment and the American Revolution. In this regard, the golden age piracy proved to be the most radical and extreme form of resistance as the pirates could establish a society of their own and could escape, albeit for a limited time, the grasp of the state and capitalism.

The third chapter reviews the literature on the commons in order to demonstrate the relevancy of both the accumulation by extra-economic means and the commons to the contemporary prefigurative movements. By doing so, this chapter provides a theoretical and conceptual framework with which the pirates of the golden age can be analyzed. In order to do so, firstly, the ongoing character of primitive accumulation is presented. Then, the risk of cooptation of the commons by capital is explained and the distinction of the commons on the basis of its position vis-à-vis capital is made. After a

brief history of the contemporary debate on the commons, the tragedy of the commons and governance of the commons, the anti-capitalist commons and its components, namely common goods, commoners and commoning, are explained. Then, prefigurative politics and prefiguration are introduced and the prefigurative character of the commoning activity is presented. Lastly, the relationship between the commons and violence is briefly described. Following this and using the conceptual framework outlined above, the next chapter will analyze the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commons movement that commonized the ship as a means of subsistence and production. Furthermore, the pirate movement also commonized the international trade that thrived upon the plunder of the Atlantic by capital and states, commonized the ocean that was in the process of being enclosed by states, in particular England/Great Britain, and commonized the political itself.

The fourth chapter, after defining the golden age of piracy as the period between 1650-1730, discusses the political and social organization of pirates. In order to do so, firstly, life on merchant and navy ships is explained. The conditions of this life on board included militarized discipline, strict hierarchy, the dangerous nature of the job. Secondly, turning to piracy as a route of escape from these harsh conditions of work and the autonomous and democratic social and political organization on the pirate ships is examined and three sets of pirate articles as listed by Captain Charles Johnson is explained. In this way, the pirate democracy was based on the articles signed at the moment the pirate community was founded by the decision to turn pirate. On the one hand, the articles allowed the pirates to elect a captain as well as to depose the captain, and on the other, allowed them to have the final say on all matters concerning the ship and the crew. Then, after the pirates' attitudes towards race, nationality, nation and state is explained, the stories of woman pirates in the history of the golden age of piracy, Mary Read and Anne Bonny is presented. Then, the violent aspect of piracy and the revenge as a motivation is analyzed. Lastly, the pirates' attitudes towards religion and sexuality as distinct from the mainstream attitudes of the period are explained.

The fifth chapter analyzes the golden age of piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement. Firstly, the high esteem of idleness held by the pirates of the golden age is explained as a resistance against the labor discipline onboard the merchant

and navy ships. In this way, the idle way of life created on the pirate ship is discussed as the revolt of doing against abstract labor. Then the idle way of life in question is related to the fact that the pirate movement could challenge the separation of producers from means of subsistence, that being the ship itself, which could be returned to the pirates by the collective ownership of the pirate ship. Then the abolition of wage labor on the pirate ship is discussed in connection with the collective ownership of the pirate ship and the parallels between the "occupation" of the ship and contemporary workplace recuperations are briefly discussed. After the communal and reciprocal aspects of the "pirating/doing in common" are explained, its social aspect in the sense of collective governance of the pirate ship is discussed as another form of doing. In connection with the abolition of wage labor by way of collective ownership of the ship and introduction of share system as well as the abolition of hierarchical government of the ship by way of horizontal, democratic and egalitarian decision-making process adopted on the ship, the new subjectivity which was produced and reproduced by the commoning activity, and which also produced and reproduced the commons is discussed as the pirate as a commoner. Lastly, doing/pirating in common is characterized as a prefigurative movement as it took direct action which rather than relying on state constituted the future ideals of the movement such as abolition of wage labor and hierarchical discipline onboard as well as democratic and horizontal organization in the present by constructing the alternative order that the movement strived for alongside with creation of new subjectivities and reflecting its ends through the means it employed.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT: CAPITALISM AND STATE CENTRALIZATION IN ENGLAND, AND RESISTANCE

This chapter aims to present the developments and transformations that have accompanied the emergence of capitalism, and the resistance and struggle against capitalism. In this regard, the chapter focuses on these developments and transformations under four main sections, economics, law, culture, and politics. Firstly, the wage labor relation which was made the only way to access means of subsistence for common people through dispossession will be explained. Secondly, the redefinition of property along the lines of emerging capitalism will be presented. Thirdly, the attempts at disciplining the poor and eroding idleness will be demonstrated. Fourthly, the political transformation that accompanied capitalism in terms of state centralization will be presented. Then, the unique labor conditions at sea will be briefly explained. And finally, the resistance and struggles against dispossession, wage labor, labor discipline, redefinition of property and state centralization will be explained.

Two dominant strands examining the transition from feudalism to capitalism, namely the commercialization model and political Marxism, despite their contrasting accounts on the history of capitalism, give the same period for the emergence of capitalism: the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The commercialization model is, according to Ellen Meiksins Wood, is a non-explanation for the emergence of capitalism since rather than explaining the specifics of capitalism, it wittingly or unwittingly assumes capitalism as a natural process that has been going on since the beginning of history and that has encountered some obstacles on its way. With the removal of these obstacles after the decline of feudalism, capitalism comes to its own. The traditional conception of the emergence of capitalism, in this way, traces capitalism to the beginning of history as an embryo residing in acts of commerce. Through technical

developments and specialization in the form of division of labor, capitalism emerges. In this line, capitalism is presented not as a qualitative development but as a quantitative expansion.[39]

World-systems theory presents a criticism to this traditional conception of capitalism and claims to move beyond the presentation of capitalism as a quantitative expansion and explain the qualitative transformation that has undergone during the transition from feudalism and capitalism. In this line, Immanuel Wallerstein argues "that the modern world-system took the form of a capitalist world-economy that had its genesis in Europe in the long sixteenth century and that involved the transformation of a particular redistributive or tributary mode of production, that of feudal Europe (Braudel's "economic Ancien Regime") into a qualitatively different social system."[40] The world-systems theory emphasizes the unequal exchange between the core and periphery nations and exploitation of the latter by the former, which denotes the world system and locates the emergence of capitalism in this world system.[41] However, Wood sees traces of the traditional commercialization model in the world-systems theory since "The extent of trade is the index of capitalist development, which arises from the growth of commercial activity and the 'primitive accumulation' that follows from it. Economies develop in a capitalist direction to the extent that the expansion of trade and the accumulation of commercial wealth is free from impediments."[42] Brenner's account as well states the world-systems theory, despite criticizing the commercialization model, acknowledges trade as the central explanatory factor. While the expansion of trade and the specialized division of labor are the underlying factors of development in the commercialization model, they are the underlying factors of 'development of under-development' in the world-systems theory.[43] In this sense, the world-systems theory cannot provide the explanation of qualitative transformation it aspires to do and remains limited to the explanation of quantitative expansion.

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[39] Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View* (London: Verso, 2002), 11-12

[40] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World Economy, 1600-1750* (New York: University of California Press, 2011), 7-8.

[41] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 18.

[42] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 19.

[43] Razmig Keucheyan, *The Left Hemisphere: Mapping Critical Theory Today*, trans. Gregory Elliot (New York: Verso, 2013), 145

Benno Teschke also argues in a similar vein through "the fundamental distinction between commercial capitalism, with profits generated exclusively in the sphere of circulation, and modern capitalism, involving a qualitative transformation of relations of production."[44] In this account, the fact that profit only comes from circulation points out to the logic of 'buying cheap and selling dear' which is only attainable when the different prices between different parts of the world are ensured through price controls via political or militarily means. In this line, commercial capitalism is synonymous with political trade which requires control over coastlines and even seas by states in order to control prices and enable 'buying cheap and selling dear'. Therefore, economic competition is accompanied by extra-economic activities since as it "took the form of politico-military competition between rival polities over market monopolies, colonies, and circuits of exchange."[45] Thus, according to Teschke commercial capitalism, or mercantilism, does not signify a qualitative break: "It did not usher in a modern world-system; based on a new mode of territorial organization and international relations, but essentially extended the pre-modern logic of absolutist territorial organization into the non-European world."[46]

Comparing the Dutch and the English, Teschke asserts that the new trading system of the Dutch did not represent a break from the commercial capitalism's logic either. The competitive advantage of the Dutch was based on lower costs of operating and consequently charging lower prices for transportation, not on lower costs of production. On the other hand, the English began underpricing the Dutch due to their ability to lower costs of production in the seventeenth century. The lower production costs in question were made possible by the transformation of social property relations in the rural England, which brings us to political Marxism. [47]

Political Marxism, represented prominently by Ellen Meiksins Wood and Robert Brenner locates the emergence of capitalism in the class struggles between peasants and landowners and argues that it was an unintended byproduct of these struggles. As Liam Campling and Alejandro Colás remarks, Wood clearly separates

[44] Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London; New York: Verso, 2003), 197.
[45] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 202.
[46] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 204.
[47] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 208.

capitalism and the acts of commerce that have been going on since the dawn of history. In this way, she demonstrates that trade, markets, profiting and even wage labor existed throughout the history while depending on the market for subsistence, competitive trade, profiting not from buying cheap and selling dear but from production of value through labor that has taken the form of commodity are only present under capitalism.[48]

The main problem with the commercialization model and the world-systems theory is that presenting capitalism as a quantitative expansion of trade and specialized division of labor emphasizes a continuity between pre-capitalist and capitalist systems, masks the historical specificity of capitalism, by extension suggests that the advent of capitalism was inevitable and naturalizes capitalism. This, in turn, makes resistance against capitalism futile.[49] Therefore, in the remainder of this chapter, the explanation of the economic, political/legal, and cultural developments and transformations that have accompanied the emergence of capitalism will heavily draw on political Marxism. However, it should also be noted that the political Marxists, namely Brenner and Wood, "acknowledge that, although capitalist social-property relations may have first crystallised in the English countryside, they were subsequently integrated into overseas commercial networks which bolstered and nourished the growth of English and later, British capitalism."[50]

2.1. Economic Transformation: Dispossession and Wage Labor

The history of capitalism is the history of dispossession. Karl Marx clearly states that what paves the way for capitalism is the separation of producers from their means of subsistence and the commodification of labor that accompany this separation.[51] Therefore, dispossession lies at the basis of capitalism: "The capitalist system presupposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by

[48] Liam Campling and Alejandro Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea: The Maritime Factor in the Making of the Modern World* (London: Verso Books, 2021), 58.
[49] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 5-8.
[50] Liam Campling and Alejandro Colás, "Capitalism and the Sea: Sovereignty, Territory and Appropriation in the Global Ocean," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 36, no. 4 (November 6, 2017): 776–94, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775817737319, 778.
[51] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 25.

which they can realize their labour."[52] The complete separation of laborers from their means of subsistence, on the other hand, meant that the means of subsistence could only be accessed through the intermediary of the market, thus resulting in depending on the market for subsistence not only for the laborers but also for the landlords and tenants. In this way, "the market no longer represented an opportunity for selling surplus produce, but an economic compulsion in which landlords, tenant farmers, and wage-labourers had to reproduce themselves."[53] Therefore, the distinction between market opportunities and market imperatives lies at the basis of Wood's and Brenner's account for the emergence of capitalism since although markets have existed before capitalism, the transformation of market from being an opportunity to dictating imperatives is specific to capitalism. Brenner connects this transformation to "a two-sided development of class relations: first, the breakdown of systems of lordly surplus extraction by means of extra-economic compulsion (especially serfdom); secondly, the undermining of peasant possession or the aborting of any trend towards full peasant ownership of land."[54] The two-sided development of class relations in question was a long and gradual transformation and can be traced back to an as early period as the fourteenth century. The Black Death in the fourteenth century resulted in a demographic catastrophe which also entailed a decrease in the feudal incomes. Brenner states that the landed nobility reacted to this catastrophe and income decrease through "attempts to control peasant mobility by forcing peasants to pay impossible fees for permission to move; legislation to control wages; an actual increase in rents in some places."[55] These attempts, on the other hand, counteracted by the peasant revolt and flight and this peasant resistance culminated in certain achievements such as abolishing of serfdom for the peasants. In this way, the abolishing of serfdom "prevented the ruling classes from exploiting the peasantry intensively by increasing 'absolute' surplus-value (for example, by lengthening the work day)."[56] Consequently, the free peasants had to be exploited through other means in

[52] Maurice Herbert Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 223.
[53] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 251.
[54] Robert Brenner, "The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism," *Past and Present* 97, no. 1 (1982): 16–113, https://doi.org/10.1093/past/97.1.16, 17.
[55] Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," *Past and Present* 70, no. 1 (1976): 30–75, https://doi.org/10.1093/past/70.1.30, 51.
[56] Keucheyan, *The Left Hemisphere*, 146.

order to increase production which eventually led to the advent "of a new mode of production: capitalism", whose primary attribution was "its capacity to create profit via increased productivity."[57] The new mode of production, on the other hand, necessitated the dispossession of peasantry.

In this line, although the fifteenth century was a more or less prosperous period for the peasants as they had become free from various feudal controls and had gained copyhold[58] agreements on land that meant long-term leases ensuring some level of security, copyhold agreements was not equal to freehold[59] rights and were not protected legally, therefore landlords managed to turn these copyholds into leaseholds in time. The leasehold agreements did not guarantee renewal since the renewal depended on the lords' wishes. Consequently, the lords could increase the rents of these leaseholds, which, starting from the sixteenth century, led to the driving off of the peasants from their customary lands. According to Brenner, the landlords had two strategies available to them in order to prevent the freehold of the peasants. Firstly, the population decline in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries created vacancies in the lands customarily belonged to the peasants, which were easily appropriable by the landlords since there were no one who could contest the appropriation. Secondly, even in terms of freehold lands, the landlords "could insist on the right to charge fines at will whenever peasant land was conveyed, that is in sales or on inheritance. Indeed, in the end entry fines often appear to have provided the landlords with the lever they needed to dispose of customary peasant tenants, for in the long run fines could be substituted for competitive commercial rents."[60] Through these strategies, the landlords could evict the peasants from their customary lands and consolidate large holdings at their own hands that they

[57] Keucheyan, *The Left Hemisphere*, 146.
[58] *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines copyhold as follows: "copyhold, in English law, a form of landholding defined as a 'holding at the will of the lord according to the custom of the manor.' Its origin is found in the occupation by villeins, or nonfreemen, of portions of land belonging to the manor of the feudal lord." The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Copyhold," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, October 5, 2007. https://www.britannica.com/topic/copyhold.
[59] *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines freehold as follows: "freehold, in English law, ownership of a substantial interest in land held for an indefinite period of time. The term originally designated the owner of an estate held in free tenure, who possessed, under Magna Carta, the rights of a free man." The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Freehold," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, July 20, 1998. https://www.britannica.com/topic/freehold-law.
[60] Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," 62.

could lease out to those who could afford to pay rents, which of course meant dispossession for the peasants and emergence of tenant farmers.

Comparing the peasants and the tenants, Brenner argues that the peasants did not have to operate in the market, therefore, they did not need to be in competition. On the other hand, the tenants had to compete for tenancies in terms of meeting the level of rent the landlord asked or at least outbidding the other possible tenants as well as they had to compete for the products they sold on the market in terms of producing and selling cheap. If the tenants had not been competitive, they would have face eviction or would have not been able to sell their products. While this was the case for the tenants, all peasants had to do was to produce adequate products for subsistence and to pay their taxes and rents which were usually customarily fixed.[61] Therefore, the transformation of the peasants in England to tenants was based on the fact that they were compelled to cut their costs, specialize, innovate and accumulate surpluses in order to react to the newly emergent market conditions and the single cause behind this compulsion was their separation from non-market access to the means of subsistence, in other words, their separation from their lands. Losing the possession of their lands, a possession by way of paying customary rents and long leases, they were compelled to pay competitive, economic rents. This transformation was to the disadvantage of small farmers as the farmers who could access to larger lands could take advantage of efficient production and cost-cutting in order to profit in the market and consequently could lease larger lands by outbidding the small peasant farmers on the lease market. The competition in the newly emergent market was not limited to the tenants, either. The landlords were also compelled to compete for the tenants who could provide the maximum rent for their lands therefore they had to offer better, larger, more improved lands than other landlords.[62]

The result was that "by the end of the seventeenth century English landlords controlled an overwhelming proportion of the cultivable land – perhaps 70-5 per cent…"[63] Consolidating large lands at their hands, the landlords started to lease these lands out to tenants who, contrary to the peasants and common people, could afford

[61] Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," 72-73.
[62] Brenner, "The Agrarian Roots of European Capitalism," 91.
[63] Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," 63.

renting large lands. These developments culminated in a new class composition formed by the triad of large landowners, capitalist tenant farmers and wage laborers employed by the former.[64] This triad of new class composition represented a qualitative transformation signifying the transition from feudalism to capitalism. The leases by the large landowners to the capitalist tenants were not paid by customary fixed rents but by economic, capitalist rents subject to the market imperatives while the profit of the tenants were also capitalist profits subject to the same market imperatives dominated by competition. "Cost-cutting through innovation and specialization became the means of increasing productivity and competitiveness in commercial farming. Systematic reinvestment in the means of production brought agricultural improvements, large-scale commercial tanning, the break-up of the Malthusian cycles in the countryside, and the beginning of a self-sustaining 'Agricultural Revolution'."[65] The agricultural revolution which represented the advent of agrarian capitalism, however, was a byproduct of the class struggles between the peasants and the nobility and was not inevitable. After all, the class struggles between the French peasants and the French nobility resulted not in the advent of agrarian capitalism but absolutism. In this sense, "Brenner states that while capitalism emerged in England with the transformation of class relations in agriculture and this development had nothing to do with urban bourgeois, the development of absolutist state in France entailed an entirely different social transformation and this transformation had nothing to do with capitalism."[66]

In this line, the newly emerging class structure was based on the dispossession of the peasantry, which points out to primitive accumulation. At this point, Campling and Colás, drawing on the commercialization model, identify a moment of primitive accumulation that rests on "state-sponsored violence, monopoly trade, colonial conquest, maritime predation and resource plunder."[67] Nevertheless, they also point out to another moment of primitive accumulation that has been taking place in England during the same period "as peasants and other direct producers were dispossessed from their access to communal lands and customary rights, and compelled into accepting the 'double

[64] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 250-251.
[65] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 251.
[66] Şebnem Oğuz, "Maddeci Tarih Yazımında Temel Tartışmalar," *Praksis* 17 (2007): 33-56, 44.
[67] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 61.

freedom' of the value-producing capitalist market: relieved from their means of subsistence, and at liberty to exchange their labour power for a wage."[68] This second moment of primitive accumulation set the stage for capitalism as the double freedom in question brought forth the free worker, who were also free "in the double sense that they neither form part of the means of production themselves, as in the case with slaves, serfs, etc., nor do they own means of production, as would be the case with self-employed peasant proprietors."[69] The freedom from the means of production represents also the separation of producers from their means of subsistence which is exactly what capitalism presupposes: "The capital- relation presupposes a complete separation between the workers and the ownership of the conditions for the realization of their labour."[70] Therefore, the first moment of primitive accumulation noted by Campling and Colás amounts to an accumulation of wealth through conquest, violence, plunder and monopoly while the second moment signifies a more radical point in history, which is stressed by Marx as well: "The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production."[71]

The radical point in question is what Ellen Meiksins Wood calls transformation of social property relations which she argues that started in rural England with the dispossession of producers: "In the new agrarian relations, landlords increasingly derived rents from the commercial profits of capitalist tenants, while many small producers were dispossessed and became wage labourers."[72] As Wood argues, the reason Marx states that the real primitive accumulation is the transformation of social property relations in question is not that the transformation resulted in an amassing of wealth but it created novel imperatives such as a need to compete and develop the forces of production.

Therefore, the fact that the landlords possessed large proportion of lands in England and that they could impose economic rents on tenants instead of legally or

[68] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 61.
[69] Colin Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe: Absolutism, Revolution, and the Rise of Capitalism in England, France and Germany* (London; New York: Verso, 1991), 16.
[70] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 16.
[71] Marx, *Capital*, 874.
[72] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 37.

customarily fixed rents lies at the basis of this transformation of social property relations. The transformation in question was an infringement upon peasants' customary rights since they had numerous ways to regulate the use of land in order to preserve the interests of the community. "They have restricted certain practices and granted certain rights, not in order to enhance the wealth of landlords or states but in order to preserve the peasant community itself, perhaps to conserve the land or to distribute its fruits more equitably, and often to provide for the community's less fortunate members."[73]

By the eighteenth century, the transformation of property rights into absolute private property, the capitalist transformation of agriculture in the direction of market imperatives, the undermining of customary laws and rights with regard to the commons was already underway and "this transformation was not novel, it had been an ongoing process that continued for generations since the Tudor period. Although the transformation in question was not complete in the seventeenth century, it was clear that, for the propertyless classes, "The land came to be, overwhelmingly, something they worked *for others*."[74] This was the result of engrossing, the demolishing of cottages and, as closely related these two, enclosure. Moore also argues that the transformation is observed in the boom that has been seen in the land market at the end of the sixteenth century continuing into the early seventeenth century and this boom was accompanied by structural changes in agriculture, of which the most crucial one was enclosures.[75] Encyclopedia Brittanica defines enclosure as

> *the division or consolidation of communal fields, meadows, pastures, and other arable lands in western Europe into the carefully delineated and individually owned and managed farm plots of modern times. Before enclosure, much farmland existed in the form of numerous, dispersed strips under the control of individual cultivators only during the growing season and until harvesting was completed for a given year. Thereafter, and until the next growing season, the land was at the disposal of the community for grazing by the village livestock and for other purposes. To enclose land was to put a hedge or fence around a*

[73] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 107.
[74] Robert W. Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England, 1700-1780* (London: Hutchinson, 1981), 137.
[75] Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Middlesex: Penguin University Books, 1973), 9.

portion of this open land and thus prevent the exercise of common grazing and other rights over it.[76]

Engrossing was the process of consolidating small farms worked by smallholders into larger farms in favor of a more efficient and profitable agriculture. The cottagers who had rights to the commons also were a hindrance against the efficient and profitable agriculture. Malcolmson refers to a newspaper piece written on the issue of cottages and cottagers in 1726:

> *there are a sort of Stewards in the World … that cannot endure to see a little House or a little Farm, … and have therefore of late Years perswaded their Lords and Masters, that little Houses and little Takings are every where detrimental to great Estates; and that there is more Charge and Trouble in supporting Cottages than they are worth; that they are impolitick Harbours for poor People, and do even tempt them from other Parishes, to become troublesome, if not chargeable, to theirs; and in short, that it is therefore more adviseable for his Grace, his Lordship, or his Worship, utterly to abandon such Cottages,, and let them fall; especially considering that thereby the Right of Common, belonging to such Cottages, (in some Places not inconsiderable) will be sunk to the Benefit of larger Takings…*[77]

Therefore, demolishing of cottages, which were essentially seen unfit for the emerging agrarian capitalism due to their attached rights to commons was a strategy indispensable to engrossing. On the other hand, the enclosure movement that accompanied the engrossing and demolishing of cottages, according to Malcolmson, did not start the dispossession process, rather it did accelerate the process. As a result of this process, on the other hand, the rights to use the commons, and an economy oriented towards subsistence as a part of these rights have eroded in the course of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which eventually curtailed the relative independence of common people by compelling them to dependence on wage labor.[78] Thus, by the beginning of the eighteenth century and the during the ensuing decades, "An increasing proportion of working men found that they were destined to spend their whole lives as

[76] The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, "Enclosure," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, February 25, 2013, https://www.britannica.com/topic/enclosure.
[77] *Northampton Mercury,* 22 August 1726, quoted in Malcolmson, 139-140.
[78] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 144.

wage-dependent labourers."[79] As the industrialization wave began, the late eighteenth century witnessed a polarization between the manufacturers owning capitalist enterprises and wage laborers working in these enterprises. The enterprises in question "by the 1770s and 1780s, were for virtually the first time being run as recognizable 'modern' factories: that is, they involved a rigorous division of labour, a centrally administered and superintended organization of production, much stricter work discipline than ever before and sometimes a centralized source of power."[80] Over the course of this process, a large and discontented proletariat class has emerged, which depended on wage labor for their subsistence as the rights to the commons eroded in addition to the erosion of protection of common people by authorities. In addition to the decreasing protection from authorities, the authorities in question tried to restrain the cooperation and organization of industrial laborers to secure their collective interests.[81]

As seen, the economic transformation that entailed dispossession and wage labor did not happen in the sixteenth century once and for all. As Wood states, the state of decline affecting the peasants in England took longer and carried onto the periods as later as the nineteenth century. However, the market imperatives taking hold of the peasants, farmers, and even the landowners in England starting with the leases taking form of economic rents instead of legally or customarily fixed leases, and therefore, bringing competition into play in the sixteenth century "accelerated the dispossession of those unable to survive in increasingly competitive conditions, market dependence increasingly took the more complete form of commodified labour-power and the reliance on a wage for access to the means of subsistence."[82] In this way, dispossession accompanied with the separation from means of subsistence meant that there remained an only one way to reach subsistence, wage labor. "The expropriations, which were a natural part of enclosure, created a huge mass of rural proletarians who provided the labour force for the large capitalist farms which now dominated the English countryside. By 1750, between 40 and 50 per cent of English families worked for wages."[83]

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[79] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 149.
[80] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 150.
[81] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 151.
[82] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 137.
[83] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 168.

In sum, the advent of agrarian capitalism in England was the result of class struggles between landlords, who tried to react against the feudal income decrease via attempts to control peasant mobility, to control wages and to increase rents, and peasants who counteracted these attempts through revolt and flight. The abolishment of serfdom as the consequence of these struggles necessitated new ways of exploitation, which culminated in capitalism. In this way, the destruction of customary rights to commons, the gradual elimination of customary rents, and replacement of these customary rents with economic rents through engrossing and enclosure were indispensable for the new ways of exploitation. On the one hand, leasing lands to large tenant farmers were more profitable for the landlords: "As landlords decided that to lease out their land to large tenant- farmers was more profitable than leasing it to small copyholders or than farming the land themselves, the copyholders for lives or terms of years were forced out in favour of capitalist farmers who could farm for the market more productively."[84] On the other hand, capitalism required the dispossession of peasants and common people since the abolishment of serfdom meant the end of extra-economic extraction of surpluses from peasantry. In order to ensure that surpluses could be extracted from peasantry economically, peasants had to be separated from their direct means of subsistence, thus, to be dispossessed, and compelled to labor to be able to acquire their subsistence. As a result of this dispossession process, a decline of small owners and small farmers took place in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century[85], a triad of large landowners, capitalist tenant farmers and wage laborers emerged, and common people who were neither large landowners nor could afford to capitalist rents required for leasing large lands and farms were left no choice but wage labor. In the end, "Those evicted, the 'seething mobility,' remained in rural areas as agricultural wage laborers or tramped to the cities and found their way into crime, casual labor, the lower trades, and the army, navy, or merchant shipping industry."[86]

[84] G. E. Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 1983), 28.
[85] Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farmer,* 31.
[86] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 17.

2.2. Legal Transformation: Redefinition of Property and Crime

The economic transformation that entailed dispossession and obligation to wage labor for common people and peasants was accompanied by a legal transformation as well since "engrossing was facilitated by the powers provided in enclosure Acts for the termination of leases."[87] Therefore, enclosure did not just refer to putting hedges around a piece of land physically but entailed a transformation in the legal arena, in other words, a redefinition of property.

In this regard, enclosure as a redefinition of property, actually the most famous form of redefinition of property, was, contrary to the commonly held view as the simple act of fencing the land, pointed out to an act more than fencing but to the destruction of common rights to use the land based on custom.[88] Of all the waves of enclosures, the first one that had disruptive effects on the social order happened in the sixteenth century as the growing profits of sheep raising directed, or as in line with Wood's argument of market imperatives compelled, landowners to open up lands for pasture. The lands that would be opened up, of course, were the lands that were used in common by the peasants. Hence, as the famous saying goes, 'sheep devour men.' The 'devoured 'men', however, did not simply cease to exist, but were turned into dispossessed masses: "Contemporary commentators held enclosure, more than any other single factor, responsible for the growing plague of vagabonds, those dispossessed 'masterless men' who wandered the countryside and threatened social order."[89]

In this line, enclosure abolished the common rights, which in turn, generated a significant disturbance for the propertyless classes who until that point had enjoyed these rights. The common rights in question were critical for the propertyless classes in rural regions as their subsistence depended on them. In this regard, the gradual elimination of the common rights during the course of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries resulted in the increasing dependence of propertyless people on wage labor while deteriorating their living conditions.[90] "For enclosure extinguished use-rights: rights to use lands, for particular purposes and within certain limits, that belonged —

[87] Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farmer,* 21.
[88] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 108.
[89] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 108-109.
[90] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England*, 142.

though not absolutely — to others. It marked the triumphant realization of exclusive private rights of property — rights that were now unconstrained by any communal or public rights to enjoy certain benefits from this property."[91] Accompanying, or to put it more fittingly, facilitating this transformation was developments in law. In this line, "Such customary practices as gleaning, wood-gathering and the right of herbage were, in time, discovered to be incompatible with the absolute private possession of land."[92] Despite the resistance and struggles of common people in rural regions against the transformation that had been leading to triumph of absolute private possession of land, the common rights such as these were started to be defined as crimes.[93]

According to Mooers, as well, what facilitated the dispossession wave and creation of a propertyless mass in question was a transformation that took place in legal system in English. Customary laws were replaced by statue laws while rights to use were replaced rights to absolute property, all of which in turn facilitated destruction of customary rents in favor of economic and competitive rents. In addition, crimes against property started to be punished with death penalties, which in turn were implemented by the Justices of Peace who were selected among the propertied persons. Creation of new offences were also a part of this process as documented by the Black Act passed in 1723 introduced fifty new offences in relation to poaching and game, which were punishable by the death penalty.[94] The name of the Act came from the fact that the gangs organized by the commoners to resist against the encroachment of their customary rights did cover their faces with masks to avoid recognition and were called 'the blacks'. For instance, one of these gangs led by a man who called himself King John, carried acts such as killing deer at a park, which was banned to commoners and ringbarking trees in a plantation owned by a gentleman who charged commoners for collecting parts of timber fell on the ground, which was customarily free, and threatening destroying more trees unless the gentleman returned the money to the commoners.[95] According to Mooers, the Black Act represented the uselessness of old class discipline in the form of manorial

[91] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 142.
[92] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 144.
[93] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 144.
[94] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 168-169.
[95] Simon Fairlie, "A Short History of Enclosure in Britain | the Land Magazine," www.thelandmagazine.org.uk, 2009, https://www.thelandmagazine.org.uk/articles/short-history-enclosure-britain, 22.

controls and its replacement as "economists advocated the discipline of low wages and starvation, and lawyers the sanction of death."[96] In this line, according to Douglas Hay, "The most recent account suggests that the number of capital statutes grew from about 50 to over 200 between the years 1688 and 1820. Almost all of them concerned offences against property."[97]

Starting from the sixteenth century, a transformation in the conception of property has emerged due to the fact that customary rights to the land was in contradiction to the capitalist logic of property. This transformation took the form of objections against communal rights through claims of exclusive ownership rights, destroying peasants' rights to use private lands of landlords or challenging peasants' tenures that were based on custom. "In all these cases, traditional conceptions of property had to be replaced by new, capitalist conceptions of property - not only as 'private' but as exclusive."[98] Private property, of course, had existed under feudal relations. In this regard, the replacement in question signified a change in the viewing of land in the sense that the land that has been considered as a means to feed the people depending on it transformed into a means of investment. "They began to treat land more and more as something that could be bought and sold, used and abused, in a word like modern capitalist private property."[99]

The transformation of land from a means to subsistence to a commodity that could be sold and bought was reflected in the transformation of the concept of freedom since "The Glorious Revolution of 1688 established the freedom not of men, but of men of property.[100] Along that line, redefinition of property added sacred characteristics to property: "Once property had been officially deified, it became the measure of all things…Again and again the voices of money and power declared the sacredness of property in terms hitherto reserved for human life."[101]

In this line, the change in the social property relations were reflected in the change in the concept of property, which in turn pointed out to a legal transformation in

[96] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 169.
[97] Douglas Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," in *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England.*, ed. Douglas Hay (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 17–65, 18.
[98] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 108.
[99] Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, 8.
[100] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 18.
[101] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 19.

terms of redefinition of property. The concept of absolute private property triumphed against the resistance of propertyless common people, the idea of freedom of people that surfaced during the English Civil War gave way to the freedom of property, and the sacredness of human life gave way to the sacredness of private property.

2.3. Cultural Transformation: The Poor and Idleness, Labor Discipline

As a result of the economic transformation and the dispossession wave it entailed, poverty became a widespread characteristic of common people's life. Of course, poverty had not been a novel fact of life and had existed before the advent of capitalism, however, as Hill indicates, the novelty that has surfaced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was that the poor were not a particular proportion of the population that fell victim due to some misfortunes but were a significant part of the society with no hope of saving themselves from poverty. "The poor were no longer the casual victims of unpredictable crises and accidents but were a permanent class with no hope of escape from their poverty."[102] As poverty pervaded into the society, the view on the poor began to change as well and poverty lost its holiness to labor as a religious duty. In turn, idleness started to be seen as a great evil that must be reformed and prevented. The public workhouses were seen as a means for this reformation and prevention, especially for the poor children whose families did not provide any moral education. The main idea behind the usefulness of public workhouses was that "To give them the means 'to get an honest livelihood' mattered because 'Idleness in Youth is the Weed plot of the Hangmans Harvest.'"[103] The idea of providing public work also served to educate and discipline the poor in order to make them fit to labor since the children of poor families succumbed into idleness and were not educated and disciplined enough to be fit to labor. For instance, it was argued in 1683 that

> *Poor Families which daily multiply in the Kingdom for want of a due order for their Imployment in an honest course of life whereby they may gain subsistance for them and their Children do unavoidably bring up their*

[102] Christopher Hill, *Liberty against the Law: Some Seventeenth-Century Controversies.* (S.L.: Verso, 2020), 40.
[103] Joyce Oldham Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth- Century England* (Princeton (Nj): Princeton University Press, 1980), 142.

> *Children either in a Trade of Begging or Stealing, or such other Idle course, which again they propagate over to their Children, and so there is a successive multiplication of hurtful or at least unprofitable People, neither capable of Discipline nor beneficial Imployment*.[104]

Therefore, it was obvious that the poor masses had to be fed. However, in order to prevent them and their children from begging or stealing or from other idle courses, they had to be put to work. They had to feed themselves through labor even if the labor in question was not useful since they had to be made accustomed to obedience and discipline. "From the 1640s - when the poor first presented themselves as a social problem - to the end of the century, the need for employment and the role of employment in preparing the poor for socially useful tasks was reiterated in economic tracts."[105]

In this line, "The old ideal of rich and poor linked by mutual needs was replaced by an ad hoc contractual relationship mediated by wage payments…"[106] In the eighteenth century, the discourse on labor and wage became so prevalent that the charity given to the poor could be seen as 'the wages of idleness'.[107] Therefore, the double freedom of capitalism was accompanied by the discipline of wage labor in such a way that wage labor became a permanent condition of life as "full-time wage-earners were assumed to be paupers."[108] The pauperization of the wage laborers, on the other hand, was so significant that "Neither contemporary nor modern economists can explain how they lived."[109]

The wage laborers who were doomed to work for all their lives due to pauperization became the dominant portion of the society as well as they were deemed indispensable to the system. In order to force them to work, that they remained as paupers was quite necessary. Of course, they had to be protected from starvation, but they had to be prevented from saving since saving enough to be able to become idle

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[104] Matthew Hale, *A Discourse Touching Provision for the Poor, Written by Sir Matthew Hale ...* (London: J. Leigh, 1683), preface.
[105] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 144.
[106] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 145.
[107] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 41.
[108] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 42.
[109] David Ogg, *England in the Reign of Charles II* (Oxford U.P., 1934), I, 85, quoted in Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 42.

would keep them from laboring. They were to be prevented from education, too, since education could keep them from working as well.[110]

In this regard, Appleby refers to the 1601 Poor Law that "established the principle of taxing the well-off for the relief of the needy, naming parishes as the effective administrative units."[111] However, the poor law, according to Appleby, did nothing to solve the problem of poverty, on the contrary, did sustain the poverty as the benefits of the poor law reserved for the poor only the crumbs left from the upper class and served to keep them from starvation while it did not provide any means of self-support for the poor. On another note, the sustainment of poverty was required, and the poor law served that purpose well since poverty "was socially necessary, for only as a result of their poverty would some men be prepared to perform those vital laborious tasks on which 'society' — that is, gentlemen, masters, merchants and the like — so obviously depended."[112] In this line, richness depended on poverty as in a society in which everyone was rich, no one would take any orders, or governments would be destroyed, no lands would be cultivated.[113] Therefore, "The labouring people must be made to submit to those in authority; they must acquiesce in their positions of dependence and subordination; they must accept the discipline of poverty, hard work and low wages."[114] Therefore, the now propertyless mass of England, who once feed the country, an undertaking that needed fewer and fewer people's labor in time, was considered an excess and was in an uncertain position.[115] In a period of transition to capitalism, their position in the society was also in a transitional phase: They were "No longer viewed as peasants and not yet part of an industrial proletariat…"[116]

Nevertheless, the fact that the laboring people were not part of an industrial proletariat in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries does not mean it was a pre-industrial society as there existed a prevalent manufacturing sector. Nonetheless, a substantial proportion of the laboring people in England worked in areas directly related to agriculture. In this sense, the nature of work in the period was complex as a single job

[110] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 42.
[111] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 131.
[112] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 13.
[113] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 13.
[114] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 14.
[115] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 152.
[116] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 152.

was not sufficient to support oneself. Instead of working a single full-time job, the dominant way of earning one's life dictated living off the land, although the amount of land that was owned or could be worked by common people has been increasingly diminishing, combined with wage labor.[117] Living in a period of transition meant a transitional way of supporting oneself. Yet, to what extent one could live off the land differed from community to community. As the concentration of land in the hands of large landowners grew, the land that was owned or could be used by common people decreased and "Landlessness inevitably led to a greater dependence on wage-payments…"[118]

2.4. Political Transformation: State Centralization and Maritime State

In England, the transition from feudalism to capitalism witnessed a transformation in the state apparatus itself as well. In this line, the emergence of the constitutional monarchy in England was based on the demilitarization of the nobility according to Teschke. Absolutism, as stated, emerged in France due to the class struggles happened between the peasants and nobles of France. While the Stuart dynasty in England tried to introduce absolutism to England in the early seventeenth century through a series of attempts such as trying collecting taxes without parliament's consent and attacking powers held by the justices of peace these attempts were not compatible with the newly emergent capitalist aristocracy. Seeking support against the Stuarts, the capitalist aristocracy turned to the radical movements and to William of Orange. Yet, seeking support of the radical movements carried the risk of turning anti-absolutist objectives of the capitalist aristocracy into a much more radical trajectory, therefore, the anti-absolutist project oppressed the radical elements and settled with the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 which resulted in the constitutional monarchy, 'the King-in-Parliament'. Through the parliamentary acts, the capitalist aristocracy could gain control over the military and taxation and while control over the military culminated in the

[117] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 22-24.
[118] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 43.

monopoly of legitimate violence, control over taxation prevented collection of taxes unless commissioned by the parliament.[119]

Teschke separates feudalism, absolutism, and capitalism on the basis of the state formations each entail. In feudalism, the lords rule in a decentralized and personalized manner, and state sovereignty is parcellized, while in absolutism, we see the dynasties becoming prominent and ruling in a more centralized manner although personalized rule continues. Capitalism, on the other hand, is marked by the modern state in which the rule is depersonalized and centralized. Moreover, the fact that the capitalist ruling class in capitalism derives its power from private property and consequently control of production, the modern state does not interfere with the economic sphere and is reserved to the protection of private property system and the separation of economy from politics marks the capitalist social relations.[120] In this sense, "the eighteenth- century British 'military-fiscal' state was sustained by a productive capitalist economy, an increasingly rationalized state apparatus, and the ultimately consensual national policies of a unified ruling class."[121]

Brenner, in this sense, compares the developments of centralized state in France and England and argues that the centralized state in France had 'class-like' characteristics. Since it could extract the surplus independently, especially through arbitrary taxation of the land, the state in France can be seen as an independent class. The fact that the peasants in France could hold onto their lands and the distinctive development of the state in France, which added class-like characteristics to the state, culminated in a different class structure from the one that appeared in England. In this sense, England's way to state centralization was quite distinct as the centralization depended on the landowning classes. Whereas the state in France was in a competition of extraction of surpluses with the noble classes, the fact that the peasants in England could not provide any revenues for the state in England since, on the contrary to the French peasants, they could not hold onto their lands through freehold rights, the English state could not establish its independence from the landowning classes. In consequence, absolutism was not a possible way to state centralization in England. The landlords'

[119] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 252-253.
[120] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 256.
[121] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 262-263.

establishment of private property in an absolute sense accompanied the development of a distinct state form from the French absolutist state. The English state, although obtaining monopoly of legitimate violence and force instead of decentralizing the use of violence and force to feudal authorities, was not a class-like competitor for the capitalist aristocracy. The capitalist aristocracy, in turn, did not need to rely on violence, force or political power in order to extract surpluses and could attain capitalist profits based on the triad of large landowners, capitalist tenant farmers and wage laborers. Thus, they did need neither the state's political power nor absolutism. The state's sole desired function for the capitalist aristocracy was the protection of the private property system.[122] In this regard, the emergence of capitalism was not inevitable, and capitalist social relations came into being as an unintended byproduct of the class struggles between the peasants and landowning classes in England. "Capitalism, however, rose in conjunction with the first modern state…"[123] in the sense that "The self-organization of capitalist landlords in Parliament meant that sovereignty was centralized and pooled in a state that was no longer directly involved in political accumulation… Political surplus appropriation was replaced by the nexus between private, purely economic capital accumulation and public, impersonal political authority: modern sovereignty."[124]

In this regard, the state in the sixteenth century England was quite centralized, especially in comparison with the states in the continental Europe in the same period. The 'parcellized sovereignty' which was a defining characteristic of the feudal state was gradually being eliminated and the autonomous political powers of the lords were more and more incorporated into the central state. Wood argues that the distinctive state centralization observed in England was based on the national unification due to the development of road networks and water transport, and the developing national market centered around London. The development of national market and national economy, in turn, founded upon the uniqueness of agriculture in England. One aspect of the uniqueness in question was that the ruling class, aristocracy, in England was demilitarized and incorporated into the centralizing state. Therefore, the private property of the ruling class was protected by the state while the ruling class did not have or need

[122] Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," 68-72.
[123] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 255.
[124] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648*, 254-55.

extra-economic powers. The other aspect of the uniqueness was that the aristocracy possessed concentrated, large lands, which provided them with economic powers that recompensated for the lack of extra-economic powers. Hence, the separation between economic and political areas. [125]

Comparing England and France, Wood notes that while the absolutist France had regional estates, England had already established its national parliament; against the local laws of France, England's legal system was unified. However, the unification in England had more than legal and political aspects, it meant an economic unification as well. Wood traces this unification to the cooperative project of state formation that "a kind of division of labour between political and economic power, between the monarchical state and the aristocratic ruling class, between a central political power that enjoyed a virtual monopoly of coercive force much earlier than others in Europe and an economic power based on private property in land more concentrated than elsewhere in Europe.[126]

In this line, "Although capitalism did not give rise to the nation state, and the nation state did not give rise to capitalism, the social transformations that brought about capitalism, with its characteristic separation of economic and political spheres, were the same ones that brought the nation state to maturity."[127] Furthermore, the modern state was not the product of capitalism, the social relations that bore the modern state, sovereignty and territoriality were not the social relations of capitalism. Yet, capitalism and the formation of English state emerged in the same process: "The transformation of politically constituted property into capitalist property was at the same time, and inseparably, a transformation of the state."[128] As noted, this transformation in question, remarks the division of economic from politics however, this division does not mean that economic imperatives do not need for its own sustainment the extra-economic powers of politics and law in the sense of coercion and order. Therefore, "capitalism

[125] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 98-100.
[126] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 172.
[127] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 171.
[128] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 173.

remains dependent on extra- economic conditions, political and legal supports,"[129] of which the best way known so far to ensure is the nation-state according to Wood.

According to Teschke, as well, the centralized state in England with its parliament as a place for organization of the capitalist aristocracy, neither needed nor used extra-economic powers for surplus extraction: "Political surplus appropriation was replaced by the nexus between private, purely economic capital accumulation and public, impersonal political authority: modern sovereignty. A capitalist aristocracy, rather than a mercantile bourgeoisie, came to dominate Parliament and determine affairs of state."[130]

Feudalism characterized by 'parcellized sovereignties' represented the organic unity between politics and economic as extraction of surplus in feudalism was essentially a political surplus extraction. Anderson connects the rise of absolutism to the weakening of this political surplus extraction due to a transformation of collected rents from the peasants by the lords, the transformation of customary rents to economic rents. The transformation of rents in question meaning the fall of serfdom threatened the feudal lords and resulted in an upwards centralization, the absolutism.[131] However, Anderson acknowledges that in England, absolutism was short-lived and weaker, perhaps the weakest, compared to the continental states, especially France.[132]

The demilitarization of the English aristocracy suggests an explanation for this weak absolutism. The insular geography of England made invasion a far possibility and rendered a standing army unnecessary. On the other hand, the same geography made the navy a real necessity. In this sense, "The decisive strategic development of the time for the whole character of the English landed class and its State lay elsewhere - in the slow switch towards naval equipment and expansion in the 16th century."[133] The predominance of the navy vis-à-vis the army had two results: On the one hand, the military violence was moved away from the land to the seas; and on the other, the focus on the navy was in line with the commercial aspirations. After all, the army was an instrument directed at only warfare while the navy could be used for trade in addition to

[129] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 179.
[130] Teschke, *The Myth of 1648,* 254-255.
[131] Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State,* (London: Nlb, 1974), 19.
[132] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 113.
[133] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 133.

warfare.[134] Anderson, in this regard, argues that the naval focus of the state and the aristocracy in England instead of the army culminated in the fact that the navy served as an instrument of trade rather than being just a coercive instrument, and enabled that the aristocracy and mercantile class could evolve in cooperation.[135] In this sense, Anderson, comparing the strong French absolutism and the weak English absolutism, contends that "Continental Absolutism was built on its armies. By a strange irony, insular Absolutism could only exist on its meagre revenues so long as it did not have to raise any army. For Parliament alone could provide the resources for one, and once summoned was soon certain to start dismantling Stuart authority."[136]

Holton, while discussing the arguments that the weak absolutism in England was conducive for the emergence of capitalism since it lacked the strong state which would hinder capitalism, remarks that firstly, the decentralized state in the Netherlands did result in the Dutch decline in the eighteenth century despite its progress towards mercantile capitalism in the seventeenth century. Thus, decentralization and the lack of absolutism do not automatically transform into the emergence of fully developed capitalism. Secondly, he argues that neither the weak absolutism in England points out to a decentralized state. Tracing the centralization process to the Normans and then the Tudors, Holton established that both the state and feudal structure in England was more centralized in contrast to the continental Europe: "Whereas in Europe feudal vassalage had been extremely parcellised such that 'the vassal of my vassal is not my vassal', in England all lords were vassals of a centralised Crown."[137] The same centralization can be observed in the parliament as well since the parliament in England was a national and unitary parliament, the counterpart of the parliament in the continental Europe was local assemblies.[138]

In this line, Holton concludes that the state in England was already underway towards centralization in the sixteenth century while the attempts at absolutism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were unsuccessful. The focus on navy in lieu of a

[134] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 134.
[135] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 134-135.
[136] Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 141.
[137] R. J. Holton, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 176-177.
[138] Holton, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, 177.

standing army according to Holton, underlies the different state formations in England and the continental Europe. Not having to keep a standing army due to the insular position of England, in turn, resulted in a decrease of financial burden of the standing army, the demilitarization of the English aristocracy earlier than the aristocracy in the continental Europe, and provided a centralization without absolutism for England.[139] Furthermore, the constitutional monarchy, 'the King-in-Parliament' settlement was the result of the absolutist attempt of James II, which led to his overthrow and the Revolution of 1688. As a consequence of the Revolution, keeping a standing army was prevented and the parliament gained significant financial powers. However, through the preservation of the Navigation Acts and the Corn Laws, the parliament continued "the mercantilist system of strong centralist state support for private capitalist interests… Such policies may be seen not simply as conducive to, but in some ways constitutive of, the English transition to capitalism."[140]

On the other hand, the absolutist attempts could be circumscribed due to the fact that the landowning class had been able to collect a certain level of political power at their hands such as prevention of collecting taxes without the consent of the parliament, strengthening themselves at the national level through increasing parliamentary powers, and at the local level through the appointment of justices of peace among the property holding people. In this line, Charles I's attempts at absolutism through trying collecting taxes without parliament's consent, attacking powers held by the justices of peace culminated in the unification of an anti-absolutist opposition of the landowner classes, which was followed by the English Civil War.[141] However, the restoration period following the Commonwealth (1649-1660) "greatly strengthened the forces of capitalism and the sovereignty of Parliament and further diminished any remaining hope of constructing an absolutist state on the pattern of France."[142] In short,

> *What emerged was a state in which the administrative organs that most impeded capitalist development had been abolished: Star Chamber, High Commission, Court of Wards and feudal tenures; in which the executive was*

[139] Holton, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, 178-179.
[140] Holton, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, 180.
[141] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe*, 157-158.
[142] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 160.

> *subordinated to the men of property, deprived of control over the judiciary, and yet strengthened in external relations by a powerful navy and the Navigation Act; in which local government was safely and cheaply in the hands of the national rulers, and discipline was imposed on the lower orders by a Church safely subordinated to Parliament*.[143]

The newly emerging state in the late seventeenth century was accommodating for the capitalist aristocracy's needs as the capitalist aristocracy did not need a state that helped to extract surpluses through extra-economic means. The agrarian capitalism, in Brenner's terms, dissolved the unity of the economics and politics.[144]

In this sense, Wood summarily argues that England witnessed two significant transformations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the centralization of the state and the emergence of capitalism. Indeed, "by 1600, England had become a unified state, with a clear centre of power, a national or 'common' law, a national representative body, and even a national church subordinate to, and sustaining, the unified state."[145] By the end of the Tudor period in England, Wood argues, a modern nation-state was created in England.[146] At the start of the seventeenth century, England "was now a strong centralized and unified institutional totality. Capitalism was making substantial headway in the agrarian sector, with a wealthy, increasingly homogeneous and tightly knit landed aristocracy, in growing numbers deriving their wealth from capitalist rents."[147]

The formation of the nation-state in England, on the other hand, was accompanied by the professionalization of the navy during 'long eighteenth century', which can be observed in the creation of administrative units such as "the Admiralty, the Naval Board, the Ordnance Board, the Victualling Board and the Navy Office – which managed the Royal Navy's budgets, shipyards, personnel, command and repair facilities and procurement agencies."[148] The underlying factor behind this was that although state in England was accommodating for the agrarian capitalist interests, mercantile capital interests were not disregarded as well. In this regard, we could use Perry Anderson's

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[143] Christopher Hill, "A Bourgeois Revolution?," in *Three British Revolutions 1641, 1688, 1776*, ed. John Greville Agard Pocock (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 109–40, p. 134-35.
[144] Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe,* 161.
[145] Ellen Meiksins Wood and Neal Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition: Political Theory and the Rise of Capitalism, 1509-1688* (Washington Square, N.Y: New York University Press, 1997), 5.
[146] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 8.
[147] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 19.
[148] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea,* 76.

remarks on absolutist state in Europe for the centralized state in England: "it fundamentally represented an apparatus for the protection of aristocratic property and privileges, yet at the same time the means whereby this protection was promoted could simultaneously ensure the basic interests of the nascent mercantile and manufacturing classes."[149] Therefore, what Campling and Colas conclude when discussing the commercialization model and political Marxism seems fitting when examining the state in England: "it is indeed possible and desirable to think of capitalist social relations as being born in the countryside but nurtured through international trade – to understand capitalism as a mode of production emerging out of feudal class antagonisms which subsequently developed by latching onto pre-existing money and commercial circuits of capital."[150]

International trade, on the other hand, was equal to maritime trade and according to Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, the organization and maintenance of capitalism and international trade that nurtured the former was only possible through the maritime state.[151] Apart from the predominance of navy vis-à-vis the land army touched upon above, the mobilization of shipyards in 1649 by the parliament when Cromwell discovered the relative weakness of navy and the law passed by the parliament in order to supply the required maritime labor through impressment to which resistance was a capital offense were factors that strengthened the maritime state. On the other hand, the 1651 Navigation Act and the 1652 Articles of War, "both reaffirmed by the Restoration government after 1660, would dramatically expand the powers of the maritime state."[152] The expanding powers of the maritime state were reflected in the expanding the navy: "the navy had 50 ships and 9,500 sailors in 1633, and 173 ships and 42,000 sailors in 1688."[153]

As can be recalled from the previous section, dispossession led to an increasing dependence on wage labor. Although there were many laboring people who worked for wages in areas directly related to agriculture due to the growing capitalist agrarian

[149] Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State,* 40.
[150] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 59.
[151] Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (London: Verso, 2012),, 145.
[152] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 145.
[153] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 146.

sector, there was also a substantial portion of people who were detached from agriculture and who had to seek employment in trade, industry and transportation. Given the insular geography of England, it seems natural that many of these people sought and found employment in maritime sector. With regard to this, they could work in fishing industry, in ship-building industry, and lastly as sailors.[154] Nevertheless, it should be stressed that "The global deployment of thousands of seamen in the early eighteenth century was predicated upon the broad and uneven process of proletarianization, through which these men or their forebears were forcibly torn from the land and made to sell their labor power on an open market to keep body and soul together."[155]

2.5. Labor Conditions at Sea

In this line, one area where the newly emerging discipline of capitalist social relations can be observed is the maritime sector. As Linebaugh and Rediker argues, "By the last half of the seventeenth century, capitalists had organized the exploitation of human labor in four basic ways"[156]: large commercial estate, petty production, the putting-out system, and the ship. The ship presented "a setting in which large numbers of workers cooperated on complex and synchronized tasks, under slavish, hierarchical discipline in which human will was subordinated to mechanical equipment, all for a money wage. The work, cooperation, and discipline of the ship made it a prototype of the factory."[157]

Who worked in this prototype of the factory, then? It is worth citing Marcus Rediker in length on the social background of average sailors in the eighteenth century:

> *Some were younger sons of yeomen and poor farmers, men who had migrated to the cities in search of work and finally found it on the docks. Some, perhaps, had been dispossessed of land by enclosure. Others had been picked up by press gangs, and once forced to acquire the skills of maritime labor in the Royal Navy, decided to work as merchant seamen. Still others were rural folk who had been drawn to the sea by the lure of high wages during wartime*.[158]

[154] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 47-48
[155] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 80.
[156] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 149.
[157] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 150.
[158] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 13.

Although not directly related to the sailors working on ships, the transformation pointing out to being the precursor of factory can be traced to the shipbuilding industry as well, for instance to the Dutch shipbuilding industry which, starting from the beginning of the seventeenth century, "shifted from a medieval handicraft to something along the lines of modern factory organization."[159] The wharfs where the ships were built, especially, resembled modern factories as the working days of the laborers employed on fixed wages were designated and divided by the sounding of bells.[160]

When it comes to the labor conditions at sea, the first and foremost aspect of employment on ships in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was the manner in which the employment began for most of the sailors: impressment, or in other words, recruitment of maritime labor by force. The growing maritime state required a stronger navy and "A stronger navy required more maritime labor, yet the low pay and mean working conditions in the king's service made seamen none too willing to serve. Increasingly the impressment of maritime workers, planned and organized by the Admiralty Office, did the job where a free labor market could not."[161] Impressment was a really hated policy for the sailors and "During Queen Anne's reign, seamen had entered the navy like men 'dragged to execution… since almost half of all of those pressed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries died at sea. Those lucky enough to stay alive often went unpaid."[162]

In addition to the unique and horrendous way of recruitment, the actual labor conditions after the recruitment process were peculiar to maritime labor. The ship was, and still probably is, first of all, a confined working space on which sailors spent the days and months of their lives side by side. They worked, ate, and slept aboard the ship, which was "a 'worksite in motion'. Mobility, containment, segmentation and isolation thus became the hallmarks of ocean-going labour."[163] Although "Each sailor alternately worked a ten-and a fourteen-hour day", … "Even when off duty, Jack Tar was never far

[159] Richard W. Unger, "Technology and Industrial Organization: Dutch Shipbuilding to 1800," *Business History* 17, no. 1 (January 1975): 56–72, https://doi.org/10.1080/00076797500000005, 60.
[160] Unger, "Technology and Industrial Organization,", 63.
[161] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 31.
[162] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 32-3.
[163] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 115.

from work. Anytime, anywhere, he might hear the mate's fearful cry: 'up every soul nimbly, for God's sake, or we all perish.'"[164]

Adding to that, they were not alone but lived alongside their bosses, especially their captains who were the sole sovereigns aboard the ship. In this sense, another aspect of the unique labor conditions aboard the ships was this status of the captain: "Representatives of capital and state, the captain's rule could not be opposed, unless crew were willing to face the charge of mutiny."[165] In this regard, although oceans and seas have always been associated with freedom, there was, on the other hand, "distinctive uses of force, violence and domination, which has given exploitation in merchant fleets a markedly militarised character."[166] The ship, under the absolute authority of the captain, had its own laws with physical abuses and punishments which were always possible. Therefore, "One of the most hazardous aspects of the labor process was the dispensation of discipline, the necessary and bloody complement of the increasing productivity of seafaring labor in the eighteenth century", which "resulted in many disabling injuries inflicted by masters and mates upon the common men of the deep."[167]

In addition to the hierarchical order and militarized character aboard the ship, another aspect of the uniqueness of labor conditions at sea was the dangerous nature of the job itself. According to Campling and Colas "a royal commission launched in 1885 investigating the loss of life at sea on British-registered ships found that seafaring was the most deadly job in that country. It determined that a flurry of legislation on vessel safety in the mid-1870s 'had little or no effect' because of the reluctance of regulators to risk litigation by shipowners for their losses."[168] Although the commission in question was launched in the late nineteenth century, the fact that the deadliness of the seafaring jobs were quite high in that period makes it safe to assume that the dangers at sea during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were as high as the nineteenth century, if not higher. Falling, washing overboard, being struck by loose equipment, getting hernia

[164] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 88.
[165] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea* 108.
[166] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 130.
[167] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 93.
[168] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 107.

from heavy lifting and pulling, losing limbs such as fingers, hands, arms and legs, and lasty drowning were not uncommon.[169]

Diseases were among the most common risks that might be faced by the sailors. Some of these diseases were caused by tropical climates and most of the time they were unknown or rare diseases. However, there were diseases not exclusive to tropical climates including but not limited to typhoid, dysentery and typhus.[170] In addition to diseases, malnutrition was also among the main causes of death. Especially scurvy was prevalent among the crew of the period since the primary source of food was ship biscuit and salted fish and meat due to storage limitations. [171] Finding or preserving clean water were also crucial during the voyages at sea and lack of clean water was a highly risk for the mariners. In addition to the problems pertaining to clean water, water rations were not sufficient as according to Paine, for the crew of the Spanish ships in the seventeenth century was one liter for a day. [172] The dangers of maritime work can be summarized by referring to a few memoirs written by the sailors and captains in the eighteenth century. For instance, William Funnell ends his memoirs with a striking death toll: "And on the 26th of August, 1706. after many Dangers both by Sea and Land, we happily arrived in *England*; being but eighteen out of one hundred and eighty-three which went out with us."[173] Or, Wooders Rogers writes "Betwixt nine and ten at night, a Sailor going up to furl the Main-Top-Gallant Sail, fell suddenly without any noise from the Main-Top over board, occasion'd as I suppos'd by a Fit."[174] Again Rogers recounts the death of a sailor: "Yesterday in the Afternoon one of the *Dutchess'*s Men fell out of the Mizen-Top down on the Quarter-Deck, and broke his Skull: They desir'd the Advice of our Surgeon, and I went on board with our two, where they examin'd the Wound, but found the Man irrecoverable; so that he died, and was buried next day."[175] Or Nathaniel Uring tells that

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[169] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 93.
[170] Lincoln P. Paine, *The Sea and Civilization: A Maritime History of the World* (New York: Randon House Llc, 2013), 475.
[171] Paine, *The Sea and Civilization*, 476.
[172] Paine, *The Sea and Civilization*, 476.
[173] William Funnell, *A Voyage Round the World. Containing an Account of Captain Dampier's Expedition into the South-Seas in the Ship St George, in the Years 1703 and 1704. ... Together with the Author's Voyage from Amapalla ... By William Funnell ...* (London: Printed By W. Botham, For James Knapton, 1707), 302
[174] Woodes Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World* (1712; repr., The Seafarer's Library, 1928), 18.
[175] Rogers, *A Cruising Voyage Round the World*, 75.

"At my first Arrival at this Place, a Malignant Fever began to rage among the Ship's Company; and for want of a skilful Surgeon, Eight of them died."[176] Or, Edward Barlow, quoted by Hans Turley, notes that

> *One of our men died as soon as ever he came aboard, and another the next day, so that we had then lost forty men since our coming from England. But one of the Dutch East India ships that came in while we stayed, fared much worse, who had lost near a hundred men, and as many more sick and weak; for they carry more men out than English ships to supply their need for their ships sailing to and fro in India*.[177]

In sum, Gottlieb Mittelberger, a German who migrated to the America in 1750 exhibits the misery of ocean wide travel in the eighteenth century:

> *…during the voyage there is on board these ships terrible misery, stench, fumes, horror, vomiting, many kinds of sea-sickness, fever, dysentery, headache, heat, constipation, boils, scurvy, cancer, mouth-rot, and the like, all of which come from old and sharply salted food and meat, also from very bad and foul water, so that many die miserably. Add to this want of provisions, hunger, thirst, frost, heat, dampness, anxiety, want, afflictions and lamentations, together with other trouble…*[178]

All in all, "The voyages that brought fame, wealth, and hand servants to Bristol masters and merchants more often brough illness and death to their sailors; mortality rates, for seamen as for slaves ran hideously high."[179]

The transition from feudalism to capitalism, as stated, is a process of dispossession and consequently signifies the transition to wage labor. In this line, the

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[176] Nathaniel Uring, *A History of the Voyages and Travels of Captain Nathaniel Uring : With New Draughts of the Bay of Honduras and the Caribbee Islands, and Particularly of St. Lucia, and the Harbour of Petite Carenage, into Which Ships May Run in Bad Weather, and Be Safe from All Winds and Storms : Very Useful for Masters of Ships That Use the Leeward Island Trade, or Jamaica.* (London: Printed By W. Wilkins, For J. Peele, 1726), 247.

[177] Edward Barlow, *Barlow's Journal of His Life at Sea in King's Ships, East and West Indiamen and Other Merchantmen from 1659 to 1703*, Transcribed by Basil Lubbock, (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1934), 464, quoted in Hans Turley, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality, and Masculine Identity* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1999), 19.

[178] Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Gottlieb Mittelberger's Journey to Pennsylvania in the Year 1750 and Return to Germany in the Year 1754, Containing Not Only a Description of the Country according to Its Present Condition, but Also a Detailed Account of the Sad and Unfortunate Circumstances of Most of the Germans That Have Emigrated, or Are Emigrating to That Country.*, trans. Carl Theodor Eben (Philadelphia, J.J. Mcvey, 1898), 20.

[179] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 43.

sailor was placed in a central point in this transition. "The completely contractual and waged nature of maritime work represented a capital-labor relation quite distinct from landlord-tenant, master-servant, or master-apprentice relationships. The sailor was both a free wage laborer in a critical sector of the economy and a collective laborer located among an unprecedented number of men much like himself."[180] On the one hand, there were sailors who cooperated and adopted to these newly emerging conditions, capitalist labor relations. On the other hand, against these same conditions and relations, sailors resisted since they "as landless proletarians, depended upon the monetary wage. They often had no choice but to fight."[181] So they "mutinied, deserted, rioted, and altogether resisted naval service. Over and against these chronic struggles for freedom and money, the state used violence and terror to man its ships and to man them cheaply."[182]

2.6. Resistance: Idleness as Resistance, the Levellers, the Diggers, Sailors

The conditions available to the propertyless mass who were to be wage laborers both on land and at sea for all their life, then, was not quite promising. Severed from the land that provided their means of subsistence, that is, their means of feeding themselves, earning barely enough to feed themselves to avoid starvation and nothing more, no prospect for education or escaping the life ahead of them, in addition to having no political rights since "the 'commonwealth consisteth only of freemen'"[183], the wage labor pointed out to deteriorating conditions of life for the propertyless people. Therefore, "Acceptance of wage labour was the last resort open to those who had lost their land, but many regarded it as little better than slavery." [184] Drawing similarities between wage labor and slavery was not reserved for the wage laborers as well. As it is seen when Hill refers to Josiah Tucker, a member of clergy in the eighteenth century, the near-like slavery conditions of wage labor were known: "The relations between employer and wage-labourer, wrote Dean Tucker in George II's reign, 'approach much

[180] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 114.
[181] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 150.
[182] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 150.
[183] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 43.
[184] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 42.

nearer to that of a planter and slave in our American colonies than might be expected in such a country as England.'"[185]

It seems that a little better than slavery was not quite enough for the people since there were instances of opposition to it: "In the Stannaries of Cornwall free miners fought long and hard in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries to avoid the wage system."[186] The non-acceptance of wage labor took other forms than the resistance documented in the fights of the miners. One aspect of the non-acceptance was the idleness of the laborers which according to Hill was something that was been aware of as early as the fourteenth century.[187] Referring to Defoe, who argues that "'English labouring people eat and drink, but especially the latter, three times as much in value as any...foreigners'. The labourer 'will tell you honourably, he will drink as long as it [his money] lasts, and then go to work for more'"[188] This attitude towards labor, of course, was seen unproductive by the contemporary upper class and Appleby provides rigorous examples of the rage against this unproductivity: First, he refers to one Francis Gardiner who argued that the poor would refuse to work on the third day if the first two days' labor was enough and that the laborers would work harder when wages were low while they would spend their time drinking when wages were high. Later, he notes that according to John Houghton, artisans would rarely work on Mondays and Tuesdays if they could their wares for good prices and again spend their time drinking.[189] Then, he refers to Thomas Manley on the independence of the workers in England: "too proud to beg, too lazy to work, when 'tis either too hot or too cold, and will choose their own time and wages, or you may do your work yourself."[190] Lastly, he states that according

[185] Josiah Tucker, *Instructions for Travellers* (1757), 25, quoted in Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 44.
[186] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 42.
[187] Hill, *Liberty against the Law*, 45.
[188] Daniel Defoe, *Giving Alms no Charity*, quoted in Hill, *Liberty against the Law,* 45.
[189] Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 146.
[190] Thomas Manley, *Usury at six per cent. examined, and found unjustly charged by Sir Tho. Culpepper and J.C. with many crimes and oppressions, whereof 'tis altogether innocent wherein is shewed the necessity of retrenching our luxury, and vain consumption of forraign commodities, imported by English money : also the reducing the wages of servants, labourers, and workmen of all sorts, which raiseth the value of our manufactures, 15 or 20 per cent. dearer than our neighbours do afford them, by reason of their cheap wages ... : humbly presented to the high court of Parliament now sitting*, (London: Printed by Thomas Ratcliffe, and Thomas Daniel, 1669), 24.

to William Carter, the workers accepted working only "if two days' pay will keep them a week."[191]

Hill sees that this attitude towards labor remains quite contrary to the labor discipline of wage labor that was tried to be introduced as the capitalist social relations were evolving. In this way, idleness was a form of resistance against the labor discipline of wage labor in question.

In this regard, as the causes of the social conflict in the eighteenth century, food riots, conflicts regarding production processes such as labor conditions, wages, the control over workplace and industrial conflicts in dockyards are listed.[192] There were also instances of conflict that were not prevalent to the whole society but were common in certain regions such as smuggling, which was not considered as a crime by the common people living in those regions. In addition, new taxes and the introduction of Game Laws as well as impressment during war time and enclosure movement caused conflicts on occasion.[193]

In terms of food riots, the basic assumption that directed common people to action was that food was not, or at least, should not have been a commodity sold under market directives, rather it was, or should have been produced, and sold and bought in a community-oriented manner. According to Malcolmson, "There was already, by the later seventeenth century, a large discrepancy between this popular ideal of marketing and the reality of marketing."[194] This was true especially in times of dearth, local common people thought that when there was need in the region, food exports to other regions, especially to the expanding cities like London, should have been banned, speculation and profiteering should have been prevented, the prices of food should have been regulated. The lack of these bans and regulations by the local authorities were seen as preventable problems which authorities deliberately chose not to prevent, and caused widespread indignation among the common people. Then, the common people thought

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[191] Carter, *The ancient trades decayed, repaired again [electronic resource] : wherein are declared the several abuses that have utterly impaired all the ancient trades in the kingdom : with many proposals humbly offered how the same may be repaired again, with some reasons shewing the necessity thereof / written by a countrey trades-man*, (London: Printed by T.N, 1678), 8, quoted in Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology*, 146.
[192] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 112-113.
[193] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 114.
[194] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 115.

in order to ensure justice taking direct action was legitimate and justice could be ensured by preventing export of food to other regions and by enforcing customary price standards.[195]

Malcolmson, furthermore, emphasizes the discipline and orderliness of these collective actions taken by common people, which were considered disturbances by the property holding classes and authorities whereas being considered just and legitimate responses to inequalities by common people. These collective actions were not impulsive and mechanical reactions although the main motivating factor for action was hunger. Rather, the actions taken by common people were rooted in culture as in custom, morals, and justice. Mostly, the collective actions taken against injustices regarding food prices and exports had defined objectives, carried out commonly in a disciplined manner, and aimed at correcting perceived inequalities and injustices, punishing the responsible parties in addition to reminding the responsibilities of authorities.[196]

The conflicts over wages in the eighteenth century, again, were rooted in the divergence of popular idea of marketing from the reality since the industrial laborers sought the regulation of wages in accordance with the popular sense of standards of subsistence. In this regard, the capitalist idea that the wages were the price of a commodity, namely the labor, and this price in question should have been determined by the market via supply and demand conditions were inacceptable by common people. In the mind of common people, while food prices had to be regulated at a just maximum level, wages also had to be regulated at a minimum level that allowed for meeting customarily basic needs of people. Therefore, instead of capitalist market directives and supply and demand conditions, justice and human needs had to determine price and wage levels. The responsibility for regulating price and wage levels in accordance with justice and human needs, in turn, lied with the authorities. In the case that this responsibility was not fulfilled by the authorities, the common people thought that taking direct action in order to correct the injustices by regulating wage levels was legitimate.[197]

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[195] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 116-118.
[196] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 118-122.
[197] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 123.

These sources of social conflict, food prices and wages, emphasize an idea "of *popular rights*: of the right to a basic subsistence; of the right to have their interests considered and taken account of by the established authorities; of the right to resist the 'arbitrary will' of employers."[198] According to Malcolmson, the idea of popular rights also entailed laborers' control over work and employment conditions to some extent while denying the narrow freedom of selling labor under market conditions regulated by nothing but forces of supply and demand.[199]

The idea of popular rights was expressed in the conflicts regarding enclosure as well since the enclosure movement represented a threat to these popular rights via establishing rights of absolute private property. In this regard, "Just as food should not be engrossed by dealers, nor arbitrary power exercised by employers, so too (according to the popular view) all land in a locality should not be engrossed into the hands of one or two men, to the detriment of other men's legitimate interests."[200] The injustice against the commons perceived during the enclosure movement is clearly worded in a folk rhyme Malcolmson cites: "They hang the man and flog the woman / Who steals the goose from off the Common; / But let the greater criminal loose / Who steals the Common from the goose."[201]

In this regard, the collective actions taken by common people in the eighteenth century mostly were against the state's increasing control over personal freedom of these common people. The people knew that the state's actions were not aimed at protecting their rights or freedom, so these actions were met with distrust and resisted on occasion. After all, it was the state that made the Game Laws, which were illegitimate while poachers, who were criminal according to the state, were people who exercised their rights to hunt in the common people's eyes. Again, it was the state that imposed high taxes for imported goods, which in turn directed people towards smuggling, and common people sympathized with these smugglers rather than the state officials. The impressment practice was also the doing of the state and was extensively considered

[198] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 126.
[199] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 126.
[200] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 127.
[201] Quoted in Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 128.

unjust therefore it was also highly resisted.[202] As the result of these exactions of the state on common people, "The state was increasingly seen by labouring people, not as a source of protection — as, in their view, it should be, and as they thought it had been in the past — but rather as a source of oppression and exploitation."[203] Therefore, as a result of the state's inaction with regard to protecting customary liberties and rights of common people in addition to the state's actions that favor property holding classes through allowing and encouraging capital accumulation while encroaching upon these customary liberties and rights, common people regarded defending these rights and liberties and resisting against the state's illegitimate demands legitimate and just. [204]

On the other hand, despite the upper-class consideration that common people had levelling tendencies and were against authorities, the collective actions taken by common people were not revolutionary in the sense that they did not have great objectives, rather had quite limited aim, and they did not seek to transform or abolish the social and political order. Rather than carrying out revolts against authority that sought revolutionary objectives aspiring to subvert the social and political order, the collective actions in question did aim at reminding the authorities of their duties and responsibilities against the people and compelling the authorities to act in line with these duties and responsibilities.[205] Therefore, "Most riots, or demonstrations of force, or threatening utterances were intended to recall gentlemen to their obligations, not to undermine the whole social order."[206] Malcolmson refers to various instances that support this observation: with regard to food riots and protests against turnpike tolls the people who took part in the collective actions in question stated that "they were resolved to put the law in execution since the magistrates neglected it" and "by the Omission of your Duty, and your Carelessnes and Over sight, you have lost your Honourable Magistracy, and brought your self under the reproach of a Turnpike".[207] As can be observed from the statements of the rioters of the time, the objective was not the disruption of social order but to recall the authorities of their duties and responsibilities.

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[202] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 129.
[203] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 130.
[204] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 130.
[205] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 130-131.
[206] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 131.
[207] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 131.

In this line, the arbitrariness of authorities, of which standing army and impressment were explicit examples according to the popular views, was another point that caused resistance of common people. The deep beliefs of common people in law, duty, responsibility, and anti-arbitrariness were connected to the concept of birthright. "Labouring people, in short, had a strong sense of the 'Englishman s birthright', a birthright that ensured them (as they thought) certain basic liberties, including the right to be left alone and enjoy a modicum of 'independence'."[208]

According to Malcolmson, for a laboring person, the independence in question indicated having control over their own labor as well, that is, control over their working times rather than having specified workhours, control over working process and control over workplace such as working in their own houses. This, in turn, suggests that the resistance against the later factory labor and the labor discipline connected to it as well as the attempts to reduce wage labor dependence were results of the common people's aims at protecting their independence.[209] An excerpt from the Gentleman's Magazine in 1788 clearly reveals the aspirations for independence of common people:

> *The poor man is comforted under his poverty by thinking himself free. This freedom of his, God knows, is circumscribed by such a number of imperious necessities, that it is reduced to little in effect; but he pleases himself in imagining that he possesses it; and that he may go out or come in, work or play, at his own option. He likes to be the judge of his own wants, and to provide for them after his own manner. He even chooses to have the determination whether he shall boil or bake his Sunday's dinner. Then he cannot be easy under confinement, abhors the thought of being under lock and key, and thinks no man deserves a prison who has not committed a crime. To be a cypher in the state, and therefore a slave, according to the idea of some political theorists, does not hurt him at all; but he has a mortal dislike to arbitrary rule exercised over all his actions*.[210]

Then, it is apparent that the common people in the eighteenth century highly regarded their independence, which they considered consisting of their rights to commons, to subsistence, to freedom from arbitrariness, to freedom to determine their

[208] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 133.
[209] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 133.
[210] Philander, "Humane Thoughts on the Rights and the Comforts of the Poor," *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1788, 41

own work conditions, to freedom from increasingly tightening labor discipline as well as to freedom to choose whether they shall bake or boil their dinners. Therefore, it can be seen that there was a decades-long, even centuries-long ongoing confrontation between two kinds of logic, between the logic of capitalist market economy and the logic of non-economic customary economy of the common people. The former logic dictated that the practices such as and/or aimed at introduction of Game Laws, imposing taxes on common people, enclosure movement, the affirmation of absolute private property as the only kind of property system, separation of producers from their direct means of subsistence, impressment, centralizing state authority, improvement, capital accumulation, labor discipline and efficiency were legitimate practices. The latter, on the other hand, did not acknowledge the legitimacy of these practices and deemed common people's various forms of resistance against these legitimate.

The English Civil War had an important role for the emergence of radical ideas. In this line, according to Wood, the revolution was crucial for the development of capitalism as it was essentially a struggle between a capitalist, landowning class, and monarchy. However, the elimination of the radical threat emanating from the popular masses in the aftermath of the revolution was equally important for the development of capitalism since the aims of the radical popular elements that had emerged during the Civil War appeared to contradict with the aims of the ruling classes. According to Dobb, who considers the English Civil War as a bourgeois revolution, every bourgeois revolution necessitates the participation of radical elements in order to ensure the momentum of the revolution, however, it always has to suppress these radical elements since they always turn on to the property-holding elements of the revolution by starting to question the property system.[211] Therefore, it was obviously not possible to win the Revolution only with the landowning classes, so they needed the support of the popular and propertyless class, which consisted of the street mobs and the New Model Army. The New Model Army, despite the efforts of the Parliament, was not disbanded and "The radical alliance lasted long enough to bring to trial and execute the king in 1649, to establish the 'Commonwealth', to introduce religious toleration for a wide variety of religious dissenters, including Quakers and Jews, and to produce some remarkably

[211] Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, 172.

radical developments in theory and practice." [212] Wood notes that the 1640s witnessed remarkable radical ideas, the most prominent of which were the Leveller and Digger ideologies. This radical environment was the result of the mobilization against absolutism and the king, however Cromwell, who encouraged that mobilization, broke away from the radical alliance later. The Stuart Restoration in 1660 and finally the coronation of Mary and William of Orange in 1689 represented the end of the radicalism of the 1640s. The Glorious Revolution of 1688, in this way put a stop to the turbulent period in the English history while decisively defeating the absolutist attempts. However, it also surely defeated the radical and popular threats. The constitutional monarchy, 'the King-in-Parliament' settlement, established the landowning classes and merchants as the unchallenged ruling class.[213]

The New Model Army, consisting of two factions, that were Grandees, the senior officers usually coming from landowning classes, and the Agitators, the elected soldier representatives, was the parliamentary army formed by Oliver Cromwell and other Parliamentarians against the royalists. In this regard, the New Model Army consisted of both gentlemen, upper and landowning classes, middle sections of the society such as yeoman farmers and lower classes such as craftsmen, cottagers and tenant farmers. "But the tenant farmer and perhaps also the smaller freeholder, and certainly the poorer cottager, who were damaged by the enclosing or rack-renting landlord, were prepared to be much more radical."[214]

However, the New Model Army was not just a military force but also proved to be an arena for radical and democratic political ideas. The essential dividing line between the two camps was the question of franchise, which "represented a substantial divergence between what has been called an 'oligarchic republicanism' and a more democratic radicalism."[215] The debate over franchise turned out to be a debate over property as the radical camp of the Agitators, which had links with the Levellers as well, asserted that every English man had the right to be ruled according to his own consent and the right in question was not bounded to the property but belonged to the person

[212] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 23.
[213] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 23-25.
[214] Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, 172.
[215] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 66.

himself. These arguments, of course, was fiercely opposed by the camp representing the landowning class interests since the logical conclusion of these ideas could be the arguments in favor of abolishing the private property system.[216]

Indeed, the Levellers were accused on this basis as "The name itself seems to have appeared earlier in the century to describe people who rose up against practices such as enclosure, 'levelling' hedges, fences or walls; but increasingly the term was used pejoratively to accuse certain radicals of wanting to equalize or 'level', indeed even to abolish, private property."[217] Nevertheless, the Levellers were not really aiming at the abolishing private property and explicitly stated that. They essentially represented small proprietors against the large landowning class and objected to the concentration of large lands at the hands of that class via enclosure or similar encroachments on customary rights.[218] In addition to the objections against the concentration of property, which were radical but not as radical as the accusations against them claimed, their views regarding suffrage and self-government were radical as well. In terms of franchise, although excluding women, "the starting position of the Leveller leaders - from which they retreated in order to get the agreement of Cromwell and Ireton - was universal adult male suffrage."[219]

Wood notes the speech given by Colonel Rainsborough, a Leveller spokesman, in the Putney Debates:

> *for really I think that the poorest he that is in England has a life to live as the greatest he; and therefore truly, sir, I think it's clear that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government; and I do think that the poorest man in England is not at all bound in a strict sense to that government that he has not had a voice to put himself under*.[220]

Despite being an argument for the universal suffrage and democracy, the more conservative camp realized the potential ramifications of this argument which could be furthered to the point that if the poorest person had the right to live life as the richest

[216] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 67.
[217] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 80-81.
[218] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 82.
[219] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 83.
[220] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 84.

person lived, the same person could also have the right to anything that they required to sustain their life. This right to anything, on the other hand, could result in the destruction of private property. Rainsborough, of course, denied that the Levellers aimed at the abolishing of private property.[221]

Nevertheless, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker add that, after pointing out there have been three primary interpretations of Putney Debates in history, namely discussions on citizenship and broadening franchise starting with Edouard Bernstein, discussions on welfare state starting with Aneurin Bevan in 1942, and discussions on colonial liberation in the Pan-African Congress in 1945, "We find two neglected themes: the struggle for the commons and the struggle against slavery… The fork in the road at Putney pointed to either a future with the commons and without slavery, or to one with slavery and without the commons."[222]

In addition to the Levellers, the Diggers were a more radical group who claimed to be "True Levellers, to distinguish themselves from those less inclined really to 'level' property."[223] In this line, the Diggers were prepared to carry the Levellers' argument for the universal suffrage that had been seen as a potential basis for furthering the argument to the destruction of private property despite the Levellers' denial to the point "that there could be no true liberty without destroying the system of property."[224]

Gerrard Winstanley, one of the most prominent representatives of the Diggers movement, which had emerged as a resistance to the enclosure practices just like the Levellers, envisioned a society in which there were no masters or landlords, no exploitation of labor, no commerce, no money, no poverty, no kings, no lords, no church or no clergy. Winstanley's radical vision opposes the division between laboring class and ruling class and posits that the dethronement of the king should be accompanied by the abolishment of private property system since the existence of private property restrains the true liberty as private property entails exploitation.

Winstanley, for instance, stated that the Earth was a common treasury which would be used by animals and humans for their subsistence and while the humans had

[221] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 86.
[222] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 108.
[223] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 81.
[224] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 87.

been given domination over animals, a similar domination of one group of people over other groups did not exist.[225] In this line, private property was deviation from the original state of the earth as well as it was a sin. It was a sin since both God did not intend people to have private property and having private property was not possible without murder or theft. He argues that "this civil property is the curse is manifest thus: those that buy and sell land, and are landlords, have got it either by oppression or murder or theft; and all landlords lives in the breach of the seventh and eighth commandments, *Thou shalt not steal nor kill*."[226] Moreover, the existence of private property was a hindrance against true liberty according to Winstanley: "Take notice that England is not a free people till the poor that have no land have a free allowance to dig and labour the commons, and so live as comfortably as the landlords that live in their enclosures."[227] The curse of private property, on the other hand, was connected to the existence of wages and rents: "He that works for another, either for wages or to pay him rent, works unrighteously and still lifts up the curse; but they that are resolved to work and eat together, making the earth a common treasury, doth join hands with Christ to lift up the creation from bondage, and restores all things from the curse."[228]

Thus, the society Winstanley envisioned was "to have the earth set free from all kingly bondage of lords of manors and oppressing landlords, which came in by conquest as a thief takes a true man's purse upon the highway, being stronger than he."[229] In that society, private property was to be seen as a form of slavery and thus, "And that neither the earth, nor any fruits thereof, should be bought or sold by the inhabitants one among another, which is slavery the kingly conquerors have brought in; therefore he set his stamp upon silver, that every one should buy and sell in his name."[230]

In this regard, the Diggers' attempt at creating a community by occupying a common land on St. George's Hill proves to be an act of liberation based on communal

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[225] Gerrard Winstanley, "The True Levellers' Standard Advanced," in *Winstanley: "the Law of Freedom" and Other Writings,* ed. Christopher Hill (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 75–97, 77.
[226] Winstanley, "The True Levellers' Standard Advanced," 85.
[227] Winstanley, "The True Levellers' Standard Advanced," 87.
[228] Winstanley, "The True Levellers' Standard Advanced," 90.
[229] Gerrard Winstanley, "The Law of Freedom in a Platform," in *Winstanley: "the Law of Freedom" and Other Writings*, ed. Christopher Hill (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 273–390, p. 302-3.
[230] Winstanley, "The Law of Freedom in a Platform," 303.

property and freedom of labor from exploitation.[231] According to Wood, the radicalization represented by the Levellers and Diggers had a legacy that can be observed "not only in later radical traditions, in the American Revolution or in the philosophy of the modern Labour Party and even socialist movements, but in more conservative political ideas which have attempted to appropriate, domesticate and neutralize the radically democratic ideas that emerged in the English Revolution."[232]

Even after the defeat of these radical ideas, in the eighteenth century, "Gentlemen complained of the levelling notions of many labouring people, of their 'licentious spirit' and their 'ungovernable appetites'."[233] As Malcolmson notes, Timothy Nourse writes in 1700: "But as for our Common People, many of them must be confess'd to be very rough and savage in their Dispositions, being of levelling Principles, and refractory to Government, insolent and tumultuous."[234] Nourse continues:

> *What Gentleman soever then shall have the Misfortune to fall into the Neighbourhood of such Boors, let him never think to win them by Civilities; it will be much more easie for him to teach a Hog to play upon the Bagpipes, than to soften such Brutes by Courtesie; for they will presently interpret a Man's Gentleness to be the Effect of a timorous and easie Nature, which will presently make them bold and saucy. The best way therefore will be to bridle them, and to make them feel the Spur too, when they begin to play their Tricks, and kick. The Saying of an English Gentleman was much to the purpose, That Three things ought always to be kept under, our Mastiff-Dog, a Stone-Horse, and a Clown: And really I think a snarling, cross-grain'd Clown to be the most unlucky Beast of the three. Such Men then are to be look'd upon as trashy Weeds or Nettles, growing usually upon Dunghills, which if touch'd gently will sting, but being squeez'd hard will never hurt us*.[235]

Therefore, the defeat of the radical ideas was not sufficient, and the remnants of these ideas should be dealt not with civility but should be suppressed with bridle and spur. Nevertheless, to what extent the bridle and spur succeeded is open to question

[231] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 90.
[232] Wood and Wood, *A Trumpet of Sedition*, 92.
[233] Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England,* 108.
[234] Timothy Nourse, *Campania Foelix* (London: Printed for Tho. Bennet, 1700), 15.
[235] Nourse, *Campania Foelix,* 15-16.

since "[i]n 1708 the Leveller William Rumbold's epigram was cited: 'No man was born with a saddle and bridle on his back, nor any booted and spurred to ride him'."[236]

The eighteenth century also witnessed sailors' acts of resistance. "During the course of the eighteenth century sailors became prominent in strikes and the disturbances associated with them; the middle years of the century, in particular, led to a number of disputes."[237] Indeed, according to Marcus Rediker, "the very term 'strike' evolved from the decision of British seamen in 1768 to 'strike' the sails of their vessels and thereby to cripple the commerce of the empire's capital city."[238] C. R. Dobson, who counts sailors among "the three most conspicuously militant groups"[239], along with tailors and weavers, gives a list of labor disputes between 1717 and 1800. The disputes in merchant shipping and navy, which were almost completely regarding wages, are as follows: 1739, Southampton; 1746, Bristol; 1750, London; 1751, London (Royal Navy); 1762, Liverpool; 1768, Deptford; 1768, Limehouse; 1768, Port Glasgow; 1769 Gravesend; 1769, Tyne; 1770, London; 1771, Tyne; 1772, Wapping; 1773, Lodon; 1775, Liverpool; 1780, Royal Navy, 1783, London (Royal Navy); 1783, London; 1783, Montego Bay; 1785, Shields; 1790, Newcastle; 1792, Dublin; 1792, Leith; 1792, Yarmouth; 1792, Shields; 1792, Ipswich; 1792, Bristol; 1792, Lynn; 1792, Aberdeen; 1797, Spithead, Portsmouth, Plymouth, The Nore (Royal Navy).[240] Although the instances of strike given generally correspond to the second half of the eighteenth century, these strikes point out to the existence of a maritime radicalism in the eighteenth century. In this line, "the seamen, in sum, was one of the first collective workers" whose collectivism "was a collectivism of necessity"[241], and they utilized their collectivism in order to negotiate for better wages and better labor conditions.

Apart from strikes, perhaps the most forceful act of resistance available to sailors was mutiny in order to limit the captain's authority, or sometimes to take the ship's control. "Although there is no systematic record of mutinies for the first half of

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[236] Christopher Hill, "Radical Pirates?," in *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill. Vol. 3 People and Ideas in 17th Century England* (Amherst, Mass.: University Of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 161–88, 162.
[237] John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1832* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 155.
[238] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 110.
[239] C. R. Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen: A Prehistory of Industrial Relations, 1717-1800* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 25.
[240] Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, 154-170.
[241] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 111.

the eighteenth century, documentation exists for sixty such rebellions, and certainly this must represent only a small portion of those occurred."[242] The act of mutiny, most of the time, was violent and had various motives: reaction against the abuse of captains, poor physical conditions of the ship, having inadequate sailors to operate the ship, insufficient provisions, heavy workload, neglection of sailors' health, violation of wage contracts, or sailors' aim to turn pirate.[243] In addition to the actual act of mutiny, the threat of mutiny as well as intimidation were also tactics of resistance. Rediker gives instances of intimidation, which would be useful to quote in length:

> *Frequently seamen attempted to intimidate their captain or officers with the defiant refusal of work. David Macky, of the Christabella in 1721, was ordered by his master to set sail and responded: 'God damn you, you may come and sett it yourself and be damned for I will not do it.' His messmate Mathew Carmichael was told to work on the maintopsail and told the captain that 'he might kiss his Arse for by God he would not do it.' Their captain, George Jesson, was apparently afraid to discipline the men, but kept himself double-armed in case they should decide to 'turn Pyrates.' John Ward in 1729 refused to work in "any but his own way" and often insisted, so that the whole crew of the Lawson could hear, that if the 'Master struck or any ways corrected him for his disobedience he would knock him down and not take a Blow of[f] him*.'[244]

Many other instances of refusal of work, disobedience against orders such and threatening officers or the captain can be listed. After all, the tools used in ships could easily be utilized as weapons, which were used by captains and officers as well as common sailors during disputes on ship. Lastly, admiralty courts could be and were used by sailors especially against abusing captains or to solve disputes over wages, however, this method was both costly and tedious. Therefore, "Many seamen, it must be added, did not wait for God to take up their cause, preferring instead to take matters into their own hands, bypassing the legal system altogether."[245] In sum, Rediker emphasizes the collectivity of sailors in the eighteenth century, a collectivity which was formed against the exploitative and hierarchical labor conditions at sea. The collective struggle of sailors, in this sense, was a "class war: 'class' because the setting of conflict was the

[242] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 227.
[243] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 228.
[244] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 236.
[245] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 241.

workplace and because the conflict grew directly out of the social relations of production, manifested between those buying and directing labor power, and those selling and providing it; 'war' because the hostility and struggle between opposing forces for different ends was armed, violent, and nearly chronic."[246] The collectivism, and the oppositional culture based on this collectivism was, in turn, "horizontal", "antiauthoritarian", and "egalitarian."[247]

The unique aspect of the maritime labor process, impressment, was one of the major sources of resistance. Regarding the British colonies in America, Jesse Lemisch states that "Ashore, seamen and others demonstrated their opposition to impressment with the only weapon which the unrepresentative politics of the day offered them – riot."[248] There were many instances of riot such as the ones in Boston in 1747, in Newport in 1765, in Norfolk in 1767, in New York in 1764 and 1765, in Newport in 1764, in Maine in 1764.[249] In this sense, "' Impressment had played a role in the estrangement of the American people from the British government. It had produced "Odium" against the navy, and even six-year-olds had not been too young to have learned to detest it."[250]

The Stamp Act of 1765, which aimed to raise money via taxes on official papers used in the colonies, also invoked the resistance of sailors in American colonies. Although the act met with resistance of the colonial leadership as well, their resistance against the act only involved stopping activities that the act necessitated the use of stamps, which would stop all trade in the colonies. The sailors, who depended on the trade, on the other hand, took a more radical way and rioted. "The pattern of rioting as political expression, established as a response to impressment, was now adapted and broadened as a response to the Stamp Act."[251] At the end, the sailors' riot "had

[246] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 242.
[247] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue* Sea, 243-45.
[248] Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (July 1968): 371–407, https://doi.org/10.2307/1921773, 390-91.
[249] Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets," 391-93.
[250] Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets," 395.
[251] Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets," 396.

consequences. Parliament, taken aback by colonial protests, would soon repeal the Stamp Act."[252]

Rediker, in this sense, considers sailors as a part of what he calls motley crew, which "was a social-political formation of the eighteenth-century port city" and "was usually an armed agglomeration of various crews and gangs that possessed its own motility and was often independent of leadership from above."[253] Furthermore, according to Rediker, "the history of the motley crew extends from the piracies of the 1710s and 1720s to the slave revolts and urban insurrections of the 1730s and 1740s" while "Operations on sea and land, from mutiny to insurrection, made the motley crew the driving force of a revolutionary crisis in the 1760s and 1770s."[254]

In this line, Rediker follows the radical resistance of sailors and the motley crew in time and connects the struggles against impressment to the Independent Advertiser founded by Samuel Adams in 1748 which "reported on mutiny and resistance to the press gang" as well as "supported the natural right to self-defense and vigorously defended the ideas and practices of equality, calling, for example, for popular vigilance over the accumulation of wealth and an 'Agrarian Law or something like it' (a Digger-like redistribution of land) to support the poor workers of New England"[255] He, furthermore, cites instances of resistance against impressment in the form of street battles against press gangs in London in 1770 and 1776, or in the form of burning or threatening to burn the "vessels belonging to the king in Wilmington, North Carolina, and in Nevis in 1765, in Newport again in 1769 and 1772, and twice in New York in 1775."[256] Therefore, he argues that "Multiracial mobs under the leadership of maritime workers thus helped to create the imperial crisis of the 1770s and simultaneously helped to create a revolutionary solution to it."[257] Moreover, he connects the struggle against impressment with the Leveller movement, both of which consider impressment as a form of slavery. The Leveller movement, as Rediker notes, clearly had denounced impressment a century ago: "We do not empower them to impress or constrain any

[252] Marcus Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic: Sailors, Pirates, and Motley Crews in the Age of Sail* (London: Verso, 2014), 89.
[253] Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, 91.
[254] Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, 90.
[255] Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, 95.
[256] Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, 97.
[257] Rediker, *Outlaws of the Atlantic*, 111.

person to serve in way by sea or land — every man's conscience being to be satisfied in the justness of that cause wherein he hazards his own life, or may destroy another's."[258] Christopher P. Magra, also, attributes the fierce resistance against impressment, among other factors such as the dangers of military impressment, the lower wages paid in the navy compared to merchant vessels and the strict discipline in merchant or navy vessels, to "a combination of deep-seated beliefs and practical experiences" that were rooted in "the ideals of the Levellers."[259] In this line, "Just as the Levellers viewed impressment as an infringement of natural rights and an indication of the abuse of state power during the English Revolution, colonial American maritime laborers equated impressment with state-sponsored slavery prior to the American Revolution."[260] Furthermore, "Maritime radicalism also inspired revolution. In 1776, Thomas Jefferson listed naval impressment as one of the foremost grievances Americans had with the British government in the Declaration of Independence."[261]

In sum, as Lemisch also acknowledges, the American Revolution was not caused by the sailors.[262] Nevertheless, it is possible to trace radicalism of sailors during the revolutionary era in America to the earlier revolts and struggles against impressment, and sailors' strikes. The most powerful form of these revolts, strikes, and struggles of sailors was the mutiny. The most extreme result of the mutiny, on the other hand, was piracy as an open defiance of state authority as well as the captain's authority on the ship. In this line, it is also possible to assume that the radical legacy of the golden age of piracy extended into the rest of the eighteenth century. Therefore, as Rediker also points, it can be argued that the golden age piracy in the early eighteenth century, the struggles against impressment, the sailors during the American revolutionary era connected in the radical legacy of the motley crew. On the other hand, the traces of the Leveller and Digger movements can be observed in the said radical legacy as the emphasis on

[258] John Lilburne et al., "An Agreement of the Free People of England," in *The English Levellers*, ed. Andrew Sharp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 173.
[259] Christopher P. Magra, "Anti-Impressment Riots and the Origins of the Age of Revolution," *International Review of Social History* 58, no. S21 (September 6, 2013): 131–51, https://doi.org/10.1017/s0020859013000291, 138-39.
[260] Magra, "Anti-Impressment Riots," 141.
[261] Magra, "Anti-Impressment Riots," 150.
[262] Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets," 401.

equality, freedom, anti-impressment and anti-slavery had influence on the sailors and pirates in the eighteenth century.

While the radical Leveller and Digger ideas during the English Civil War had been suppressed in England, the fact that "The English view of the function of overseas colonies differed markedly from that of the French. Far from prohibiting the departure of undesirables, the English encouraged the migration of religious dissidents, the poor, malcontents, and criminals."[263] provides an explanation for the continuance of these suppressed radical elements and ideas. Indeed, Paine refers to Sir Humphrey Gilbert who writes at a date as early as 1576 "Also we might inhabite some parte of those Countreys, and settle there suche needie people of our Countrie, which now trouble the common welth, and through want here at home, are inforced to commit outragious offences, whereby they are dayly consumed with the Gallowes."[264] Moreover, Hay also notes that the sentence of transportation was given to convicts of various other crimes: enclosure rioters[265], crimes against property committed by "the unpropertied labouring poor"[266], "gentlemen with unusual sexual tastes or guilty of homicide"[267]. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the dispatch of the undesirables to the colonies contributed to the formation of a radical Atlantic.

Christopher Hill, also investigates where the radical elements and ideas that surfaced during the English Civil War disappeared to after the restoration. Accordingly, he traces these radical elements and ideas in the Caribbean and makes note of the fact that "A surprising number of English radicals emigrated to the West Indies either just before or just after 1660."[268] In addition to naming a few of these radicals, he states that "The inhabitants of the islands were a hodge-podge of pauper immigrants (Barbados was described in 1627 as a "city of refuge for poor impoverished persons", in 1655 as "a dunghill whereon England doth cast forth its rubbish".) There were many deportees, especially Irish."[269] Furthermore, "Among others were beggars from Liverpool, royalist prisoners from Scotland, and from England after Penruddock's plot in 1655,

[263] Paine, *The Sea and Civilization*, 1067.
[264] Sir Humphrey Gilbert, quoted in Paine, *The Sea and Civilization*, 1068.
[265] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 21.
[266] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 22.
[267] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 33.
[268] Hill, "Radical Pirates," 167.
[269] Hill, "Radical Pirates," 169

highwaymen taken on the Scottish border, pirates caught on the English high seas, a royalist agent arrested in 1659, dissenters under the Clarendon Code, Monmouthites after 1685. On St Christopher there were Huguenots and other Frenchmen."[270]

In this regard, Hill concludes that

> *many radicals sought refuge in the West Indies, especially in Barbados; squeezed off that island, some — like Morgan —went to Jamaica, where they were a source of recruits for the privateers and buccaneers patronized by that island's former Cromwellian rulers. Some no doubt carried with them ideas which had originated in revolutionary England. But the dependence of the West Indian economy on slaves and subjected Indians must have made these ideas hard to sustain, especially when piracy seemed to offer the only means of livelihood*.[271]

In sum, as Magra argues, despite the suppression of radical ideas during the Restoration, these ideas were spread by way of sea to the Atlantic. On the one hand, sailors carried information between ports on both side of the Atlantic, and on the other, the radicals and dissenters were transported to the colonies. In this way, "The ideas that they shared were passed down from generation to generation."[272]

In this chapter, I have tried to show that capitalism emerged in England as a byproduct of the class struggles between feudal nobility and peasants, and culminated in the dispossession of peasants and other common people, and their separation from direct means of subsistence. Thereby, the wage labor as the commodification of labor became the only way for access to subsistence. This transformation was accompanied by a transformation in the legal arena, which was reflected in the redefinition of property as the conception of absolute private property gained weight over the conception of commons with the enclosure movement. In addition, the creation of new offences against property, which were punishable by death, emphasized the redefinition of property as well as the increasing sacredness of property. The cultural transformation that accompanied these transformations, on the other hand, indicated that poverty became an indispensable part of the social order and idleness was an obstacle against capitalist growth. Therefore, the propertyless poor had to be disciplined in order to

[270] Hill, "Radical Pirates," 169
[271] Hill, "Radical Pirates?" 173
[272] Magra, "Anti-Impressment Riots," 140.

become fit to become wage laborers as well as they had to remain poor in order to be easily disciplined. The political transformation pointed out to a state centralization in the hands of an agrarian capitalist class which, on the other hand, did not disregard mercantile capitalist interests, thereby the emerging capitalism in the countryside thrived upon the international trade. The growing international trade required a massive maritime labor, which had to, despite the increasing dependence of propertyless mass on wage labor, be provided in a considerable rate by impressment, recruitment by force. This employment tactic, together with other labor conditions at sea such as confinement, strict discipline, and dangers of maritime labor, indicated the uniqueness of maritime labor. The dispossession wave, dependence on wage labor, the emerging labor discipline, the redefinition of property, the state centralization were met with resistance both on land and at sea. The wage labor relation was resisted, idleness was not abandoned in spite of the condemnation of contemporary writers, there were food riots against the commodification of food. In addition, more radical movements, the Leveller and the Digger movements, emerged during the English Civil War, which aimed at universal suffrage as well as targeting private property. These instances of resistance in the seventeenth century were followed by sailors' resistance, which connected the golden age piracy, sailor strikes, struggles against impressment and the American Revolution. In this regard, the golden age piracy proved to be the most radical and extreme form of resistance as the pirates could establish a society of their own and could escape, albeit for a limited time, the grasp of the state and capitalism.

CHAPTER 3

OMNIA SUNT COMMUNIA: THE COMMONS AND PREFIGURATIVE POLITICS

The commons are both a historical and a contemporary notion. As can be seen in the previous chapter on the history of capitalism, the commons precede capitalism: The commons were enclosed, thus the commoners were separated from their means of subsistence that they gained through the commons and were subjected to wage labor. However, not only the commons existed before the advent of capitalism but they still exist in the contemporary world. In this way, "commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[273]

The recent revival of the commons in the literature points out to that connectedness of the previous forms of class struggle to the contemporary forms. This chapter aims to review the literature on the commons in order to demonstrate the relevancy of both the accumulation by extra-economic means and the commons to the contemporary prefigurative movements. By doing so, this chapter will provide a theoretical and conceptual framework with which the pirates of the golden age can be analyzed.

In order to do so, firstly, the ongoing character of primitive accumulation will be presented. Then, the risk of cooptation of the commons by capital will be explained and the distinction of the commons on the basis of its position vis-à-vis capital will be made. After a brief history of the contemporary debate on the commons, the tragedy of the commons and governance of the commons, the anti-capitalist commons and its components, namely common goods, commoners and commoning, will be explained. Then, prefigurative politics and prefiguration will be introduced and the prefigurative

[273] Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons,", 47.

character of the commoning activity will be presented. Lastly, the relationship between the commons and violence will be briefly described.

3.1. "Capital Encloses": The Ongoing Character of Primitive Accumulation

In the orthodox Marxist tradition, the commons were seen as a relic of the past, belonging to a specific, pre-capitalist historical stage. The enclosure of the commons, the dominant form of primitive accumulation, paved the way for capitalism, preparing capitalism's preconditions, which were the separation of producers from their means of subsistence, thus subjecting them to wage labor and capital accumulation. "So-called primitive accumulation, the process by which commons are enclosed, was understood to be a one-off process; moreover, a process that was completed several centuries ago. For example, in England the 'enclosures' is a term which is usually assumed to refer to something that happened in the sixteenth century."[274] What distinguishes primitive accumulation from capital reproduction, in this sense, is the lack of capital and wage labor. Therefore, primitive accumulation must establish the wage relationship along with the accumulating capital, which points out to value appropriation outside the capitalist laws of economy. Thus, primitive accumulation separates the producers from their non-capitalist means of subsistence, a separation that depends on use of violence. In this way, commoners losing their access to means of subsistence and their rights to commons are forced into wage labor while the commons are transformed into private property.[275] Thus, both the concept of primitive accumulation and the notion of the commons were considered history in the orthodox Marxist tradition.

Nevertheless, from another perspective, this process of primitive accumulation denotes a temporary interruption in the principle of the common. Especially in the autonomist Marxist tradition, the idea that primitive accumulation, enclosures, and commons belonged to the pre-capitalist history is challenged since "capital encloses."[276] If primitive accumulation is "taken as an extra-economic force that separates the

[274] Massimo De Angelis and David Harvie, "The Commons," in *Routledge Companion to Alternative Organization*, ed. Chris Land et al. (Taylor and Francis, 2014), 281.
[275] Martin Deleixhe, "Conflicts in Common(S)? Radical Democracy and the Governance of the Commons," *Thesis Eleven* 144, no. 1 (February 2018): 59–79, https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513618756089, 70.
[276] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 57.

workers from their means of production, we would be compelled to acknowledge it as a recurring phenomenon not only preceding capitalism but in fact littering its history. For workers organize, be it in cooperatives, unions or political parties, and develop political strategies that have enabled them to wrest back some control over their means of production."[277] Thus, separating them from their newly won control requires extra-economic force, meaning the continuation of primitive accumulation in capitalist mode of production.

In this line, for instance, Massimo de Angelis argues that Marx's primitive accumulation can be taken both as a historical argument and as an argument for continuation. [278] With regard to this, de Angelis stresses three fundamental points regarding primitive accumulation: (1) Both accumulation proper and primitive accumulation contain the separation of producers from means of production. (2) The separation in question is one of the central categories of Marx's thought. (3) The only difference between primitive accumulation and accumulation proper in Marx's thought is the separation's conditions and forms.[279] Once it is put that separation of producers and means of production are common in both forms of accumulation, it is crucial to note that while primitive accumulation means "the ex novo production of the separation", accumulation proper "implies the *reproduction* — on a greater scale — of the same *separation*."[280] The ex novo production, in this regard, indicates extra-economic forces while accumulation proper points out to the economic laws of capitalism. In other words, the ex novo separation of producers from their direct means of subsistence happens through direct extra-economic forces and after this separation occurs there remains no need for extra-economic forces. The separation is reproduced within the limits of economic forces since "the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws."[281] However, when accumulation encounters any kind of obstacle, when the self-evident natural laws of capitalism are challenged, primitive accumulation as the ex novo separation targets these obstacles and challenges.

[277] Deleixhe, "Conflicts in Common(S)," 69-70.
[278] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 2.
[279] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 6.
[280] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 8.
[281] Marx, *Capital*, 900.

According to De Angelis, on the other hand, these obstacles and challenges are an indispensable part of capitalism as is primitive accumulation:

> *divorce embedded in the definition of primitive accumulation can be understood not only as the origin of capital vis-à-vis precapitalist social relations, but also as a reassertion of capital's priorities vis-à-vis those social forces that contest this separation. Thus, precapitalist spaces of autonomy (such as the common land of the English yeomen or the economies of African societies targeted by slave merchants) are not the only targets of primitive accumulation strategies. Enclosure strategies also target any given balance of power among classes that constitutes 'rigidity' – that is, a resistance against the further process of capitalist accumulation, or a reversal of that process. If we conceive social contestation as a continuous element of capitalist relations of production, capital must continuously engage in strategies of primitive accumulation to recreate the 'basis' of accumulation itself*.[282]

The ex novo production of separation, the recreation of the basis of accumulation, in this regard, happens in one or two ways, either when capital discovers new areas to be colonized or when capital's already colonization is challenged and an alternative is presented, like commons.[283] Temporally then, primitive accumulation "refers to the problematic of the preservation and expansion of the capitalist mode of production *any time the producers set themselves up as an obstacle to the reproduction of their separation from the means of production*, a separation understood in the terms described above."[284]

In this way, De Angelis infers two points: "First, separation does not only indicate the rupture *between* modes of production in an epochal period of 'transition'. This implies that primitive accumulation cannot be confined to a distant past... there is nothing indicating that this separation may not occur any time, even within a 'mature' capitalist mode of production, when the conditions for an *ex novo* separation are posited."[285] "Second, insisting on the role of *separation* in the definition of primitive accumulation and stressing that the distinction between accumulation and primitive accumulation is based on the conditions of implementation of this separation opens the

[282] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 69-70.
[283] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 67-68.
[284] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 69.
[285] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 9.

way for investigating what are the different possible forms of primitive accumulation."[286] The other forms of primitive accumulation besides the enclosures in England include slave trade, public debt, international credit system and taxes.[287] This suggests that "primitive accumulation is the *ex-novo* production of the separation between producers and means of production and therefore, in certain conditions, it represents a strategy" and "this social process or strategy can take different forms."[288]

The notion of different forms of primitive accumulation as capital's strategies implies that there are different forms of struggles that disturb the capital's accumulation proper and that require the capital to use the primitive accumulation strategy. De Angelis notes two instances of struggles, the first of which is the Diggers' attempt at commoning by digging the land on St. George Hill in 1649. This attempt, although drawing four or five thousand commoners to the hill, were dispersed one year later. De Angelis considers the Diggers' collective action as an activity aimed "at 'associating the producer with the means of production'"[289] while also considering the dispersion of the Diggers as a form of primitive accumulation that corrects the disturbance introduced by the Diggers by establishing the separation of the producers from the means of subsistence. The second instance considers the struggle over working day. Referring to Marx, De Angelis argues that the workers' struggle to limit the working day erects a social barrier against the capital, which is a form of common since it limits the separation. This form of common, on the other hand, is counterposed by the introduction machinery, which is a form of primitive accumulation since by intensifying labor, it recreates the separation.[290]

In connection with the struggles against the capital to prevent and/or reduce accumulation proper touched upon above, George Caffentzis discusses three temporalities of capitalism, and connects the third temporality that he argues is lesser known than the first two to the discussion on primitive accumulation and its ongoing character. The first two temporalities, linear and circular time, involve respectively work-time, i.e., the length of workday, and reproduction i.e., simple reproduction (M-C-M circle), expanded reproduction (M-C-M' circle), and social reproduction through

[286] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 9.
[287] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 10-11.
[288] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 12.
[289] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 17.
[290] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 18.

which labor power is reproduced and can be challenged by struggles such as those over the length of workday, boycotts, strikes, mobility of workers and simple rejection of biological reproduction. These temporalities are located at the sphere of accumulation proper. The third temporality, tensed time, on the other hand, signifies beginnings, middles, and ends as it is not located at the sphere of accumulation proper, rather it can exist in pre-capitalism, capitalism, or post-capitalism.[291] The tensed time, in this sense, represents "a struggle to prevent the establishment of the preconditions of capitalism and to transcend these conditions once they are established as well. It is not exactly a 'class struggle' for it is an attempt to either deny the presuppositions of class existence or to transcend them."[292]

In this line, despite the capitalists' attempt to postulate capitalism as the only system available in terms of having no beginning and no ending, capitalism, according to Caffentzis, has not only *a* beginning but many beginnings since it is obvious that once its preconditions for existence are in place, capitalism begins, however, the existence of capitalism does not guarantee the continuation of these preconditions.[293] "The logical key to primitive accumulation is the process of depriving people of noncapitalist access to the means of subsistence (metonymically described as the "enclosure of the commons") whenever and wherever this access arises."[294] This means the appearance of the access in question interrupts the continuation of capitalism and forces it to start again, hence the many beginnings of capitalism. In this way, Caffentzis names two class struggle actions operating in the tensed temporality, prevention and commonization: "Both actions are relational, one outside the capitalist circle attempting to bar absorption to the inside, one inside going out and attempting to bar a return. One prevents the loss of, the other expands, the commons. One prevents absorption into capitalist time and the other exits from it."[295] The action of prevention, in Caffentzis' words worth including in length here,

[291] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 83-87.
[292] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 88.
[293] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 88.
[294] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 88.
[295] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 89.

> *arises from a struggle to defend a precapitalist commons that already provides tools and wealth for subsistence. This type of commons offers the possibility of refusing entrance into capitalist relations. Prevention is the ur-class struggle that aborts the formation of the working class. Those who are fated to be workers conduct this struggle in order to stop their metamorphosis…It is a struggle against primitive accumulation with a long "history." ... There is a difficulty in seeing this struggle at times because it does not express itself as a class struggle, and it has often been dismissed by practitioners of standard conceptions of class struggle as reactionary or irrelevant*.[296]

In this line, Caffentzis emphasizes the ongoing character of primitive accumulation as he establishes the existence of precapitalist commons in capitalism through his concept of tensed time. In this way, the defense of precapitalist commons against the enclosures, prevention of capital's penetration into these commons becomes "outward-looking" struggles, rather than being simply "backward-looking" struggles. Moreover, he shows that the precapitalist commons can coexist with capital, which also brings up the possibility that the commons could be coopted by capital as well as the possibility that they could challenge it. For instance, the workers who have access to precapitalist means of subsistence through their families or villages can lengthen their strikes since they can attain food without the mediation of market.[297]

On the role of class struggle in ongoing primitive accumulation, Jim Glassman emphasizes the class struggles for and against proletarianization in order to present the possibility that primitive accumulation is a component of contemporary capitalism. On the one hand, workers' struggles might be directed against unemployment, demand to be employed as waged workers, and aim at full proletarianization. On the other hand, workers might resist against full proletarianization in order to protect their independence by maintaining their access to non-capitalist means of subsistence. According to Glassman, then, proletarianization is not an inevitable direction that capitalism takes, but a process dependent on class struggle. While capitalists think that they can take advantage of reserve army of labor by keeping proletarianization low to control wages, the workers might fight for proletarianization in order to gain access to wages. Or, whereas capitalists want full proletarianization in order to increase production, the

[296] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 89.
[297] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 89-90.

workers might, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, resist against this process.[298] Thus, "the fact that proletarianization-retarding forces emanating from class struggle will always likely be present, implies that primitive accumulation is a more enduring process than Marx suggested in the moments where he discusses it as a historical phase."[299]

While de Angelis, Caffentzis and Glassman emphasize struggles against the capital in their discussions on the ongoing character of primitive accumulation, David Harvey places his discussion within the framework of the theory of falling rate of profit and the crises of overaccumulation. Overaccumulation, in this sense, "means a condition of surpluses of labour (rising unemployment) and surpluses of capital (registered as a glut of commodities on the market that cannot be disposed of without a loss, as idle productive capacity, and/or as surpluses of money capital lacking outlets for productive and profitable investment)."[300] These surpluses of labor and capital, in turn, lead to a failure in accumulation through expanded reproduction. The capital's solution to this failure and overaccumulation crisis, according to Harvey, comprises of spatio-temporal fixes that represent "accumulation by dispossession".

> *The spatio-temporal 'fix', on the other hand, is a metaphor for solutions to capitalist crises through temporal deferment and geographical expansion. The production of space, the organization of wholly new territorial divisions of labour, the opening up of new and cheaper resource complexes, of new dynamic spaces of capital accumulation, and the penetration of pre-existing social formations by capitalist social relations and institutional arrangements (such as rules of contract and private property arrangements) provide multiple ways to absorb existing capital and labour surpluses*.[301]

In this way, capital may invest in public in order to postpone the results of overaccumulation or may open up or penetrate new geographical sites, hence the spatio-temporal fix. However, this fix results in dispossession of the people on the one hand,

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[298] Jim Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation, Accumulation by Dispossession, Accumulation by 'Extra-Economic' Means," *Progress in Human Geography* 30, no. 5 (October 2006): 608–25, https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132506070172, 615-16.
[299] Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation," 616.
[300] David Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession," *Socialist Register* 40 (2004), 64.
[301] Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism," 65-66.

and on the other, the accumulation of capital. Since it is an ongoing process, Harvey prefers to call this process accumulation by dispossession instead of original or primitive accumulation. In addition to the forms of primitive accumulation described by Marx, such as the commodification of land, evictions of peasants, the triumph of private property rights, elimination of commons rights, commodification of labor, processes of resource appropriation, slave trade, international credit system, national debt[302], Harvey argues that accumulation by dispossession introduced new mechanisms of accumulation. These new mechanisms include intellectual property rights in terms of genetic material patents and licenses; exploitation of environmental commons such as air, water, and land; commodification of culture; privatization of public goods and services that range from social security and public healthcare to water, from universities to welfare. All these new mechanisms represent new enclosures of the commons.[303] Although Harvey focuses on the role of accumulation by dispossession in capitalism's expansion into the periphery, his emphasis on privatization, particularly privatization demanded by the IMF establishes the close relations between the accumulation by dispossession in the periphery and in the core. In this line, privatization emerges as an important process by which capital can increase proletarianization and commodification of public goods and services.[304]

De Angelis also lists "privatisation, marketisation, cuts in entitlements both North and South, effects of structural adjustment policies, biopiracy, intellectual property rights, resource privatisation" as types of enclosure and argues that they "share a common character: *the forcible separation of people from whatever access to social wealth they have which is not mediated by competitive markets and money as capital*."[305] The access in question provide people with autonomy to some extent from the capitalist market relations whereas the new enclosures aims to destroy the commons that provide the access to non-market means of subsistence and the autonomy from market.[306]

[302] Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism," 74.
[303] Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism," 75.
[304] Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation," 620.
[305] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 75.
[306] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 75.

The increasing privatization, proletarianization and commodification as mechanisms of new enclosures are what enabled for example, Midnight Notes Collective to conceptualize "The New Enclosures" as well as to declare that the 1980s "has seen the largest Enclosure of the worldly Common in history."[307] Whereas the old enclosures were the process by which the commoners of the old were transformed firstly into beggars, paupers, vagabonds, and then into wage laborers; the new enclosures are again "the common denominator of proletarian experience across the globe" as they force millions "from their land, their jobs, their homes through wars, famines, plagues, and the IMF ordered devaluations (the four knights of the modern apocalypse)."[308] In this way, "once again, as at the dawn of capitalism, the physiognomy of the world proletariat is that of the pauper, the vagabond, the criminal, the panhandler, the street peddler, the refugee sweatshop worker, the mercenary, the rioter."[309]

Midnight Notes Collective lists five aspects of the new enclosures. The first two are methods utilized by the old enclosures as well: putting an end to non-capitalist access to means of subsistence and appropriating land for debt.[310] In addition to these usual methods of enclosing, the new enclosures, thirdly, take advantage of migration and renders the labor increasingly mobile.[311] As a fourth method, the new enclosures transform humans as well as animals and land into mutants by destroying the environment, and by engineering and patenting genes, which instead of the age long dream of capital sending people to labor in space, turns the earth into space as "millions are already living in space-colony conditions: no oxygen to breathe, limited social/physical contact, a desexualized life, difficulty of communication, lack of sun and green ... even the voices of the migrating birds are missing."[312] Moreover, particularly in the service industry, the appearance of the worker also gained importance for capital, pointing out to the enclosure of the bodily common, which was, until recent, out of reach

[307] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," *The Commoner*, no. 2 (2001): 1–15, https://thecommoner.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/New-Enclosures-Midnight-Notes-Collective.pdf., 1.
[308] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 2.
[309] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 4.
[310] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 4-5.
[311] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 5.
[312] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 5-6.

of the enclosing capital.[313] The last aspect of the new enclosures, according to Midnight Notes Collective, was that they needed socialism to collapse.[314]

In conclusion, following Glassman, there is merit in discussion of primitive accumulation as an ongoing character of capitalism since separation of producers from their lands and privatization of resources are crucial processes for both historical primitive accumulation and ongoing accumulation by extra-economic means, thus the discussion remains relevant for contemporary transformations. In addition, the discussion also reveals the heterogenous and complex character of capitalism.[315] Thus, it is crucial to challenge the notion of primitive accumulation as a part of long gone historical, pre-capitalist stage since while acknowledging the differences between the historical forms of primitive accumulation and its contemporary forms and the different contexts of these, "to emphasise their common character allows us to interpret the new without forgetting the hard lessons of the old."[316] In this sense, De Angelis, by establishing the ongoing character of primitive accumulation, stresses two points: firstly, neoliberalism takes different forms in the Global North and Global South, however, there are commonalities among these forms. Secondly, the alternative to capitalism should address "the issue of the direct access of the means of existence, production and communication, the issue of commons."[317] Nevertheless, as noted, the existence of precapitalist commons alongside with capital suggests the risk of enclosure of these commons by capital as well as the risk of cooptation, which we will turn in the next section.

3.2. The Risk of Cooptation: Pro-Capitalist Commons?

The popularity of the commons in the recent decades indicates a paradigm shift in mainstream economics, which is signified by the Nobel award in economics received by Elinor Ostrom with her study on the commons. However, the popularity in question is both a celebrated and concerning development since it "puts commons discourse firmly within the mainstream, in turn making more visible emancipatory politics

[313] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 7.
[314] Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," 5.
[315] Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation," 609.
[316] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 19.
[317] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation," 20.

grounded in commons. Concern, because any paradigm shift signaled by the Nobel may not be an epistemic shift *away* from capitalism, but rather a paradigm shift *within* the strategies of management of capitalist social relations."[318]

The paradigm shift amounts to a "commons fix", a strategy adopted by capital in order to curb its own devastating effects on both the social and ecological reproduction. In this way, capital is face to face with an impasse consisting "of the devastation of systems of social reproduction through reductions of wages and welfare over the past 30 years as work has become more atomized, flexible and precarious as well the increasing inability of natural ecosystems to support capital in its endless quest for greater resource extraction and cost-shifting externalities, such as the free use of the atmosphere as a waste dump."[319] However, the impasse in question requires a solution which cannot be provided by capitalism alone since capital needs growth and accumulation in order to maintain its existence, and growth and accumulation strategies that are feasible for capital are the ones that will deepen its devastating effects on social and ecological reproduction. Hence, according to De Angelis, "to solve or at least to address this impasse, capital needs the commons, or at least specific, domesticated versions of them. It needs a *commons* fix. Since neoliberalism is not about to give up its management of the world, it will likely have to ask the commons to help manage the devastation. And if the commons are not there, capital will have to promote them somehow."[320]

Nevertheless, the relation between capital and the commons is an ambiguous one since as much as capital needs the commons through a fix that will coopt them, the commons can also go the opposite way. In other words, the commons might constitute alternative and autonomous relations of social production. In this way, "their co-dependence and co-evolution makes it difficult to point out which of the two systems uses the other."[321] De Angelis and Harvie refer to a study on village commons in South Africa conducted by the anthropologist Claude Meillassoux. According to the study, the

[318] De Angelis and Harvie, "The Commons," 289.
[319] Massimo De Angelis, "Crises, Capitalism and Cooperation: Does Capital Need a Commons Fix," in *The Wealth of the Commons: A World beyond Market and State*, ed. David Bollier and Silke Helfrich (Amherst, Ma: Levellers Press, 2012), 184–91, 185.
[320] De Angelis, "Crises, Capitalism and Cooperation," 185.
[321] De Angelis and Harvie, "The Commons," 290.

reproduction and subsistence provided in the village commons, essentially by women, enabled male workers to migrate in order to get waged jobs, and from the capital's perspective, this lowered the cost of these workers' reproduction. However, the productivity of the commons had an enormous effect on the availability of workers for capital as well as on the cost-cutting strategies of capital since the unproductive commons would increase the cost of reproduction for capital while the productive commons would lower the number of workers migrating or would strengthen the negotiating power of the workers vis-à-vis their employers.[322]

Therefore, in addition to enclosures of the commons, cooptation of the commons emerges as a strategy of capital. Capital's cooptation strategies might be observed in the World Bank's attempt at promoting the commons in the global South, by which such aspects of the commons as community participation or pooling resources were encouraged only in order to link credit associations created in common to the microcredit institutions and banks, or the "Big Society" campaign in the UK which sought to delegate public services to charities under the guise of community involvement.[323] In this line, Max Haiven argues that there is an ongoing enclosure on the plane of ideas as well when he speaks of "the enclosure of (the idea) of the commons."[324] Thus, the ideas such as democracy, human rights, gender equality are employed to serve neoliberalism; the words such as revolution, environmentalism, sustainability, green and creativity are utilized for advertisement, for gentrification, and for selling commodities.[325] In a similar manner, "Today, the name and the idea of the commons appear everywhere to rebrand capitalism and sell us the illusion of community."[326] City planning uses the word commons while in actuality public spaces are enclosed, the term digital commons is used while free labor of coders or users are commodified by companies, the microfinance loans from the IMF or the World Bank monetize commons, local attempts to sustain communities that try to compensate the

[322] De Angelis and Harvie, "The Commons," 290.
[323] De Angelis, "Crises, Capitalism and Cooperation," 188.
[324] Max Haiven, "Commons as Actuality, Ethos, and Horizon," in *Educational Commons in Theory and Practice: Global Pedagogy and Politics*, ed. Alexander J. Means, Derek Ford, and Graham B. Slater (New York, Ny: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 23.
[325] Haiven, "Commons as Actuality, Ethos, and Horizon," 24.
[326] Haiven, "Commons as Actuality, Ethos, and Horizon," 24.

lack of public services are encouraged by neoliberalism.[327] In terms of the privatizations in the Global South, "Starting from the 1990s onwards, the World Bank has explored the idea of common property management, eventually stating in the 1992 World Bank Report that Common Property Resources can foster more effective rural development than nationalization."[328] In this way, "where capital uses the commons as a fix for its crisis, commoning is harnessed by capital and, in turn, the possibilities for expanding commons are constrained. The goal here is not to provide alternatives to capital, but to make a particular node of capital – a region or a city perhaps, a 'sustainable community' – more competitive, while somehow addressing the problems of social reproduction at the same time."[329] Therefore, "'cooptation' mainly refers to that process of revalorization of the Commons by mainstream economists and capitalist planners that have finally understood that collective management of natural resources can be more efficient and less prone to conflict than privatization, and that the Commons can produce for the market very well."[330]

Caffentzis also emphasizes the transformation of the concept commons "from a word referring rather archaically to a grassy square in the centre of New England towns to one variously used by real estate developers, 'free software' programmers, ecological activists and peasant revolutionaries to describe very different, indeed conflicting, purposes and realities."[331] The conflicting realities and purposes here points out to Caffentzis' distinction regarding the commons: *"(1) pro-capitalist commons that are compatible with and potentiate capitalist accumulation and (2) anti-capitalist commons that are antagonistic to and subversive of capitalist accumulation.*"[332] In this way, Caffentzis conceptualizes what De Angelis refers to as "commons fix" as "Neoliberalism's 'Plan B,' that is, the use of the tools of the commons to 'save'

[327] Haiven, "Commons as Actuality, Ethos, and Horizon," 25.
[328] Iolanda Bianchi, "The Post-Political Meaning of the Concept of Commons: The Regulation of the Urban Commons in Bologna," *Space and Polity* 22, no. 3 (2018): 287–306, https://doi.org/10.1080/13562576.2018.1505492, 290.
[329] De Angelis and Harvie, "The Commons," 290.
[330] Bianchi, "The Post-Political Meaning of the Concept of Commons," 290.
[331] George Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons': Neoliberalism's 'Plan B' or the Original Disaccumulation of Capital?" *New Formations*, no. 69 (July 26, 2010): 23–41, https://doi.org/10.3898/newf.69.01.2010, 23.
[332] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 25.

Neoliberalism from itself."[333] Thus, in a nutshell, neoliberalism, which was a response to the crisis faced by Keynesianism that sought to contain class struggle but started to fail in the 1970s, ushered a new wave of privatization and commodification of goods and services that had been publicized and de-commodified as the result of past class struggles and the attempts to contain them. These "new enclosures" as they are called by the Midnight Notes Collective targeted the Global North as well the Global South, and Caffentzis stresses the World Bank's attack on the latter which took the form of Structural Adjustment Programs in the 1980s. The programs in question aimed to direct the agriculture in Africa to raising export crops, which also required the privatization of the communal lands. The need to privatize was supported by Garrett Hardin's piece that defended the enclosures against the commons, "The Tragedy of the Commons", which will be touched on in the next section.[334]

Nevertheless, the new enclosures were met with resistance in Latin America and Africa. Regarding the former, Caffentzis refers to the 1994 Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico, and the 1999 Water Wars in Bolivia. Yet, these were resistance movements that began later, and there were movements for

> *resistance to land and resource privatisation that had already taken off in the 1980s, a decade that saw the launching of a world-wide land war. Up the Andes into Central America and Mexico there has been an armed struggle over the control of land (frequently referred to in the US as an aspect of the 'drug problem'). In West Africa there was a micro-level of armed struggle against land seizures by the state and development banks (frequently discussed as anachronistic 'tribal wars'). In Southern Africa, the battle over land and its control, both in town and country, is included as an aspect of the 'struggle against apartheid,' while in East Africa it is considered a 'problem of nationalities'.*[335]

Therefore, in the face of the fierce resistance movements, the view of the commons saw a transformation. The World Developmet Report in 1992 acknowledged the commons in Africa in a limited way while the World Bank admitted that the commons could administer their resources better than larger institutions. In this way, neoliberalism's Plan B acknowledged the commons, albeit as a strategy that aimed at the

[333] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 25.
[334] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 26-27.
[335] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 28.

de-escalation of resistance against the new enclosures.[336] "Thus, the World Bank considered the Commons as a commodifiable collective form of management that is an alternative to a private one but one that is actually better than state management; this is because it is an arrangement that may in any case foster capitalist development, especially when aggressive privatisations are not recommendable."[337]

3.3. Tragedy of the Commons vs. Governance of the Commons

The literature on the commons in contemporary debates starts with the defense of the enclosures. Garrett Hardin, trying to tackle the population problem, describes a pasture used in common by herders who, as rational individuals, pursue to maximize their gains in his influential article "The Tragedy of the Commons". Every individual herder calculates that adding one animal increases their gain while also increasing the overgrazing of the common pasture. While the gain in question directly belongs to the individual herder, the cost of overgrazing is shared by all herders. Therefore, Hardin concludes that the rationality dictates that the herders keep on adding animals to their herds and that all the individual herders using the pasture take this course. "Therein is the tragedy. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit – in a world that is limited…Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all."[338] The only way to prevent this tragedy and the potential ruin of freedom is either privatization or state management. The privatization solution suggested by Hardin, of course, "had impact not only in the realm of demography or biology, but also in neoliberal economics, as an irrefutable proof that privatization was the only answer available against free riding and inefficient use of common and public resources."[339]

On the one hand, "the problem with Hardin's model concerns the fact that its players are cast in a rationality and measuring process that is uniquely the type of subject portrayed by capital: *Homo economicus* – neo-liberal economic man."[340] On the other hand, in Hardin's tale the pasture is used in common while the herders' animals were

[336] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons',"28-29.
[337] Bianchi, "The Post-Political Meaning of the Concept of Commons," 291.
[338] Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243–48, 1244.
[339] Matías Saidel, "Discussing the Common(s) in Neoliberal Capitalism: From Ontology to Politics," *Fragmentos de Filosofía*, no. 16 (2018): 65–81, 68.
[340] De Angelis and Harvie, "The Commons," 284.

private property. “If the cattle were held in common, of course, the metaphor would not work. It would then be clear that it was private property in cattle and individual utility-maximizing behavior that lay at the heart of the problem.”[341] Moreover, Peter Linebaugh argues that the rational herder is a fiction evoked by Hardin, “it is a fantasy. What he most likely means is the selfish herdsman or the lonely herdsman, because, in history, the commons is always governed. The pinder, the hayward, or some other officer elected by the commoners will impound that cow, or will fine that greedy shepherd who puts more than his share onto the commons.”[342]

On the governance of the commons Elinor Ostrom should be definitely noted since her “work and the subsequent literature it inspired thus mark the start of a broader shift in scholarly thinking about the commons and policy making.”[343] Indeed, Ostrom, a political scientist, received a Nobel award in economics in 2009. While Hardin’s homo economicus acted exclusively based on their individual interest and was represented as operating in a vacuum without communicating with other individuals, Ostrom shows that this representation of homo economicus is a fiction and individuals act, in fact, in a way limited by social norms. “The widespread recognition that individuals are social beings who act upon values, concerns, incentives and preferences that extend beyond narrowly defined economic self-interest, and that factors such as mutual trust, altruism, reciprocity and cooperation should become key elements in any debate on the commons, is a major accomplishment; especially given that the zeitgeist was Hardin’s tragedy.”[344]

While Ostrom stresses the social organization aspect of the commons in the sense that despite Hardin’s proposed tragedy, the commons can be and have been sustained with the help of self-organization, she conceptualizes common-pool resources (CPRs), which “refers to a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use.”[345] Furthermore, she makes a distinction between

[341] David Harvey, “The Future of the Commons,” *Radical History Review*, no. 109 (2011): 101–7, https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2010-017, 101.
[342] Peter Linebaugh, *Stop, Thief! The Commons, Enclosures and Resistance* (Oakland, Ca: Pm Press, 2014), 147.
[343] Bengi Akbulut, “Commons,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ecological Economics: Nature and Society*, ed. Clive L. Spash (London: Routledge, 2017), 395–403, 397.
[344] Akbulut, “Commons,” 397.
[345] Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 30.

resource systems and resource units. While resource systems are "stock variables that are capable, under favorable conditions, of producing a maximum quantity of a flow variable without harming the stock or the resource system itself."[346], "Resource units are what individuals appropriate or use from resource systems."[347] In this line while fishing grounds and groundwater basins are examples of resource systems, the fish caught in a fishing ground or water collected from a groundwater basin are examples of resource units.[348] Therefore, as Fournier states, for Ostrom, what are commons are resource systems while resource units appropriated from the commons are private property of the community members[349], which indicates that Ostrom does not go beyond Hardin's framework in which the pasture shared by the herders is the common while both the animals of individual herders and the fodder consumed by the animals are herders' private property.

As Martin Deleixhe argues, Ostrom shows the existence of sustainable commons, some of which are centuries old, since although being rational and individual actors, the commoners Ostrom refers to are aware of the that cooperation is key to the survival of the commons. Therefore, they can limit consumption of individuals in order to maintain the common resources through a collective decision-making process, and they develop mechanisms to monitor, to solve problems, and to prevent free riders. In this way, through autonomous organization, they can remain independent of the two solutions suggested by Hardin to the "tragedy of the commons": privatization or public control.[350]

Through examining various case studies, Ostrom designates eight principles that the sustainable CPR institutions follow: (1) the clear definition of individuals who use common resources as well as of the CPR's boundaries, (2) rules regulating provision and appropriation are accommodated to the local conditions, (3) collective decision-making process, (4) a monitoring process in which the monitors are liable to the community members, (5) the violation of rules of the community is sanctioned in a

[346] Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 30.
[347] Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 30.
[348] Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 30.
[349] Valérie Fournier, "Commoning: On the Social Organisation of the Commons," *M@N@Gement* 16, no. 4 (2013): 433–53, 439.
[350] Deleixhe, "Conflicts in Common(S," 62.

graduated way, (6) quick and low-cost access to mechanisms for conflict resolution, (7) community self-organization recognized by external authorities, and (8) regarding the large systems comprising of local CPRs, multi-layered organization of "nested enterprises".[351]

Nevertheless, Ostrom "only considers some aspects of the commons. She explores how communities organise in commons to share resources between individual members, but ignores the fact that commons may not only be distributed in common but also may be used in common and in this process may be reproductive of community."[352]

3.4. Anti-capitalist Commons and the Commoning Activity

Whereas Ostrom considers the commons as mere shared resources, this study, following Federici, Caffentzis, De Angelis and Linebaugh, focuses on the collective, relational and dynamic aspects of the commons, which are best represented by the term "commoning" that was suggested, or to put it better, unearthed from the dusty pages of history by Linebaugh: "To speak of the commons as if it were a natural resource is misleading at best and dangerous at worst—the commons is an activity and, if anything, it expresses relationships in society that are inseparable from relations to nature. It might be better to keep the word as a verb, an activity, rather than as a noun, a substantive."[353]

To again cite Federici who refers to Linebaugh, "commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[354] Linebaugh stresses the importance of the Magna Carta for the commons in history as well as for the commons today as he shows that the Magna Carta was not the only charter forced on the king, but there was another charter, Charter of the Forest, that accompanied the Magna Carta. The message conveyed by the two charters complementing each other was that "political and legal rights can exist only on an economic foundation. To be free citizens we must also be equal producers and consumers."[355] Therefore, the political rights listed in the Magna

[351] Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*, 90.
[352] Fournier, "Commoning," 435.
[353] Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 279.
[354] Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," 47.
[355] Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto*, 6.

Carta was in actuality supported by the common rights in the Charter of the Forest. Recalling, at this point, Caffentzis' conceptualization of tensed time that the struggle for the commons takes two forms, prevention and commonization, the Charter of the Forest indicates a struggle to prevent the enclosures. Yet the tensed time suggests the existence of the precapitalist and postcapitalist commons together in the same temporality:

> *For the commoning process I refer to involves the ongoing transformation of the commodified forms of life into a commons. This is not a process that is all-or-nothing nor is it a utopian vision of a "future" life. On the contrary, it recognizes that much of the commons is already operating, often extensively, under capitalism and the issue is the self- organized expansion of that area of life that is common. That is, the class struggle in this temporal dimension is not only a matter of preventing enclosures (and thus an entrance into capital's time) but to actually expanding the commons into new areas of social life (and so exiting capital's time). This expansive commonizing process is not an ideal safely ensconced in the future perfect. It is time future in the present or it is nothing*.[356]

The fact that much of the commons is already operating under capitalism, the existence of the tensed time, also indicates that "one need not wait for some mythical 'beginning of history' - after a centuries-long march through war and deprivation - to achieve the goal of a cooperative 'free association' of producers (as envisioned by both Marx and the anarchists of the First International) ... it was already here and working (though often in the so-called marginal areas of the world economy and with many distortions)."[357] Despite the marginality and distortions, this also suggests a way out of capitalism since the anti-capitalist commons have transformation as their objective in the sense that they do not only seek to provide remedies against capitalism's detrimental effects while staying within its limits but also they create alternative social relations that points out to the beyond of capitalism. They are spaces autonomous from the capitalist market relations and from the state in order to resist the ongoing enclosure movement by reclaiming the control over people's own lives. They aim to as well as to bring into existence the "free associations of producers."[358] However, the already operation of the

[356] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 90-91.
[357] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 24.
[358] George Caffentzis and Silvia Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," *Community Development Journal* 49, no. 1 (2014): 92–105, https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsu006, 100-101.

commons under capitalism should not be taken for granted as "there are no commons without incessant activities of commoning, of (re)producing in common. But it is through (re)production in common that communities of producers decide for themselves the norms, values and measures of things…there is no commons without commoning, there is no commons without communities of producers and particular flows and modes of relations."[359]

In connection with the incessant commoning activities, Gigi Roggero draws attention to the constant risk of enclosure. Discussing the common with regard to the framework of cognitive capitalism, he stresses the double status of the common: "it is both the form of production and the source of new social relations; it is what living knowledge produces and what capital exploits. This tension between autonomy and subordination, between self-valorization and expropriation, takes the form of a transition."[360] Connected to this transition, which include the risk of enclosure as well as the possibility of resistance, Roggero argues that the common does not equal to the commons, which indicate goods that exist in nature such as earth, water as well as knowledge and information. While the concept of commons focuses on property relations, the concept of the common point out to relations of production since "There is no longer an outside to the relations of production: they are the site of capture and exploitation, but also of resistance and liberation. They are the location of the double status of the production of the common."[361] In this regard, the common necessitates the activity of commoning. Moreover, according to Roggero, the concept of the commons points out to a universal subject while the common points out to the class, which is not of course, the sociological concept of class, since without class struggle we cannot speak of the existence of class.[362] Therefore, "Subjectivity is at one and the same time the condition of possibility for struggle as well as what is at stake in it… we cannot talk about class as a being, but as a becoming."[363] The issue of subjectivity also indicates that the common does not happen in the future, it happens in the present since *being* means

[359] Massimo De Angelis, "The Production of Commons and the 'Explosion' of the Middle Class," *Antipode* 42, no. 4 (2010): 954–77, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2010.00783.x, 955.
[360] Gigi Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," *Rethinking Marxism* 22, no. 3 (July 2010): 357–73, https://doi.org/10.1080/08935696.2010.490369, 360.
[361] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 361.
[362] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 363.
[363] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 364.

to be fixed in a temporality while *becoming* happens in the now as well as pointing out to the beyond. Therefore, the common longs for neither the past nor the future. Nostalgia is ineffective, even reactionary since longing for the past or the future prevents any change in the present. "Without the necessity of waiting for the ''not yet'' and for the teleological arrival of their moment of action, and without being forced to delegate their action to representational actors or to state sovereignty, the contemporary figures of living labor are in a position to overturn the absence of the future in the fullness of the decision in their present."[364] "So the common is not a Utopia: it is not a place that is yet to exist or that will exist in the future. The common exists here and now, and it is striving for liberation. In this context, what we refer to as ''the event'' is never an origin: the beginning is always the organization of the present and its power to make history."[365] In this regard, Roggero argues that considering the common with reference to relations of production makes it possible to connect struggles over subjectivity to struggles against exploitation. The struggle against exploitation by way of (re)claiming the collective control over production denotes both a critique of and resistance against exploitation and new ways for becoming, i.e., creating new subjectivities through new social relations. These, in turn, points out to the beyond of dichotomy of private and public, the autonomous common.[366]

Michael Hardt also stresses the production of subjectivity as a crucial component of the common, albeit with reference to biopolitical production. With regard to this, he sees the common not as a part of capitalism as in the pro-capitalist commons or as a part of state socialism as in the public property owned by the state and argues that despite the fact that it appears as we are faced only two alternatives, which are either socialism or capitalism, there is another alternative. While the latter means that privatization is the remedy for the malignities of state control, the former points out to that state control is the remedy for the malignities of capital. However, "We need to explore another possibility: neither the private property of capitalism nor the public property of socialism but the common in communism."[367]

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[364] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 367.
[365] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 368.
[366] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 370-371.
[367] Michael Hardt, "The Common in Communism," *Rethinking Marxism* 22, no. 3 (July 2010): 346–56,

In this way, Hardt argues, referring to Marx and Engels, that while communism actually meant "abolition of private property", its meaning has transformed into the regulation of social and economic spheres under state control. In order to challenge this, Hardt states that the available forms of organization should be analyzed, which also requires that contemporary social and economic production relations should be examined. This also includes the examination of contemporary composition of labor as well as property relations.[368] In this line, Hardt, referring to "1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts", states that Marx denotes a transition from immobile property, for instance land, to mobile property as represented by industrial production in the nineteenth century. This allows Hardt to draw parallels between the transition from immobile property to mobile property and the contemporary transition from material property to immaterial property. These transitions in question, however, means that one form of property becomes hegemonic within the economy and refers to a qualitative change, not a quantitative one. In this way, Hardt, together with Toni Negri state that the hegemonic position of industrial production is being replaced by the hegemony of biopolitical or immaterial production.[369] The biopolitical or immaterial production, in turn, indicates "the production of ideas, information, images, knowledges, code, languages, social relationships, affects, and the like."[370]

Although these are not entirely new forms of production, what Hardt argues is that the characteristics of these forms of production are increasingly being imposed on industrial production. On the one hand, knowledge, information, image, and code are becoming crucial for industrial production, and on the other, care and affect production are becoming essential for economy. In this way, Hardt stresses intellectual property as perhaps the ultimate sign of immaterial production's hegemony. The notion of intellectual property, whose main tools are copyrights and patents that are used in order to enclose the information and knowledge which might be called technical or professional as well as the natural and social common wealth such as genes, seeds or indigenous knowledge, also brings forth the discussion on the common. On the one

https://doi.org/10.1080/08935696.2010.490365, 346.
[368] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 346-347.
[369] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 347-348.
[370] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 348-349.

hand, it seems possible to privatize and enclose ideas, languages, code or images, and on the other, it is difficult to enforce ownership on these since they can be reproduced or shared with ease. In this line, Hardt even argues that despite the fact that they are privatized and enclosed, goods such as these tend to become common. In addition, the productivity of these goods actually depends on their being shared and common, which also reveals a contradiction in capitalism: While enclosing the common in the form of these goods make them less productive, turning to common in order to prevent this reduction in productivity subverts the capitalist property relations. This is of course valid for the common discussed above since Hardt, despite noting that such a distinction is not very enduring, distinguishes between the natural common such as the earthly resources such as air, land, water; and the artificial common such as language, ideas emanating from the creativity and labor of humans. Therefore, due to the contradiction discussed above, while the enclosure of the natural common occurs through extractive industries among other forms, the enclosure of the artificial common by neoliberalism is more contradictory and complex, and takes the form of rent instead of privatization. In contrast to the profit generated by industrial production, the rent generated through patents and copyrights pushes capital into an external position from the production process since any interference coming from capital means less productivity. This indicates the existence of autonomy for the common albeit being controlled to some extent as well as being exploited.[371]

In this way, according to Hardt, "this development of capital is not good in itself - and the tendential dominance of immaterial or biopolitical production carries with it a series of new and more severe forms of exploitation and control. And yet it is important to recognize that capital's own development provides the tools for liberation from capital, and specifically here it leads to the increased autonomy of the common and its productive circuits."[372] On the other hand, Hardt also argues that capital produces objects as well as subjects and taking biopolitical and immaterial production into consideration, the production of subjectivity gains much more importance.[373] Thus, "the biopolitical process is not limited to the reproduction of capital as a social relation but

[371] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 349-351.
[372] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 352.
[373] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 353.

also presents the potential for an autonomous process that could destroy capital and create something entirely new."[374] Therefore, "what private property is to capitalism and what state property is to socialism, the common is to communism."[375]

Caffentzis and Federici propose six criteria as not a strict guideline but as loose principles that would enable a general framework in order to achieve the anti-capitalist commons and the issue of production of subjectivity is observed in these as well: (1) Although there are commons all around us such as air and language, commons are created through social action as they do not simply refer to material things but also to constitutive social practices and relations. Nevertheless, they have a reproductive aspect as well since they are necessary for maintenance of life. (2) For the maintenance of life, commons must include resources, natural or social such as land, water, knowledge, communication, which should be used not as commodities but for their use values. However, the *common wealth* in the form of these resources are not public goods since these are outside of people's control and under state control. (3) Yet, the struggle against the privatization of the public goods and services should be connected with the struggle over the commons as the public goods and services contain both the past struggles over social security or public healthcare and the social labor put to construct them. (4) Community is an indispensable part of commons, however, the community is in question does not refer to gated communities which select members. The members of community of commons are selected according to their contribution to the commons' reproduction. This also entails that community is both reproduced and created by the relations within the commons. (5) Rules regulating the usage and reproduction of the commons are required for the commons and these rules, in general, comprise of collective decision-making, non-hierarchical organization of power, and equal access. (6) Egalitarian relations are the basis of commons as is equal access to means of production and reproduction. With regard to these principles, then, commons do not only refer to shared resources but also to the formation of new, collective subjectivities. The commons, in this sense, consists of common goods, community/commoners and the act of commoning. Furthermore, the commons do not point to an end that will be reached in

[374] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 354.
[375] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 355.

an uncertain future when non-capitalist social relations are constructed, rather they are the means of achieving that future.[376]

As Łukasz Moll argues, De Angelis also stresses the relational aspect of the common and the need to constitute it. The constitution in question is possible through class struggle, which does not seek to acquire land, resources or political power in the sense of state control. The common is located in a liminality, on the borders of capitalism, and is possible through collective action such as solidarity, commoning, and mutual aid. In this sense, De Angelis does not consider the common as a part of the pre-capitalist history or as something that will be constituted in the post-capitalist future, but as existing in the now through the ongoing acts of resistance that constitute alternatives to the capital. In this way the common and resistance to enclosures represent both a negative and a positive struggle: the struggle against capital and the struggle for the common.[377] Or rather, the struggle through commons: "capital generates itself *through* enclosures, while subjects in struggle generate themselves *through* commons. Hence 'revolution' is not struggling *for* commons, but *through* commons, not for dignity, but through dignity…Life *despite* capitalism, as a *constituent* process, not *after* capitalism, as a constituted future state of things."[378]

The relational aspect of the commons originates from common goods' twofold character, which

> *is this: on the one hand it is a use value for a plurality; on the other it requires a plurality claiming and sustaining the ownership of the common good, and this can be done only through the creation of relational values, that is, values that select the 'goods and bads' of social action while at the same time sustaining and (re)producing one another, social relations, social practice and the ecology in which social practice is embedded*.[379]

The twofold character in question is what is crucial for understanding commons as social systems instead of considering commons as only common goods. It includes

[376] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 101-103.
[377] Łukasz Moll, "In, Out, for or beyond Capital? Four Social Ontologies of the Common," in *Communism: Return to the New Commons?*, 1–12, 10.
[378] Massimo De Angelis, *The Beginning of History Value Struggles and Global Capital* (Pluto Press, 2007), 239.
[379] Massimo De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia: On the Commons and the Transformation to Postcapitalism* (London: Zed Books, 2017), 30-31.

the commoners, the plurality claiming and sustaining the ownership on the one hand, and on the other, points out to a dynamism of commons as social systems, arising from two processes, one internal and one external processes. The internal process involves the commoners' establishing ownership and forming social relations as well as contestation and negotiation regarding the forms of these relations. The external process involves the commons' relation to other commons or capitalist systems and denotes the possibility of commons' expansion as well as the risk of enclosure or cooptation.[380] In addition to the common goods and commoners, the activity of commoning constitutes the third element of the commons: "Commoning is the life activity through which common wealth is reproduced, extended and comes to serve as the basis for a new cycle of commons (re)production, and through which social relations among commoners – including the rules of a governance system – are constituted and reproduced."[381]

Therefore, it is obvious that commoning is a social activity, which does not say much since there are other social activities such as wage labor. At this point, De Angelis invokes John Holloway's 'power to': "The doing is in this sense the exercise of many human powers, understood as *powers to*. To talk about commoning is to talk about a constituent force of new social relations, but within a setting, a context, in which these powers to encounter the limit of capital's *power over*."[382] In this line, commoning, as a social activity of doing, as a form of 'power to', reproduces both the common goods and resources and the community itself. Furthermore, it also creates autonomy, auto-production and boundaries that defines one particular commons by separating it from other commons and capitalist systems. "Commoning therefore, in terms of both its internal relations and its external relations, is a highly *political* activity, even when the commoners themselves are unaware of this."[383]

Before discussing the political character of commoning, it should be noted De Angelis stresses the long history of the perseverance of commons and commoning against the capital. Although capital has stolen the autonomy of people by way of separating them from their means of subsistence through enclosure of the commons, and

[380] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 32-33.
[381] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 201.
[382] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 203.
[383] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 203-204.

it is true that this process is engraved in 'letters of blood and fire', "it is also true that the fire, however tremendous, has not been sufficiently big, and the blood spilled was not sufficient to stop commoning from adapting, redeveloping and recreating new social connections wherever the commoners were displaced to."[384] Indeed, Caffentzis states that the history of capitalism has witnessed the formation and almost simultaneous criminalization of many new commons. In this line, he argues that the workers' appropriation of new technologies constitutes these new post-capitalist commons, which establish future relations of (re)production. He lists three examples of such commons, the pirates of the golden age, the hobos in the USA of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, and the hackers within the contemporary free software movement. The pirates appropriated the ship, the embodiment of the highest technology of the period, the hobos appropriated railroads, and the contemporary hackers appropriate the Internet.[385]

His discussion of the commons constituted by the "Hobohemia" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might be useful in order to explain the commoning process in a more concise manner. The hobos commonized the railroads making the trains using the "heat engine", a significant component of modern capitalism, a means to resistance against capitalist social relations. They consisted of migrating, white male workers and their nomadic lifestyle was an individual one, their reproduction sites, "the jungle", that is a location close to railroad division points, were run collectively. The jungles were safe places for hobos to cook and eat, clean, sleep, share information about available jobs or police and talk about politics. While there were temporary jungles, there were also permanent ones, and except the fact that the discrimination based on gender and color of the times were not always challenged in the jungles, they were generally democratic. The jungles were run in accordance with unwritten laws such as prohibition of lighting fires at night, wasting food, and leaving used equipment dirty while jungle committees imposed sanctions on the individuals who violated the rules of the jungle. Caffentzis notes an incident as an example in which a committee was established in order to judge a hobo caught stealing from another

[384] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 203-206.
[385] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 34.

sleeping hobo. The committee sentenced the stealing hobo to whipping, however, no one wanted to whip the sentenced. Instead of whipping, a hobo accepted to fight the sentenced, and he knocked out the stealing hobo during a boxing match. After he came to himself, he was kicked out from the jungle.[386]

In this way, according to Caffentzis, the hobos commonized the private property owned by railroad companies by organizing, sharing information, and constituting sites of reproduction. Despite their distinct political views, of which the dominant one was the politics of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), what the hobos achieved was a significant exhibition, the real possibility that the railroads could be commonized. Therefore, although the hobos generally used the railroads and the trains to go after waged jobs, there were also hobos who fought for freedom of speech and called for a general strike. "Consequently, they constituted a communal challenge to the heart of US capital. The hobo commons of freight trains and the railroad territory had to be enclosed, since, after all, the hoboes were recommunalising the communal land of the indigenous Americans that had been first conquered and nationalised by the federal government and then privatised through land grants to railroad companies."[387]

The enclosure of the hobo commons, on the other hand, included violent repression, such as attacks on the IWW by the government, killing of hobos, usually with the help of the police, and violent KKK activities; a transformation in the transportation technology as the road transport replaced the rail transport as the dominant transportation method; and the ideological transformation that portrayed the hobos as dangerous white men without any ties to a home or a family.[388]

The story of Hobohemia indicates that the commons are not simply shared resources but also points out to the constitution of social relations that run counter to the capitalist social relations. Thus, in line with De Angelis's discussion of the commons as social systems above, Hobohemia involved of common goods, which were trains, railroads, the hobo jungles; of commoners, who were the hobos sharing the common goods; and commoning, which points out to both the freeriding of trains and railroads,

[386] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 35.
[387] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 36.
[388] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 36-37.

which was indeed illegal, and the social organization of the jungles on the basis of democratic principles.

With regard to the democratic principles, the assembly in the contemporary movements is suggested as a form that reflects a politics of the common, a suggestion, which also help open the discussion on the political character of commoning. As Elise Danielle Thorburn argues "an emergent mode of organising…prefigures the possible infrastructures of the common, and asserts a new organisational form with historical precedent but unique to this particular historical conjuncture."[389] Assembly, then, as an organizational form based on directly democratic decision-making processes, self-liberation, self-activity, and autonomy has always existed in one way or another. "From the early soviets of the first and even the second Russian revolution, to the factory councils in Turin in 1918, to the assembly movement in Spain in the 1970s, organisational forms have existed which, in their very construction, resisted the top-down politicking of parties, vanguards and parliamentarianism."[390] On the one hand, the assembly form is based on the workers' material conditions and on the other, "Councils and assemblies as the political form for the emancipation of labour strive to overcome the division between the economic and political spheres – they make struggles over the wage not simply an economic struggle but a political one."[391]

In this regard, Eylem Akçay and Umut Kocagöz investigate whether politics could be considered as a commons by arguing that the state appropriates the political by seizing socially, culturally, and economically produced labor, which actually means the enclosure of the political. This argumentation disrupts the dichotomy of economic sphere and political sphere and Akçay and Kocagöz state that the political operates on a plane that does not act on this distinction as well as the state apparatus can only exist through the enclosure of the political. In this way, they propose for a commoning of the political, a politics of the commons.[392] In terms of the contemporary politics, then, the political is confined to electoral or party politics within the framework of representative

[389] Elise Danielle Thorburn, "A Common Assembly: Multitude, Assemblies, and a New Politics of the Common," *Interface* 4, no. 2 (2012): 254–79, 256.
[390] Thorburn, "A Common Assembly," 266.
[391] Thorburn, "A Common Assembly," 267.
[392] Eylem Akçay and Umut Kocagöz, "Bir Siyaset Rasyonalitesi Olarak Müşterekleştirme," *Felsefelogos* 1, no. 68 (2018), 3-4.

democracy. The forums that emerged with the post-2008 movements, which the authors discuss with reference to the Gezi Park protests in Turkey, however, point out to a horizon beyond the limits of representative democracy. The horizon in question reveals that politics, far from being a professional activity, is a common, which, as presented above, also requires commoning that can be observed in the acts of self-organization and autonomy. In this way, what emerged in the post-2008 movements, and according to the authors in Gezi Park movement in particular, was the possibility of communism that indicates the possibility of rupture from capitalist temporality and the political sphere of representative democracy. The emergence of communism as a possibility, however, does not denote a society that will be achieved after the revolution but indicates a possibility in the here and now.[393]

The form of forum, just like the form of assembly, or council mentioned above, is likened to the agora as an organizational structure by the authors. Just as the agora, the forum is necessarily democratic as it belongs to everyone, and everyone has a say in the forum because, otherwise the forum cannot operate. Thus, the forum that does not have a predetermined content, exists as a form and allows for a dialog that can be shared by anyone on any issue. Having resulted in lengthy discussions on the one hand that might be considered boring or unnecessary by people who had ideological or practical concerns, this also pointed out to the political itself as the people who did not a say before, started to talk, listened themselves and others like themselves to talk.[394]

All in all, it is possible to infer some general characteristics of the commons by summarizing the above review. To start with, neither commons nor enclosure is a relic belonging to the past. The fact that primitive accumulation basically means the separation of producers from their means of production suggests that whenever this separation is challenged, whether through class struggle to seize the control of means of production, be it a whole control or partial control, or through technological advances that produce a transformation regarding the means of production, the process of primitive accumulation intervenes and tries to reestablish the separation.

[393] Akçay and Kocagöz, "Bir Siyaset Rasyonalitesi Olarak Müşterekleştirme," 6.
[394] Akçay and Kocagöz, "Bir Siyaset Rasyonalitesi Olarak Müşterekleştirme," 7.

At this juncture, it should also be noted that Werner Bonefeld places primitive accumulation in the conceptuality of capital and argues that primitive accumulation is original insofar as it endangers capitalist social relations. According to this argument, commodities, money, means of subsistence or means of production are not essentially capital, their transformation into capital requires the meeting of two different commodity owners: the owner of labor power and the owner of means of production/subsistence. In this way, it is of utmost importance for capital that the owner of labor power does not have direct access to means of subsistence but can only access to subsistence by selling their labor for a wage, hence the separation of producers from the means of subsistence. Therefore, on the one hand, the separation in question is a prerequisite for the existence of capitalist social relations, and on the other the reproduction of this separation is necessary for the continued existence of capitalist social relations.[395] Thus, capitalism, after being established, reproduces the separation in question "as the premise and innate necessity of its concept."[396] In this way, "class is the historical and logical premise of the value form. It entails the force of law-making violence within its concept. This force of law-making violence is the divorce of labour from the means of subsistence, which appears in the law of value in the form of economic compulsion."[397]

In other words, primitive accumulation as *ex novo separation* prepares the conditions required for accumulation proper as the *reproduction of separation* on a greater scale through extra-economic forces and accumulation proper continues to reproduce the separation through solely economic forces but if, or rather, when this reproduction is interrupted, the ex novo separation again comes into play. Therefore, not only "precapitalist spaces of autonomy" but also "any given balance of power among classes that constitutes 'rigidity' that is, a resistance against the further process of capitalist accumulation, or a reversal of that process"[398] is targeted by primitive accumulation. In this sense, the defense of these precapitalist spaces of autonomy points out to the struggle for prevention of loss of commons while the rigidity in question in the sense of reversal of accumulation, corresponds to the struggle for commonization, for

[395] Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy*, 81.
[396] Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy*, 81.
[397] Bonefeld, *Critical Theory and the Critique of Political Economy*, 79.
[398] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 69-70.

expansion of commons. Thus, it is crucial to stress the relevancy of both commons and primitive accumulation, whether it is called primitive accumulation, ex novo separation, accumulation by dispossession, or accumulation by extra-economic means, since as De Angelis suggests capitalism's alternative lies with the commons, which is directly related to the access to the means of existence.[399]

Yet, the fact that commons is an alternative to capitalism should not conceal the highly possible risk of cooptation of commons by capital. In this regard, while bearing in mind that there are two types of commons, pro-capitalist commons and anti-capitalist commons, the latter should be delineated. Contrary to the mainstream view that considers commons as mere shared resources, anti-capitalist commons has a social aspect. In this line, while common goods is an indispensable part of commons, what makes goods common goods is the commoning activity which also requires the presence of commoners. On the one hand, the commoning activity is essential to the production and reproduction of the common goods since sharing and commoning on material commons such as water, land, forest requires the production and the reproduction of these commons in order to ensure the survival of the commoners. On the other hand, to ensure the production and the reproduction of material commons requires the production and reproduction the necessary social relations among the commoners. In this sense, no commons is inherently common and its common character arises from the manner in which it is used. The common, be it the pastures, fishing grounds, or railroads, might be used by capital through which it becomes a commodified good or might be used in common through which it becomes a common good. In this way, the common also signifies an autonomy from the capital as well: "Thus, the commoning necessary to (re)produce water resources, a theatre, a occupied social centre, a church, a social movement, (re)produces not *only* these 'common goods' and the community, but a range of other features of the system. The first such feature is autonomy."[400] On the one hand, autonomy of the commons refers to an autonomy from the capital, and on the other, "autonomy is thus the property generated by the recursive interaction of components across a social network in such a way that the network that produced those interactions

[399] De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation", 20.
[400] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 223.

is regenerated and a boundary is defined."[401] To illustrate, it is worth quoting De Angelis in length with regard to an example of a forest common:

> *in order to share the wood of a forest for construction or to burn it to create heat in the houses of a town, it is necessary to share not only the trees but also the logs, which obviously involves a collective process to produce them. A collective production process is at the same time a process both of social labour – the mental and physical exertion of energies towards a goal – and of social relations among the commoners. In this light, commoning is thus the recursive social force and life activity that regenerate and develop the social relations constituting the commons; it is the socially defined life activity that reproduces the social relations among subjects and their metabolism with the common resources*.[402]

In this sense, the commoning activity also reflects the constitution of new social relations that points out to not just a reactive struggle against capital, though the defense of commons might seem such a struggle but also a creative struggle to constitute commons based on new social relations, based on, so to speak, self-valorization, which

> *was designed to denote working class self-activity that went beyond being merely reactive to capital, e.g., fighting back against exploitation, to denote working class self- activity that carried within it the basic positive, creative and imaginative reinvention of the world that characterized the "living labor" that capital-the-vampire has fed on but which is always an autonomous power that has frequently ruptured capital's controls and limitations and that will ultimately, hopefully, be powerful enough to break free completely and craft new worlds beyond capitalism*.[403]

Thus, turning back to the six principles presented by Caffentzis and Federici, the first, the second, and the fourth principles underline the three components of commons respectively: the commoning activity, the common goods, and the commoners. Apart from the third principle that suggests the connection of struggle for commons to the struggle for the public goods, the last two principles stress the need to regulate the commons on the basis of collective and egalitarian decision-making, equal

[401] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 227.
[402] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 228.
[403] Harry Cleaver, "H. Cleaver on Self-Valorization in Mariarosa Dalla Costa's 'Women and the Subversion of the Community' (1971)," accessed October 24, 2022, https://la.utexas.edu/users/hcleaver/357k/HMCDallaCostaSelfvalorizationTable.pdf., 1.

access, bottom-up organization. Especially these last two principles in addition to the overall emphasis with regard to the commons that reveals the already existence of the commons and indicates that the struggle for the commons does not relegate the matter of constituting the commons to the future but strives to constitute them in the now brings us to the prefigurative aspects of the common and commoning.

3.5. Prefigurative Politics and the Prefigurative Aspect of Commoning

To start with, "Prefiguration or 'prefigurative politics' is an experimental political practice in which the ends of one's actions are mirrored in the means applied in their realisation."[404] The Britannica Dictionary defines the verb 'to prefigure' as "to show or suggest (something that will happen or exist at a future time)."[405] Initially, the use of prefiguration or prefiguring as concepts is based on religious interpretations as shown by Uri Gordon's tracing prefiguration to its Christian roots and listing some of the Biblical examples of prefiguration in Christian exegesis such as the Old Testament's prefiguration of the New Testament, Adam's foreshadowing of Jesus and the prefiguration evident in the naming of Joshua by Moses that connects Joshua to Jesus.[406] In this line, Gordon states that "Prefiguration, then, is a recursive temporal framing in which events at one time are interpreted as a *figure* pointing to its *fulfilment* in later events, with the figure cast in the model of the fulfilment. In the exegetical utterances just reviewed, the interpretation is retrospective – both the figure and its fulfilment (Old and New Testaments) precede it in time."[407] Furthermore, Gordon refers to Gerrard Winstanley, who, according to him, "explicitly justifies their direct action strategy – expropriation of the commons and withholding of wage labour – in terms of its supposed fulfilment of biblical prophecy."[408] Therefore, the Diggers movement and Winstanley also denote a retrospective prefiguration albeit a different one from the Christian

[404] Mathijs Van de Sande, "The Prefigurative Power of the Common(S)," in *Perspectives on Commoning: Autonomist Principles and Practices*, ed. Guido Ruivenkamp and Andy Hilton (London: Zed Books, 2017), 25–65, 25.
[405] "Prefigure Definition & Meaning | Britannica Dictionary," www.britannica.com, accessed September 20, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/prefigure.
[406] Uri Gordon, "Prefigurative Politics between Ethical Practice and Absent Promise," *Political Studies* 66, no. 2 (October 2, 2017): 521–37, https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321717722363, 524.
[407] Gordon, "Prefigurative Politics between Ethical Practice and Absent Promise," 525.
[408] Gordon, "Prefigurative Politics between Ethical Practice and Absent Promise," 525.

exegesis in terms of that while the latter indicates an interpretation that follows the figure and its fulfillment, both of which occur in the past, the former points out to the fulfilment, in the now, of what was once prefigured in the past.

However, leaving aside Winstanley's political prefiguration mixed with religious elements, prefigurative politics is a contemporary term coined by Carl Boggs in his article "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control" in which he defines prefigurative as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal."[409] In this way, according to Boggs, the prefigurative tradition stresses three points: "(1.) fear of reproducing hierarchical authority relations under a new ideological rationale; (2.) criticism of political parties and trade unions because their centralized forms reproduce the old power relations in a way that undermines revolutionary struggles; and (3.) commitment to democratization through local, collective structures that anticipate the future liberated society."[410] Therefore, prefigurative politics, or model as Boggs calls it, does not only target elimination of private property but all forms of domination since the transformation of private property to public property or private management to state management does not introduce a meaningful solution to capitalism's contradictions.

Thus, in order to counter any form of domination, prefigurative politics stresses local and small organizations such as assemblies, committees, Soviets or councils which are organized around factories, workplaces or neighborhoods. Boggs states that these forms of organization are called councils in general and have several advantages such as establishing organic ties between the leadership and communities and ensuring the accountability of the former to the latter; eliminating social division of labor through collectivization of both management and work; incorporating a larger set of issues through stressing social transformation instead of taking power; creating new subjectivities through expanding the potentials of community members; and preventing deradicalization through engaging in unconventional politics.[411] In this sense, Boggs

[409] Carl Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," *Radical America* 12, no. 1 (1978): 99–122, 100.
[410] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 103.
[411] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 104.

argues that prefiguration reflects "an entirely new kind of politics, breaking down the division of labor between everyday life and political activity" and refers to Cornelius Castoriadis who argues that "What is involved here is the de-professionalization of politics - i.e., the abolition of politics as a special and separate sphere of activity - and, conversely, the universal politicization of society, which means just that: the business of society becomes, quite literally, everybody's business."[412] Boggs also defines the prefigurative as a task "which expresses the ultimate ends of the revolutionary process itself: popular self-emancipation, collective social and authority relations, socialist democracy."[413]

Wini Breines who wrote on the New Left explains her objective as "remembering and retrieving the new left's experiences, critically but with sympathy" in a time when "the prospects for movements for democratic change look slim."[414] In this line, she states that "Like E. P. Thompson, Christopher Hill, and others, I see as rational revolutionary behavior what other academic and establishment analysts have tended to view as irrational, antisocial, prepolitical, apolitical, and so on… My own work accepts the notion, itself an outgrowth of the new left, that often what appears unpolitical or apolitical is in fact political."[415] For instance, Breines reveals that the student movement in the 1960s were described in the academia with the words such as "nihilist, incoherent or chaotic, fanatic, irrational, moral, anti-intellectual, romantic, manipulative, extremist and irresponsible."[416] In this way, while documenting the criticisms directed at the student movement, she indicates that especially in the academia, the movement was accused "of having no real interest in any specific demands, of being indifferent to legality and of ignoring the conventional channels by which, the academics claimed, the students could have attained these demands. The rules by which they are accused of refusing to play were (1) compromise, (2) representation (a two-party system

[412] Cornelius Castoriadis, "The Hungarian Source", Telos 30 (Winter 1976- 77), 15, quoted in Boggs "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control,", 104.
[413] Carl Boggs, "Revolutionary Process, Political Strategy, and the Dilemma of Power," *Theory and Society* 4, no. 3 (1977): 359–93, 359.
[414] Wini Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968: The Great Refusal* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), xii.
[415] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, viii.
[416] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 2.

preferably), and (3) a commitment to the rules."[417] At this point, Breines argues that what the critics of the student movement "tendentiously term the 'expressive' and apolitical features of the new left, are, I believe, among its central features. Where those commentators see pathology, however, I see the healthy and vital heart of the new left, its prefigurative politics."[418] With regard to this, it is worth quoting Breines in length when she defines prefigurative politics:

> *The term prefigurative politics is used to designate an essentially anti-organizational politics characteristic of the movement, as well as parts of new left leadership, and may be recognized in counter institutions, demonstrations and the attempt to embody personal and anti-hierarchical values in politics. Participatory democracy was central to prefigurative politics. "Anti-organizational" should not be construed as disorganized. Movements are organized in numerous obvious and often hidden ways. My use of the term anti-organizational should be understood to mean principally a wariness of hierarchy and centralized organization. The crux of prefigurative politics imposed substantial tasks, the central one being to create and sustain within the live practice of the movement, relationships and political forms that "prefigured" and embodied the desired society*.[419]

In this way, Breines also emphasizes the aspect of community inherent in prefigurative politics, which she argues refers "not only to the desire to create a sense of wholeness and communication in social relationships, but to the effort to create non-capitalist and communitarian institutions that embodied such relationships, for example counter-institutions."[420] The struggle to establish or reclaim community in terms of prefigurative politics, then, is both a political and radical action according to Breines since she, examining the U.S. student movement in the 1960s, considers the increasing competitive culture and loss of control in the workplace, in schools or in everyday life during that time as consequences of capitalism. In this context, the struggle to establish or reclaim community is the result of a "desire for connectedness, meaningful personal

[417] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 5.
[418] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 6.
[419] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 6.
[420] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 7.

relationships and direct participation and control over economic, political and social institutions on the basis of the needs of the individual and community".[421]

Furthermore, Breines shows the connection between the new left and a strand of older European Marxism while she discusses the new left's rejection of the old left represented by communist/socialist parties and states. The connection in question, prefigurative politics, was evident in the works of European Marxists of the early nineteenth century such as Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg and Anton Pannokoek that opposed centralization and bureaucracy, supported spontaneous action, and advocated for councils both as an instrument for struggle and resistance and as an organization method prefiguring the future. With regard to this connection, then, Breines is more than right to suggest that "In times of insurgency and upheaval social movement theorists or historians often discover other and hidden traditions which seem suddenly profoundly relevant and inspiring. As always happens, new social movements tend to introduce new ways of looking at the past and new pasts to look at."[422]

The famous speech given by Mario Savio during a rally of Free Speech Movement in 1964 is worth including here in length:

> *There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part, you can't even tacitly take part. And you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all*.[423]

In this regard, Breines argues that the Free Speech movement, one of the first major student demonstrations in the 1960s, aimed to establish a community based on direct democracy, equality and solidarity. Amidst and against the prevailing values of capitalism such as competition, efficiency and individualism, the creation of a such community was both an aspiration for future and an instrument of resistance and struggle despite being short-lived and momentary. Moreover, the division of labor

[421] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 7.
[422] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 17.
[423] Hal Draper, *Berkeley: The New Student Revolt.* (Alameda, Calif.: Center for Socialist History, 2009), 115.

within the organization was organized nonhierarchically that reflected their struggle against hierarchy and centralization that are embodied in the symbol of the machine in Savio's speech.[424] The momentary existence of community does not indicate that the movement is unsuccessful, though. Since although the idea of a social movement at that time was that nonhierarchical, directly democratic and egalitarian organization was only possible during the early phases of a social movement, the success of the movement depended on the efficiency and engagement in real politics, which in turn required the movement to be organized on the basis of a clearly defined structure, division of labor and hierarchy, this mainstream idea of social movements was being challenged. Breines refers to Irving Louis Horowitz, according to whom: "Victory was not defined as taking over the operations of the machine, not the classic capture of organized political power."[425], for instance. Or Stephen Spender, whom also Breines refers to, writes of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a leader in the French student movement:

> *Cohn-Bendit believes much more in revolutionaries than the cares about the revolution. He describes the aim of the revolutionaries as being not a reformed capitalist society, 'but launching an experiment that completely breaks with that society, an experiment that will not last, but which allows a glimpse of a possibility; something which is revealed for a moment and then vanishes. But that is enough to prove that something could exist*.'[426]

According to Breines, prefigurative politics in this way represented a radical break with regard to the politics in a traditional sense. The realization that central organization or replacing the members of traditional political organization would not transform the society, the idea of a rupture from the status quo, of experimentation and of reflecting the ends in the means was central to prefigurative politics. "Students wanted neither to 'take power' nor to create alternative institutions informed by centralized and hierarchical models. Those who espoused prefigurative politics were convinced that the process and the changes in people which transpired in the movement

[424] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 27-29.
[425] Irving L. Horowitz, "Social Deviance and Political Marginality," Ideology and Utopia in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 388 in Breines, 30.
[426] Stephen Spender, *The Year of the Young Rebels* (New York: Random House, 1969). 111.

could not be separated from the goal of structural political change…"[427] Instead of alternative, albeit centralized and hierarchical institutions, prefigurative politics was inclined to create counter-institutions that are "institutions outside the established order organized along radical egalitarian principles as a means of building the new society within the shell of the old."[428] The counter-institutions in question were organizations that provide services in the communities, underground newspapers, free universities and communes. Furthermore, participatory democracy was an indispensable component of prefigurative politics and the counter-institutions, and emphasized the autonomy of ordinary people. "It developed directly out of the separation of ordinary people from the decisions that affected their lives… rejecting the idea that only a privileged few could be autonomous."[429] Participatory democracy, which was actually direct democracy, was closely related to community building:

> *Community was sought by the movement and attained through the practice of participatory democracy. Parallel structures or counter-institutions were both communities and strategies for social change. Above all, the movement came together not only for instrumental reasons, not primarily to accomplish a specific end (as the "politicos" might advocate), but to be together in a more basic experiment than "organization" implied*.[430]

Of course, rejecting traditional politics, nonhierarchical organization based on equality and direct democracy, favoring decentralization over centralization, being not interested in taking power were sufficient grounds on which criticisms asserting that the new left was apolitical since it was not interested in power, which was the essence of politics according to some views, was raised against prefigurative politics of the new left. However, "Counter-institutions, dual structures, demonstrations, community organizations in which new democratic forms and new relationships unfolded during the sixties were, in essence, attempts to structure power differently. They were efforts to

[427] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 30.
[428] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 52.
[429] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 57.
[430] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 59.

share equally and to structure 'in' participation, to prefigure a more egalitarian future, a way of living and struggling for social change."[431]

Just as the new left in the 1960s were criticized on the ground that it was apolitical or unpolitical as Breines shows, the 2011 Occupy Wall Street movement was criticized for not being political enough, for failing to organize to attain political leverage, or engaging in prefiguration so much that it subverted its political goals. The reason behind this, she argues, is "particular conceptualizations of the state, as a bounded sphere or actor distinct from society; and of politics, as that which occurs within or in relation to existing state structures."[432] Contrary to this conceptualization of politics, however, "Politics as a practice of constituting collective life is not confined to 'the state'."[433] In this sense, Brissette argues that the fact that the Occupy movement was considered apolitical stems from its rejection of narrow politics in the sense of demanding from the state or engaging in electoral politics, however, the embrace of narrow politics would confine the movement within the limits of the possible drawn by the state rather than continuously drawing and redrawing these limits collectively. Thus, "Occupy embraced a prefigurative form of direct action that seeks … to immediately and directly create new social relations, new practices and new understandings within the (expanding) interstices of the old… And in that action-as-creation lies the heart of politics. Prefigurative politics are politics in the most basic sense: they seek to actualize a (vision of) collective life."[434]

The prefigurative politics, or another politics as called by Chris Dixon, is formulated on the basis of four main principles: "Struggling against all forms of domination, exploitation, and oppression", "developing new social relations and forms of social organization in the process of struggle", "linking struggles for improvements in the lives of ordinary people to long-term transformative visions", and "organizing that is grassroots and bottom-up".[435] The prefigurative aspect of another politics, which is also

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[431] Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968*, 95.
[432] Emily Brissette, "The Prefigurative Is Political: On Politics beyond 'the State,'" in *Social Sciences for an Other Politics: Women Theorizing without Parachutes*, ed. Ana Cecilia Dinerstein (Cham: Springer International Publishing., 2016), 109–19, 110.
[433] Brissette, "The Prefigurative Is Political," 116.
[434] Brissette, "The Prefigurative Is Political," 116.
[435] Chris Dixon, *Another Politics: Talking across Today's Transformative Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 6-7.

evident in the second principle above as developing new social relations and forms of social organization is a way of prefiguring the future social relations and forms of organization, can be traced back to the nineteenth century anarchism: "the means (popular struggle and deeply democratic organization) must be consistent with the ends (a free and egalitarian society)."[436] Later prefigurative experiences can be listed as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) that "described one of their core aims as building 'the new society in the shell of the old.'"[437], the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) which was referred by Breines as well and which was organized around nonhierarchical and participatory democratic principles, and the Black Panther Party. The latter which was despite being a hierarchical organization that faced violence and harassment, and did not reject violence, did also organize volunteer programs providing "free meals, clothes, and healthcare in Black communities across the United States… These programs met immediate popular needs, challenged social relations of scarcity and subordination, and laid infrastructure for a new society."[438]

While discussing the contemporary forms of prefigurative politics, or in his words, another politics, Dixon defines four "anti's" as essential characteristics: "anti-authoritarianism, anti-capitalism, anti-oppression, and anti- imperialism."[439] Although rejection symbolized by the "anti's" might not seem to be sufficient for prefigurative politics, it is actually crucial since rejection indicates an indignation directed at the current situation and can pave the way for prefiguring the future that will be different from the current situation. The first anti, anti-authoritarianism, has three crucial characteristics: "rejection of the state, or at least the most repressive aspects of it"[440]; horizontal or nonhierarchical organization; and rejection of vanguardism.[441]

In respect to the second anti, anti-capitalism, Dixon defines capitalism as "system of social relations based on dispossession, exploitation, and alienation for the benefit of a small minority. It is founded on continuously dispossessing people of our means of subsistence (land, food, shelter) and turning these into things (commodities)

[436] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 26.
[437] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 27.
[438] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 30.
[439] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 58.
[440] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 65.
[441] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 66.

exchanged for money."[442] In this sense, he argues that the anti-capitalist struggles since the late 1970s have been also informed by the struggles against neoliberalism, a strategy of capitalism that "include so-called 'austerity' measures (slashing spending on development projects, welfare, health care, and other social programs), privatization (selling off public institutions and resources, such as schools and water, so that they can be run for profit), and deregulation (gutting laws that regulate business, such as environmental, health, and labor standards)."[443] In this way, struggles against neoliberalism and capitalism have challenged neoliberalism's infamous claim that there is no alternative. At this point, Dixon, drawing on the global justice movement, emphasizes two aspects of anti-capitalism: the first aspect denotes that capitalism is a system comprising of social relations and therefore it should be considered and resisted accordingly. Thus, it reveals the historical character of capitalism, the changes it has undergone throughout history, as well as that it is neither inevitable nor natural: "As something constantly created through social relations, it is also something we can undo. That is, capitalism can be resisted, undermined, and displaced through collective action."[444]

The second aspect of anti-capitalism that Dixon proposes, in fact, invokes the ongoing character of primitive accumulation. In this regard, Dixon argues against the historical primitive accumulation view that locks the dispossession process into a particular period in history, which in turn brings forward the workplace as the main site of struggle. The ongoing primitive accumulation view, on the contrary, argues that the dispossession process actually goes on to expand as the commodification of formerly noncommodified goods and services deepens. In this way this view rejects the centrality of workplace and waged work as main sites of exploitation and struggle and emphasizes the cruciality of unwaged work as well. "This is all to say that, for another politics, the workplace and the wage don't define anti-capitalism, even as they remain crucial. Our challenge is to see capitalism as a system based on both dispossession *and* exploitation, both waged *and* unwaged labor…Together, we're developing a much broader

[442] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 67.
[443] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 68.
[444] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 69.

understanding of where anti-capitalist struggle is (everywhere) and who is best positioned to fight (all of us)."[445]

The third anti, anti-oppression, refers to intersectionality and its central argument is that oppression and exploitation are not results of only one system, namely capitalism but there are systems of oppression and exploitation intersecting with each other and these include patriarchy, racism, heterosexism as well as capitalism. In this sense, as a part of another politics, anti-oppression has three fundamental characteristics: The first one is acknowledging that power relations are intertwined, which means that there are no hierarchies among systems of oppression and capitalism is one of these systems alongside with racism and patriarchy. The second characteristic is the realization that power relations are replicated and reproduced in daily lives and in movements as well and that there is a need to challenge this replication and reproduction. The third characteristic is the emphasis on transformation of systems of oppression permeating the society.[446]

The fourth, and the last, anti is anti-imperialism, which connects the economic, political, cultural, and military domination of the global South by the global North to European colonialism that dispossessed the indigenous people and argues that this process still continues despite the rarity of colonies in contemporary world through politics, trade, popular culture, finance, so-called aids and military interventions.[447] The movement against anti-imperialism is plagued by the same division between the South and North as well. In this sense, Dixon locates two tendencies in this movement, the first of which is charity that reproduces the hierarchy between the South and North while the second is adulation that praises the movements in the South as superior and places the movements in the North into only a cheerleading position. However, these two tendencies were undermined by the Zapatista movement as they rejected both charity with reference to their understanding of dignity and adulation through humor, humility and refusal of being a vanguard. In this way, the Zapatista movement argued for

[445] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 70.
[446] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 74-75.
[447] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 75.

"solidarity as a two-way relationship of support, accountability, and transformation between people fighting for another world."[448]

Dixon conceptualizes what another politics is against, which is essential as defining it clarifies the movement. Yet, it is only one half of another politics since what another politics is for should be stated as well, which calls for prefigurative politics. Dixon argues, "This term names activist efforts to manifest and build, to the greatest extent possible, the world we would like to see through our means of fighting in this one. Examples of such efforts include using directly democratic methods of making decisions and building institutions through which people can self-organize to meet popular needs."[449] In this way Dixon focuses on prefigurative praxis that denotes "the ways people in struggle both put prefigurative aspirations into practice and develop, from our practices, those prefigurative aspects that are already present."[450] He refers to Sonya Z. Mehta, a former activist, who states "prefigurative organizing means organizing now the way you want to see the world later" and continues "The core idea here is that how we get ourselves to a transformed society (the means) is importantly related to *what* that transformed society will be (the ends). The means *prefigure* the ends. To engage in prefigurative politics, then, is to intentionally shape our activities to manifest our vision." [451]

Dixon, thus, sorts out three central aspects of prefigurative politics: The first one is nonhierarchical decision-making, whose main forms are consensus-based decision-making and general assembly. Of course, these are not finished forms and present some challenges such as being time-consuming and the possibility to conceal leadership, which calls for a dynamic fight against these challenges within the movement. The second aspect defined by Dixon is new ways of relating, which he explains with reference to the term horizontalidad (horizontalism) and connects the nonhierarchical relations inherent to horizontalidad to new ways of relating alongside with of living, loving, and struggling. The third and last aspect in question is transforming power relations, which points out to both the power relations within the

[448] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 77.
[449] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 83.
[450] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 84.
[451] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 84-85.

broader society and within the movements through informing and being informed about oppression and privilege, establishing organizational designs that aim to challenge relations of privilege and oppression, and directing the priorities of the group.[452]

Dixon also points out to the pitfalls of prefigurative politics, which are considering particular forms of prefigurative politics as correct in each and every case; considering some forms of prefigurative politics as things or capacities that individuals possess or don't possess; and focusing too much on prefigurative aspect of the movement and overlooking what the movement targets. In the face of these dangers, abandoning perfectionism and accepting the possibility of failure; allowing for experimentation instead of insisting on particular forms of prefigurative politics; and realization that only prefiguration is not sufficient for transformation but it is needed to connect struggles against oppression and exploitation with prefiguration, according to Dixon, might prove useful.[453]

Luke Yates defines prefigurative politics as "the attempted construction of alternative or utopian social relations in the present, either in parallel with, or in the course of, adversarial social movement protest."[454] He scrutinizes the uses of prefigurative politics in social movements studies and distinguishes two dynamics of prefigurative politics, each of course, with their own problems. One dynamic is the reflection of the ends of a movement in the means used by that movement, in short, the means-end equivalence. This corresponds to a particular form of organization or mobilization and the main example of this particular form is decision-making process based on direct democracy and equality. The second one is related to building alternatives in the sense of creating communities, new kinds of social relations, and counter-institutions in addition to social movement organizing which aims towards a particular goal. This dynamic, of course, calls for a tension between the prefigurative politics of building alternatives and the strategy aiming at the movement goal. At this point, Yates refers to Maeckelbergh, who argues that despite the seeming dichotomy between strategy and prefiguration, prefiguration is in fact strategic. Yates, also,

[452] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 85-98.
[453] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 99-104.
[454] Luke Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration: Alternatives, Micropolitics and Goals in Social Movements," *Social Movement Studies* 14, no. 1 (January 9, 2014): 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2013.870883, 1.

acknowledges that in terms of decision-making, prefiguration proves to be strategic and instrumental as experimenting on, organizing or developing new decision-making processes also aims to replace existing processes, yet he argues whether the alternatives created through prefiguration beyond decision-making processes are relevant to movement goals is ambiguous. [455] These two dynamics are connected through a third feature, according to Yates,

> *They are linked by the notion of prolepsis evoked by the word itself: to prefigure is to anticipate or enact some feature of an 'alternative world' in the present, as though it has already been achieved. This third overarching feature has been applied to both aforementioned dynamics: to protest activities which are carried out prefiguratively, in which the protest movement, its organisation and practices are the goal, or to seemingly any other collective project which in some way 'prefigures' how it might normally be performed in the future*.[456]

With reference to these dynamics, he explains the problems associated with them. To start with, he states the ambiguity inherent to the means-ends equivalence, emerging from the fact that apart from the decision-making process based on direct democracy, Yates cannot seem to notice any other means or ends referred by prefigurative politics. Secondly, whether establishing alternatives can go beyond being just a part of lifestyle activities of particular subcultures or countercultures and become political acts or not seems open to discussion. "Third, where futures are claimed to be prefigured through prolepsis, there has been little discussion of the extent to which such an idea is (culturally and strategically) important for movement participants, whether or on what terms such 'futures' represent overarching goals of some movements themselves or if prefiguration is simply an analytic concept describing what some movements do, unbeknownst to participants."[457]

In this line, Yates, studying three social centers in Barcelona, Spain, arrive at a conception of prefigurative politics that combines the three dynamics outlined above as it is composed of means-ends equivalence, establishing alternatives, and prolepsis oriented towards the future. "The key clarification proposed is that prefiguration

[455] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 3-4.
[456] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 4.
[457] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 5.

necessarily *combines* the experimental creating of 'alternatives' within *either* mobilisation-related or everyday activities, with attempts to ensure their future political relevance."[458] Following this, Yates identifies five processes that prefiguration involves: "experimentation, perspectives, conduct, consolidation, and diffusion."[459] Experimentation involves both everyday practices as well as political activities while Yates refers to developing political ideas, perspectives and frames when explaining the process of perspectives. Conduct corresponds to creating new collective norms whereas consolidation means intervening in the material or social environment in order to consolidate these new collective forms such as arranging position of the participant seats during an assembly or deciding on the ways to use or cultivate land in a social center. Diffusion, finally, means the reflection and communication of the established alternatives beyond the particular group engaging in prefigurative politics.[460] In this regard, Yates, while acknowledging the crucial processes that distinguish prefigurative politics from politics in a traditional sense are experimentation and new conducts, argues that "it is precisely the inclusion of political 'perspectives', and at least one of 'consolidation' and 'diffusion', which distinguishes prefiguration, as a political approach, from subcultural or counter- cultural projects lacking either a collective vision or preparedness to act in order to change wider society."[461]

Marianne Maeckelbergh, who argues against the dichotomy between strategy and prefiguration on the one hand, and on the other against the assessment of movements based on their success or failure, uses the term prefiguration for movements that are organized horizontally, in other words, leaderless movements whose economic, social, and political organizations are anti-hierarchical. In this regard, prefigurative politics rejects the notion of a vanguard, hierarchical organization, political representation and leaders. It aims for the distribution of the leadership functions among the participants, advocates for direct democracy which does not require any mediation of elites. Therefore, "The goal of prefiguration is not to get someone within a position of power to recognize and respond to your grievance. It is about reimagining society

[458] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 13.
[459] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 15.
[460] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 13-14.
[461] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 15.

through experimenting with new political practices. Horizontal prefiguration is anti-capitalist and anti-state."[462]

Maeckelbergh also refers to Fuller who, with reference to Peace Movement Organizations, states that "in these movements organizational structures and processes are an 'action form', a method of protest in itself rather than simply a means to mobilise resources."[463] In this line, "the creation of alternatives to free-market capitalism rests on a process of prefigurative politics that involves putting into practice principles of solidarity, pluralism, equality, and horizontality and that this process is understood to constitute a counter-power that can challenge free-market capitalism."[464] This is, in turn, possible through horizontality, diversity, and creating social change. Horizontality, at this point, points out to both a practice and a value, and despite being in various forms in various movements, basically means a non-hierarchical social organization and "a viable alternative to liberal representative democracy."[465] Diversity is connected to prefiguration as strategy since it rejects the imposition of unity onto a movement and calls for being open to as many futures as possible. In this line, the strategy in the traditional sense, which ultimately aims to seize state power, needs to be replaced by another strategy based on horizontality and process. In connection with this, prefiguration aims for social change rather than a change that will be brought by seizing political power. According to Maeckelbergh, this does not mean eliminating or taking power but redesigning the operation of power, in other words, decentralizing power instead of the centralized power, which is of course not a goal that can be demanded from the state.[466] In this sense, prefigurative politics as a strategy involves two simultaneous steps: "One is the step of challenging and confronting current political

[462] Marianne Maeckelbergh, "The Prefigurative Turn: The Time and Place of Social Movement Practice," in *Social Sciences for an Other Politics: Women Theorizing without Parachutes*, ed. Ana Cecilia Dinerstein (Cham: Springer International Publishing., 2016), 121–34, 123.
[463] Fuller, The structure and process of peace movement organizations: effects on participation, in: *Conflict Resolution Consortium*, 1989, quoted in Marianne Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing: Prefiguration as Strategic Practice in the Alterglobalization Movement," *Social Movement Studies* 10, no. 1 (January 2011): 1–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2011.545223., 4.
[464] Marianne Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing: Prefiguration as Strategic Practice in the Alterglobalization Movement," *Social Movement Studies* 10, no. 1 (January 2011): 1–20, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2011.545223., 9.
[465] Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing," 9.
[466] Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing," 10-13.

structures and the other is constructing alternative structures to take their place."[467] In this regard, the challenge and confrontation step both provides the space for prefigurative politics and defends the constituted space. The construction step, on the other hand, plays with the tension between neoliberalism's "there is no alternative" and prefiguration's "another world is possible". Thus, the presentation of an alternative that is both viable and real at the moment subverts the hegemonic order.[468]

Marina Sitrin suggests the concept of societies in movement against the contentious politics framework, which she considers unfit to understand the new form of organization of social movements based on horizontalidad, prefiguration, autonomy, and direct action. In this regard, Sitrin argues that these new movements are based on necessity, utilize assembly as a form of organization not as a dictation of any ideology but as a practice that enables seeing and hearing each other, organize autonomously and horizontally due to experiencing the vanity of demanding from governments, reject representation, aim for horizontal organization in order to not reproduce hierarchical structures, and are not interested in taking power.[469]

From the perspective of prefigurative politics, since the means a social movement utilizes shapes the goals achieved by that social movement, the means in question should reflect the future society envisioned by the movement. In addition to being motivated by a moral commitment, however, it proves to be an alternative reformist and vanguardist movements. Rejecting a revolution that will be carried out by a vanguard through seizing state power or legal reforms implemented by political parties counting on electoral victories, prefigurative movements aims to build the new society "in the shell of the old" through establishing new ways of relating and counter-institutions, which points out to direct action in order to implement desired changes instead of demanding them from others, especially the state.[470]

David Graeber also connects the prefigurative tradition observed in the alter-globalization movement to anarchism: "The very notion of direct action, with its

[467] Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing," 14.
[468] Maeckelbergh, "Doing Is Believing," 14.
[469] Marina Sitrin, "Rethinking Social Movements with Societies in Movement," in *Social Sciences for an Other Politics: Women Theorizing without Parachutes*, ed. Ana Cecilia Dinerstein (Cham: Springer International Publishing., 2016), 135–49, 138.
[470] Darcy K. Leach, "Prefigurative Politics," in *Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, ed. David A. Snow et al. (Hoboken NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2022), 1.

rejection of a politics which appeals to governments to modify their behaviour, in favour of physical intervention against state power in a form that itself prefigures an alternative—all of this emerges directly from the libertarian tradition. Anarchism is the heart of the movement, its soul; the source of most of what's new and hopeful about it."[471] Graeber, while defining the "new anarchists" of the early 2000s, debunks that they are against globalization and that they are violent. In addition, he touches upon the criticisms that the alter-globalization movement does not have an ideology and that it is against all kinds of organization, and he argues that

> *this is a movement about reinventing democracy. It is not opposed to organization. It is about creating new forms of organization. It is not lacking in ideology. Those new forms of organization are its ideology. It is about creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-down structures like states, parties or corporations; networks based on principles of decentralized, non-hierarchical consensus democracy*.[472]

Of course, the work of constituting new, non-hierarchical organizational forms based on direct democracy and horizontality is an ongoing process that does not proceed perfectly, yet, Graeber suggests that it is effective and has a thoroughly transformative aspect as "It's one thing to say, 'Another world is possible'. It's another to experience it, however momentarily."[473]

Mathijs van de Sande suggests a comprehensive definition for prefiguration: "'Prefiguration' or 'prefigurative politics' refers to a political action, practice, movement, moment or development in which certain political ideals are experimentally actualised in the 'here and now', rather than hoped to be realised in a distant future. Thus, in prefigurative practices, the means applied are deemed to embody or 'mirror' the ends one strives to realise."[474] In line with this, this definition emphasizes "the

[471] David Graeber, "The New Anarchists," in *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?*, ed. Tom Mertes (London: Verso, 2004), 202–15, 203.
[472] Graeber, "The New Anarchists," 212.
[473] Graeber, "The New Anarchists," 214.
[474] Mathijs van de Sande, "The Prefigurative Politics of Tahrir Square–an Alternative Perspective on the 2011 Revolutions," *Res Publica* 19, no. 3 (2013): 223–39, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11158-013-9215-9, 230.

actualisation of a future ideal in the 'here and now'", "the experimental characteristics of such an actualization", and "a reformulation of the means-ends distinction".[475]

While discussing the movements that began worldwide after the 2008 crisis, Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini characterizes four common features that characterize these movements. First, the new movements witnessed the organization of new forms to meet the needs in the occupied areas, such as conflict resolution mechanisms, childcare or healthcare services and food provision. Second, the organization in question were based on direct democracy and rejected the separation of economic, social, and political spheres. Third, the solution to the problems faced by the movements was not left to others, whether these others be institutions or states, but was sought within the movements themselves. Fourth, while the movements shut the daily routine operations of occupied spaces, they also created new and horizontal social relations.[476] With respect to these common features, Sitrin and Azzellini emphasize concepts such as rupture, horizontalism, popular power, assemblies, recuperation, protagonism, new subjectivities, autogestion, autonomy, and space.[477]

All in all, despite being criticized on the grounds that it is actually apolitical, prefiguration is political and prefigurative politics is basically what politics is. To summarize, based on the above review of prefiguration, a loose list of interrelated characteristics can be drawn as follows: means-ends equivalence, construction of alternatives, nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization, direct democracy, forming of new subjectivities, direct action, rejection of engagement with state and construction of the future ideals in the present.

To start with, means-ends equivalence actually points out to nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization, and collective decision-making based on equality and direct democracy. Since reaching a society that organizes and decides in this manner is the goal of the movement, using this form of organization and decision in the present time instead of leaving it to the future also results in the creation of new subjectivities as the movement members experience and experiment new ways of relating within the

[475] Van de Sande, "The Prefigurative Politics of Tahrir Square," 230.
[476] Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us! Reinventing Democracy from Greece to Occupy* (London: Verso, 2014), 9-11.
[477] Sitrin and Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us*, 15-35.

movement. In the words of IWW, prefigurative politics aims to constitute 'the new society in the shell of the old.' This constitution requires two kinds of struggle, first, a negative struggle in the sense of challenge resistance against the current political, social and economic order, which might be compressed into the four interrelated antis outlined by Dixon: anti-authoritarianism, anti-capitalism, anti-oppression and anti-imperialism. Second, it requires a positive struggle in the sense of establishing alternatives.

At this point, it should be recalled that Caffentzis touches upon two acts of class struggle, prevention and commonization. In this regard, while the former aims to prevent the penetration of capitalist relations by defending the commons, which also reveals the anti against which the struggle resists, namely capitalism, the latter aims to expand the already existing commons, which posits the commons and its expansion as the alternative to capitalism. In this regard, Caffentzis' conceptualization of tensed time proves to be useful to put forward the prefigurative aspect of commons. To repeat once again,

> *For the commoning process I refer to involves the ongoing transformation of the commodified forms of life into a commons. This is not a process that is all-or-nothing nor is it a utopian vision of a "future" life. On the contrary, it recognizes that much of the commons is already operating, often extensively, under capitalism and the issue is the self- organized expansion of that area of life that is common. That is, the class struggle in this temporal dimension is not only a matter of preventing enclosures (and thus an entrance into capital's time) but to actually expanding the commons into new areas of social life (and so exiting capital's time). This expansive commonizing process is not an ideal safely ensconced in the future perfect. It is time future in the present or it is nothing*.[478]

In this sense, the commoning action explained by Caffentzis is an action-as-creation since on the one hand, the action in question creates the commons by transforming the commodified into the commons, on the other it creates "new social relations, new practices and new understandings within the (expanding) interstices of the old."[479] The action-as-creation, furthermore, indicates the means-ends equivalence since the creation signifies the desired ends of a movement while the action signifies the

[478] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 90-91.
[479] Brissette, "The Prefigurative Is Political," 116.

means used in order to achieve the ends. In other words, the constitution of commons is only possible with the existence of common goods and commoners, however, firstly, no goods are inherently common goods or commodified goods. What makes them commodified goods is commodification and what makes them common goods is commoning or commonization activities. Secondly, the commoner does not mean a given and premade subjectivity, being a commoner is also possible only through commoning activity. Therefore, the commoning activity prefigures commons and commoners in which the commons amounts to the ends of a commons movement while the commoning activity corresponds to its means, all of which are reflected in each other.

Moreover, the commoning activity, insofar as it is not just an activity aiming to prevent enclosures but also an activity to expand the commons, points out to the construction of alternatives to the capital. The alternatives to the capital, on the other hand, are based on non-hierarchical and egalitarian organization based on direct democracy since "*Commons require regulations stipulating how the wealth we share is to be used and cared for*, the governing principles being equal access, reciprocity between what is given and what is taken, collective decision making, and power from the ground up, derived from tested abilities and continually shifting through different subjects depending on the tasks to be performed."[480] In addition, "Equal access to the means of (re)production and egalitarian decision making must be the foundation of the commons… non-egalitarian relations are the end of the commons, as they generate inequalities, jealousies, and divisions, providing a temptation for some commoners to cooperate with enclosures."[481] The construction of alternatives to the capital also implies formation of new subjectivities. On the one hand, the new subjectivities arise from the new kind of organization that challenges the organizations of political parties, labor organizations, workplaces, public institutions, universities, NGOs, states, international organizations all of which are organized on the basis of representative democracy if not nondemocratically, i.e., people who see that they have a say in decisions that affect their lives, people who feel that they are heard through the struggle they are a part of. On the

[480] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 102.
[481] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 102-103.

other hand, the commoner appears as a new subjectivity that is not a predetermined and fixed one. This comes from the fact that commoning is a social and relational activity:

> *we characterise commoning as a relational process – or more often a struggle – of negotiating access, use, benefit, care, and responsibility. Commoning thus involves establishing rules or protocols for access and use, taking caring of and accepting responsibility for a resource, and distributing the benefits in ways that take into account the well-being of others. When these relationships are in place, what results are any number of commons including biophysical commons (e.g. soil, water, air, plant, and animal ecologies), cultural commons (e.g. language, musical heritage, sacred symbols, and artworks), social commons (e.g. educational, health, and political systems), and knowledge commons (e.g. Indigenous ecological knowledge, sci- entific, and technical knowledge). The resulting commons may also be of varying and overlapping scales from the household and family to the national and international; from the micro (such as a microclimate) to the macro (such as the planet's atmosphere)*.[482]

The characterization of commoning as a relational activity implies, on the one hand, that commons exist alongside with community, "But the community that commons is not pre-given; rather, communities are constituted through the process of commoning."[483], and on the other, "commoning can take place with any form of property, from privately owned property to open access property."[484] In this line, commoning constitutes communities and renders goods common as well as constituting subjects. For instance, Marcelo Vieta refers to Cándido González who states that

> *Early in the fight to reclaim our work we fought for our salaries, for getting out of our severe debt-loads left by the boss .... But now I know, looking back on our struggle three years on, now I can see where the change in me started, because it began during our struggles. First, you fight for not being left out on the street with nothing. And then, suddenly, you see that you've formed a cooperative and you start getting involved in the struggle of others. You don't realize at the time but within your own self ... a change is taking place, you don't see it directly at the time. You realize it afterwards, after time has passed ... doing things that you would never imagine yourself doing*.[485]

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[482] J. K. Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron, and Stephen Healy, "Commoning as a Postcapitalist Politics," in *Releasing the Commons*, ed. Ash Amin and Philip Howell (London: Routledge, 2016), 192–213, 195.
[483] Gibson-Graham, Cameron, and Healy, "Commoning as a Postcapitalist Politics," 196.
[484] Gibson-Graham, Cameron, and Healy, "Commoning as a Postcapitalist Politics," 196.
[485] Marcelo Vieta, "Autogestión: Prefiguring the 'New Cooperativism' and 'the Labour Commons.,'" in *Moving beyond Capitalism*, ed. Cliff DuRand (London: Routledge, 2016), 55–63, 61.

Or, Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini refers to Oscar Olivera when he tells that

> *I think the best lesson we, and especially the young people, have learned from the Water War in Cochabamba is that it is possible to change things without having to follow anyone, without depending on the political parties, without needing political parties to mediate. For eight days, every sign and even symbol of the state disappeared in Cochabamba. The army was barracked and the police asked the people for permission to leave the police station. There was no political party, there was not any leader telling anyone what to do. Nobody was telling people what they should do or had to do. That is where people really began to feel that they were the real protagonist in this collective action, one based on a collective horizon, but also built together, in common … and that we were doing everything among equals*.[486]

These two quotes from activists, whom we might call commoners since González was a former member of a firm recuperated, in other words commonized by workers in Argentina while Olivera refers to the demonstrations held against water privatization in Cochabamba, Bolivia, suggests that the commoning activity leads to a transformation in commoners, forming new relations based on equality, constituting new subjectivities in the sense of reclaiming agency in a collective manner. Furthermore, the above quotes relate the commoning activity to direct action as well as rejecting representational politics or demanding from state on the one hand and constituting the future in the present on the other since the representational politics

> *is irrevocably pierced by the insurgence of the 'now' as the time of subjectivity and of its political constitution. Without the necessity of waiting for the 'not yet' and for the teleological arrival of their moment of action, and without being forced to delegate their action to representational actors or to state sovereignty, the contemporary figures of living labor are in a position to overturn the absence of the future in the fullness of the decision in their present*.[487]

In short,

> *Commoning thus is an alternative way to make decisions and act upon those decisions to shape the future of communities without being locked into market*

[486] Sitrin and Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us*, 26.
[487] Roggero, "Five Theses on the Common," 367.

> *competition and its anxieties, the blackmail of profit-driven companies, and state agencies. Commoning is the way the struggle for freedom is actualised: by being free…The freedom that the commons gives you is a freedom you will find nowhere else: that is, the freedom to shape, together with others, the condition of your doing, of your caring, of your commoning. Freedom as auto-determination, to determine autonomously*.[488]

In this way, the commoning activity prefigures the future in the present. Recalling that nothing is essentially common, commodified, or enclosed, and that state encloses politics, it is possible to consider prefigurative politics as the commoning of the political. In this regard, Rebecca Hollender, who argues that "All Commons struggles are broadly centered on three basic elements: reclaiming common goods, building communal relationships, and democratizing political processes"[489] distinguishes commons into non-transformational commons and transformational ones. The transformational commons try to embody these three basic elements in addition to an effort to resist capital. "In this variant, or 'commoning the political,' what is held in common is the political process itself, or the means by which shared aspirations are pursued… This involves ongoing, bottom-up collaboration and cooperation of diverse groups in open-ended, pluriversal, and prefigurative processes towards loosely defined, dynamic end goals."[490] The commoning of the political, in Castoriadis' words above de-professionalize politics and abolishes politics as a special activity. Yet, commoning the political might not be as non-violent as prefigurative politics implies.

3.6. Violence and the Common

As Christiaan Boonen states, "It is not possible to strictly separate politics and violence."[491] In terms of the common, one reason for this impossibility is the confrontation between the common and the state authority. Although there are many ways in which the common challenges the state authority, Boonen stresses the

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[488] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 204-205.
[489] Rebecca Hollender, "A Politics of the Commons or Commoning the Political Distinct Possibilities for Post Capitalist Transformation," *SPECTRA: The Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Theory Archives* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1–17, 2.
[490] Hollender, "A Politics of the Commons or Commoning the Political," 7.
[491] Christiaan Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution? Strategies of Civility for the Politics of the Common," in *The Commons and a New Global Governance*, ed. Samuel Cogolati and Jan Wouters (Cheltenham, UK: Northampton, Ma, 2018), 57–77, 64.

incompatibility between the law and the common, which might be illustrated by the fact that while the common does not acknowledge any owner, the law cannot comprehend the common without any owner. The confrontation on the legal plane, then, could result in different scenarios. Firstly, Boonen argues that in the case that the state and its legal order sense an extreme threat, the common could be illegalized, which could, in turn, reinforce the state authority depending on whether the public acknowledges admit the illegality attributed to the common, for example strict anti-squatting laws. Secondly, the common could be integrated into the state as long as the state does not sense an immediate threat emanating from the commoning practices. For instance, Boonen states that despite the fact that it was initially illegal, the occupation of Teatro Valle in Rome, Italy was legalized. However, the threat against the state authority after the legalization of occupation provoked the state to enforce additional legal demands that aimed to obstruct the operation of Teatro Valle. Thirdly and lastly, prevalent commoning practices that are considered legitimate in the eyes of the public could question the notions of legality and illegality such as the commoning practices that violate property laws direct the public to challenge these laws through normative force of sharing. According to Boonen, then, these three scenarios are replayed in most revolutions, and the real challenge is to reach the third scenario without having recourse to violence. Yet, it is evident that the state, as the holder of the monopoly of violence, will turn to violence when challenged by the commoning practices. [492]

Therefore, Boonen argues that "political violence could enter the scene in roughly two kinds of situations: either, when the logic of the common is *extended through the strategic or non-strategic use of violence*, or, when practices of commoning have to be *defended against hostile actors*."[493] In the first instance, using violence as an instrument is not compatible with either democracy or commons since violence is unpredictable and could easily turn into an uncontrollable instrument. On the other hand, violence affects the subjectivities of the users of violence. At this point, Boonen refers to Georges Sorel, who argues that violence has a part in the formation of class consciousness, unifies both the working class and the bourgeoisie and provides a

[492] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 65-67.
[493] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 68.

motivation. However, Sorel's argument is problematic since firstly, Sorel's approach could amount to that what the working class fights for, the substance of the struggle, appears less important than to fight well. Secondly, all political relations between the working class and the capitalist class are severed through violence, and violence becomes the requirement for the emergence of a radical politics while at the same time preventing this emergence as it destroys any political relation. In this way, violence restrains the parties into fighting blocs, which precludes any possibility for transformation of subjectivities.[494]

Whereas using violence as an instrument in order to extend the commons and commoning practices is incompatible, as stated earlier, it would be a mistake to think that when the state senses an immediate threat against itself arising from the commons, it would not resort to the use of violence. In this sense, against the use of violence, the commoners might have to use violence in order to defend the commons. At this point, Boonen refers to the Paris Commune where on the one hand principle of association according to which the Commune was run represented an alternative to the state, and on the other despite the rareness of physical violence, the existence of other forms of violence such as symbolic and verbal violence, and the threat of violence use did undermine opposition to the Commune. Moreover, ultimately, the Commune was destroyed through state violence. In addition, Boonen also refers to Rojava, which while trying to organize along the principle of direct democracy and at the same time struggling against the state-formation tendencies within the community, it also struggles to operate in a hostile environment. The challenge here, then, is to democratize violence and avoid propensity to monopolize violence.[495]

3.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to show that primitive accumulation is not a historical occurrence but an ongoing process, therefore it does not only belong to the pre-capitalist history but also to the period of 'mature' capitalism. Based on the ongoing character of primitive accumulation, then, the notion of the common also is not a

[494] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 68-70.
[495] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 70-73.

historical phenomenon, rather it exists in the present. This existence, however, does not mean that we should take the common for granted since capital tries to enclose the existing commons on the one hand in order to commodify the areas that are previously not commodified and to further the separation of the producers from their access to non-capitalist means of subsistence, and on the other, it uses the 'commons fix', or the cooptation of the commons as a strategy to curb its own devastation of social and ecological reproduction. Therefore, the struggle for commons means an incessant resistance against the attempts of capital to enclose or coopt the commons. In this regard, anti-capitalist commons has three components that are common goods, commoners or community, and the activity of commoning. The activity of commoning is a relational process on the one hand, as it establishes new relations among the commoners in order to ensure the production and reproduction of the common goods alongside the community or the commoners themselves, and on the other it is an activity that consists of transforming the commodified spheres into commons. Thus, through these acts of establishing new relations and decommodification, the activity of commoning indicates a resistance against enclosure or cooptation on the one hand, and on the other it also means the construction of alternatives to capital. Hence, prevention and commonization. The construction of alternatives to capital as in expansion of the commons, in short, commonization represents the prefigurative and political aspect of the commons. For instance, take squatting: "Both as an everyday practice as well as an explicit political demand, squatter movements…directly 'take' the space or building in question and then create a reality on the ground that must either be recognized as autonomous, ignored or repressed on the part of state authorities and private property owners."[496] In this way, the squatter movements presents a vision of society without private property and of social organization based on the common and aims to reach that alternative vision through constructing exactly that vision. Furthermore, constructing a society and social organization alternative to capital implies new relations and new subjectivities formed among commoners as well as nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization based on direct democracy. Thus, we can observe the common good as in

[496] Maribel Casas-Cortés, Sebastian Cobarrubias, and John Pickles, "The Commons," in *A Companion to Urban Anthropology*, ed. Donald Macon Nonini (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2014), 449–69, 460-461.

the squatted space, the commoners as in the squatters and the commoning activity as in the squatting action, therefore the three components of commons on the one hand, and on the other the means-end equivalence, construction of alternatives, nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization, direct democracy, forming of new subjectivities, direct action, rejection of engagement with state and construction of the future ideals in the present, therefore the characteristics of prefigurative politics.

To conclude, the commons and its prefigurative aspect are political and transformative. However, it should be noted "already in the dawn of the modern world the commons was a transformative practice. The practice of commoning and the common-based economies were an alternative mode of social life beyond both the feudal relations and the emerging capitalist mode of production."[497] To recall, Caffentzis considers the golden age of piracy an example of 'post-capitalist' commons, which implies the pirates' being beyond feudalism and capitalism, alongside two other examples: "After all, the pirates expropriated the most advanced machine of their period, the ocean-going ship, ran it on new communalist rules and used it to plunder the plunders [sic] of American wealth."[498] Also, Hardt, despite not exactly calling the pirates as commoners, when referring to biopiracy, which is appropriation of genetic information or indigenous knowledge by corporations using patents, argues that "piracy is a misnomer for such activities. Pirates have a much more noble vocation: they steal property. These corporations instead steal the common and transform it into property."[499] In this way, one can argue that if stealing the common is transforming it into property, then stealing the property is transforming it into common while also invoking the folk rhyme quoted in the previous chapter: "They hang the man and flog the woman / Who steals the goose from off the Common; / But let the greater criminal loose / Who steals the Common from the goose."[500] Following this and using the conceptual framework I outlined above, in the next chapter, I will analyze the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commons movement that not only commonized the ship but also the international trade thrived upon the plunder, the ocean that was in the process of

[497] Tero Toivanen, "Commons against Capitalism," in *The Politics of Ecosocialism*, ed. Kajsa Borgnäs et al. (Routledge, 2015), 116–34, 118-119.
[498] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 34.
[499] Hardt, "The Common in Communism," 350.
[500] Quoted in Malcolmson, 128.

enclosure by the states, particularly England/Great Britain, and the political. After that, I will try to relate the commoning movement of the pirates to the contemporary commoning movements, to investigate the potentialities of pirate movement, and to draw lessons from the pirate movement. After all, the commons movements "constitute efforts to enlarge the commons from a terrain that is already organized and owned by capital. They speak to a future possibility that is actually present, even though it is inevitably 'distorted' by the terrain it commonizes. The free software movement, for example, has much to learn from the experiences of the hoboes and pirates."[501]

[501] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 93-4.

CHAPTER 4

HOSTIS HUMANI GENERIS: THE ORGANIZATION OF GOLDEN AGE PIRATES

Hostis humani generis is a quite powerful term, which means the common enemy of humankind. The term itself can be traced back to Marcus Tullius Cicero who writes "…*nam pirata non est ex perduellium numero definitus, sed communis hostis omnium; cum hoc nec fides debet nec ius iurandum esse commune*" translated as "…for a pirate is not included in the number of lawful enemies, but is the common foe of all the world; and with him there ought not to be any pledged word nor any oath mutually binding."[502] Although it is suggested that Cicero's book in question is not a book on law but a book on morals[503], the term *hostis humani generis* is imported and used in order to label pirates as the common enemies of humankind, which eventually resulted in the golden age pirates' war against the world.

There are also other terms used interchangeably with pirate, such as buccaneers, privateers, filibusters, corsairs, sea dogs, sea rovers, freebooters, marooners, picaroons, and swashbucklers. To start with the most common term that might be confused with pirate, privateers operated with the license of a legal authority. As Land states, "Privateers were generally commissioned by a head of state to disrupt the trade of hostile nations and seek plunder and wealth for the crown. They were agents of a form of primitive accumulation based upon the monarchic state."[504] Shannon Lee Dawdy and Joe Bonni also define privateers as "Pirates who operate with a legal license from a state government to attack enemy ships and ports during wartime, keeping a contractual share of seized goods."[505]

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[502] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 387.
[503] Alfred P. Rubin, The Law of Piracy, (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1988), 10.
[504] Land, "Flying the Black Flag," 171.
[505] Dawdy and Bonni, "Towards a General Theory of Piracy," 678.

Buccaneers, on the other hand, "were pirates who operated in the Caribbean and around the coast of South America during the seventeenth century."[506] Originally, they were outcast colonists mostly of French origins, who lived on by hunting and who were named after their cooking technique, *boucaner* (smoking the meat). "The majority of them were at first probably French, and originated in Normandy, but their numbers were soon swelled by English indentured servants from Barbados and elsewhere who, when their term of service expired, found themselves free but landless."[507] Lacking organization at first, they later formed a loose organization known as the Brethren of the Coast. These brethren often joined forces and carried out raids. The most famous of these raids is the 1671 Panama raid led by Henry Morgan.[508] Apart from these, freebooters were soldiers working for booty, filibusters were a kind of freebooters, and corsairs were French pirates operating along the Barbary Coast.[509]

Golden age pirates, however, were a very different kind and this chapter aims at presenting the social organization of the golden age pirates based on the data available in primary and secondary sources. In this line, this chapter, and this dissertation, will cover the golden age of Atlantic piracy.

The golden age of Atlantic piracy is the period that marks the heyday of the piracy in the Atlantic Ocean and covers the years between 1650 and 1730 in general. The primary focus of this dissertation will be the pirates who operated between 1716 and 1726 since the pirates of this period "were the most numerous and successful."[510] However, the sole reason is not their being great in number and being successful; their social and political organization as well as their objectives seem to differ than those of the former periods' pirates. The pirates who operated in the period between 1716 and 1726, a period which was "the heart of the golden age"[511] had a radically different attitude towards the state, the nations, the hierarchical government of the merchant and navy ships. This chapter aims to explore this radically different attitude.

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[506] David Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates: The Romance and the Reality*, (London: Abacus, 2002), 7
[507] Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea*, 146-7.
[508] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 8.
[509] Dawdy and Bonni, "Towards a General Theory of Piracy,", 678.
[510] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 8.
[511] Mark Shirk, Consequences of Combating Transnational Violence: The Golden Age of Piracy and the Creation of an Atlantic World (2013), APSA 2013 Annual Meeting Paper; American Political Science Association 2013 Annual Meeting, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2301712, 4.

To start with, Gabriel Kuhn states that a certain antagonism exists in regard to the political analysis of golden age piracy. He argues that there are scholars who approach pirates as murderers and thieves who are, undeservingly, romanticized and praised as revolutionaries while there are also scholars who views pirates as democratic and egalitarian rebels who challenged the mainstream social order of their times. "In the end, both sides accuse the other of substituting fiction for fact."[512] However, Kuhn chooses to avoid this debate for three reasons. First of all, the debate cannot be decided since the reliable material on the pirates' everyday lives is lacking. "While there exist a few precious—and probably authentic—accounts of the life on buccaneer ships…, our images of life on pirate ships still rest to an overwhelming degree on Captain Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*."[513]. It should also be noted that there is a controversy regarding the writer of this famous book. As Cordingly states, an American scholar named John Robert Moore argued in 1932 that the writer of the book was Daniel Defoe. Considering Moore was one of the leading Defoe scholars of the time, this announcement went unchallenged. However, P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens refuted Moore's theory in *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe*. According to these two academics, there was not any evidence to claim that the author was Daniel Defoe and there were many inconsistencies between the book and the other writings associated with Defoe.[514]

Secondly, Kuhn argues that the lack of reliable material renders romanticization quite possible. Thirdly, he questions whether the political evaluation of piracy is relevant for contemporary politics and concludes that "Politically, the question of how contemporary activists can relate to golden age pirates seems much more crucial than the inevitably contested truth about golden age piracy. In other words, the political *interpretation* of golden age piracy matters less than its contemporary political *adaptation*."[515]

In line with this, this chapter will confine itself to the limited material available in primary and secondary sources in giving an account of the social and political

[512] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 2.
[513] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 2.
[514] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 10-11.
[515] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 4.

organization of golden age pirates. To start, Barnaby Slush, a sea cook from the 18th century, states that:

> *Pyrates and Buccaneers, are Princes to such Animals, for there, as none are exempt from the general Toil and Danger; so if the Chief have a Supream Share beyond his Comrades, 'tis because he's always the Leading Man in e'ry daring Enterprize; and yet as Bold as he is in all other Attempts, he dares not offer to infringe the common laws of Equity; but every Associate has his due Quota, because there needs no Appeal to Doctors-Commons for it. Thus these Hostes Humani Generis, as great Robbers as they are to all besides, are precisely Just among themselves; without which they could no more Subsist, than a Structure without a Foundation; but our more uncultivate Barbarians, snatch at all; and if there's but the least Mutt'ring rais'd, Mutiny's the Word, and strait the poor Wrench is Massacred*.[516]

As Slush suggests, pirates were just among themselves. In order to be just among themselves, these enemies of all mankind needed a distinctive social and political organization, which I will argue is a prefigurative organization, which here "refers to scenarios where protesters express the political 'ends' of their actions through their 'means', or where they create experimental or 'alternative' social arrangements or institutions."[517] and a subversive organization with regard to the mainstream organization of the ship in the navies and merchant fleets of the time.

4.1. Life on board Merchant and Navy Vessels

However, in order to lay out this prefigurative and subversive social and political organization, firstly the mainstream organization of merchant and navy vessels of that era should be explained. When life on board a ship in the early eighteenth century is taken into consideration, Sherry states that the sailor might seem in a better condition than a laborer on land since the sailor's wage is higher than the laborer on land and

[516] Barnaby Slush, *The Navy Royal: or a Sea-Cook Turnd Projector. Containing a Few Thoughts, about Manning Our Ships of War with the Best of Sailors, without Violences, and in the Most Pleasing Manner:...* (London: Printed for B. Bragge, 1709), vi.
[517] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 1.

sailor's food and shelter is provided by the employer.[518] However, in reality the sailor's lot is way worse than a land laborer's.

It is clear that merchant vessels were organized in a hierarchical order consisting of the captain at the top, officers under the captain's command and the ordinary sailors at the bottom. Leeson argues that this represents the captain's autocratic authority: "The captain's authority gave him control over all aspects of life aboard his ship, including provision of victuals, wage payment, labor assignment, and, of course, crew member discipline"[519]. One form of ensuring discipline was corporal punishment, by which "The law empowered captains to beat crew members with the infamous (and ominous) cat-o-nine-tails, imprison them, and administer other forms of harsh physical 'correction' to sailors who disobeyed orders, shirked in their duties, and so forth."[520] While "Laws and Ordinances Martial" authorized impressment, which is recruitment into naval force by force, and punished resistance with capital punishment[521], "The Articles of War of 1652 imposed the death penalty in twenty-five out of thirty-nine clauses…"[522] Thus, "Captains possessed the power of life and death over their crews, and savage mistreatment of helpless sailors formed an integral part of life aboard ship, whatever flag it might fly."[523] In this line, Sherry provides some disturbing examples of captain's mistreatment of sailors. One example comes from the diary of a sailor quoted by Sherry: *A Mariner of England An Account of the Career of William Richardson from Cabin Boy in the Merchant Service to Warrant Officer in the Royal Navy (1780 to 1819) as Told by Himself*. Although the sailor in question worked in the late 18th and early 19th century and thus, lived after the end of the golden age of piracy, I think his remarks prove useful in order to understand the attitudes of the captains.

> *our captain began now to show himself in his proper colours, and would flog a man as soon as look at him, and assumed as much consequence as if he had been captain of a line-of-battleship : all we four mates had to attend him with*

[518] Frank Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels: A History of the Golden Age of Piracy*, (New York: HarperCollins e-books, 2008), 48.
[519] Leeson, "An-Arrgh-Chy: The Law and Economics of Pirate Organization," Journal of Political Economy 115, no. 6 (2007): 1049–94, doi:10.1086/526403, 1056.
[520] Leeson, "An-Arrgh-Chy," 1057.
[521] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 145.
[522] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 146.
[523] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 49.

> *hats off at the gangway in going out or coming in to the ship; he flogged a good seaman for only losing an oar out of the boat, and the poor fellow soon after died*.[524]

Sherry goes on to share stories of mistreatment of sailors: "a Captain Staines of the English ship Rochester became so angry at an infraction of his ship's rules that he had a young seaman beaten with six hundred lashes from an inch-thick tarred rope."[525]

> *While flogging was the most common form of punishment, it was by no means the only barbarity practiced aboard ship. The punishment for drawing a weapon in a quarrel, for example, was the loss of a hand. Other punishments an unlucky mariner might have to endure included keelhauling (being scraped across the barnacled hull of the ship), being ducked at the end of a rope from the yardarm, being strung up from the yardarm, and being towed, often with hands tied, from the stern. Some punishments, besides being barbarous, were also bizarre. One particularly sadistic mate forced his men to eat cockroaches as a punishment. Another delighted in cracking off the teeth of miscreants with an iron bolt*.[526]

In addition to the harsh discipline on board merchant and navy vessels, common sailors in the early eighteenth century suffered an arduous life, which "often involved and existence of constant dampness and discomfort, poor conditions and ever-present danger."[527] They "suffered cramped, claustrophobic quarters, 'food' that was often as rotten as it was meager, and more. They experienced as a matter of course devastating disease, disabling accidents, shipwreck, and premature death."[528] "Most sailors had to subsist on salt beef or pork crawling with worms or maggots, bread blue with mold, and water that stank from the barrel."[529] Aside from rotten and inadequate food, sailors' living condition was poor as well: "The sailor had to sleep, when he was allowed to do so, in a crowded fo'c'sle, jammed in with other men, inhaling the fumes of unwashed bodies, sweating when it was hot, shivering when it was cold, and almost

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[524] William, Richardson, *A Mariner of England; an Account of the Career of William Richardson from Cabin Boy in the Merchant Service to Warrant Officer in the Royal Navy (1780 to 1819) as Told by Himself*, (London: J. Murray, 1908), 51.
[525] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 49.
[526] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 49.
[527] Angus Konstam, *Pirates 1660-1730*, (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2004), 8.
[528] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 43.
[529] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 49.

always wet through from weather or leaks."[530] Furthermore, life on board a ship was dangerous. Fire, falling from the ship, storms, injuries sustained due to falling equipment were ever-present dangers while being disabled due to these dangers meant unemployment with no pensions or compensation. Of course, there was the danger of diseases as well as the risk of being wounded or killed in battle.

In this sense, "Death was an ever-present danger and many of the sailors setting out on a voyage would not live to receive their pay at the end of it."[531] To illustrate, Turley refers to William Funnel, a sailor on Charles Dampier's ship: "And, on the 26th of August 1706, after many Dangers both by Sea and Land, we happily arrived in England; being but eighteen out of one hundred eighty-three, which went out with us. Finis."[532] Or Rediker refers to Surgeon John Atkins: "'Weymouth, who brought out of England a Compliment [sic] of 240 men,' had 'at the end of the Voyage 280 dead upon her Books'."[533] Although these numbers come from privateering or navy ships, and "Whilst the death rate aboard a merchant vessel does not appear to have been as high as on a privateer or Royal Navy vessel, life was far from easy and worse still if the ship was involved in the slave trade. Around a quarter of all men going to sea on a slave-trader would not make it home."[534]

Thus, Sherry concludes his comparison between a sailor and laborer on land by stating that aside from these aspects, the sailor was in a far worse condition in that the sailor had no chance of escaping: "He was, except, in name, no better than a slave."[535] Rediker also summarizes the sailor's lot in the early eighteenth century when he refers to Samuel Johnson "no man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in jail with the chance of being drowned… A man in jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company."[536] However, Sherry,

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[530] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 50.
[531] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 174.
[532] William Funnel, *A Voyage round the World Containing an Account of Captain Dampier's Expedition into the South-Seas in the Ship St. George, in the Years 1703 and 1704*, (London: W. Botham:, 1707) quoted in Hans Turley, *Rum, Sodomy, and the Lash: Piracy, Sexuality, and Masculine Identity*, (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 14.
[533] John Atkins, *A Voyage to Guinea, Brasil, and the West Indies*, (London: Casesar Ward and Richard Chandler, 1722), 344 quoted in Rediker, 2012, 44.
[534] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 174.
[535] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 51.
[536] James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, (London, 1791), 86, quoted in Rediker, 2012, 43.

who argues that the sailor was "no better than a slave", and had no chance of escaping, presents a way for escape, a way which was chosen by many sailors: "If they became bitter enough, or rebellious enough, they could seize their ship and turn pirate."[537] Now it is time to explain this way for escape and the organization of pirate ships.

4.2. Autonomous and Democratic Organization of Pirate Ships

Sherry claims that "In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, there was only one true democracy on earth: the pirate brotherhood forged in Madagascar."[538] According to him, the pirates' esteem for their rights and contempt towards their oppression in honest service existed side by side in their "passionately democratic" life.[539] In this line, as they considered themselves as the collective owners of their ships, they also believed that all should have a say on board the ship. In this regard, as Lucie-Smith argues, "What attracted men to the pirate life was the prospect of freedom almost as much as the prospect of gain, and it is not surprising that they insisted on enjoying their liberty to the full, however brutishly they sometimes exercised it."[540]

Kuhn points out to the parallels between the chiefs of the stateless native American societies and the pirate captains by drawing on the French anthropologist Pierre Clastres's essay "Exchange and Power: Philosophy of the Indian Chieftainship". According to Clastres "1. The chief is elected and replaceable. 2. His power rests on merit only. 3. His power is controlled by the community. 4. He is a peacemaker. 5. He is generous with his possessions. 6. He is a good orator. 7. He is an able leader in war."[541]

On the election and replaceability of the pirate captain, Kuhn argues that it is a fact acknowledged by even non-radical historians of piracy that pirates had a tradition of democracy through which crews elected and replaced their captains. For instance, Kuhn refers to David Cordingly: "…pirate communities were...democracies. A hundred years before the French Revolution, the pirate companies were run on lines in which liberty, equality and brotherhood were the rule rather than the exception."[542] When compared to

[537] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 51.
[538] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 118.
[539] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 118.
[540] Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea*, 207.
[541] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 30.
[542] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 117.

the absolute and autocratic authority of the captain as well as the captain's not electability in the merchant and navy vessels, this democratic tradition presents a sheer contrast. In this line, "piracy, for the most part, represented a way of life voluntarily chosen by large numbers of men who directly challenged the ways of the society from which they excepted themselves."[543] Moreover, in terms of decision making, selecting leaders, distribution of plunder, the pirates presented " a world turned upside down" and "its hallmark was a rough, improvised, but effective egalitarianism that placed authority in the collective hands of the crew."[544]

The central component of this democracy was the articles which were written and agreed upon by the crew in the founding moment of the pirate crew. Of course, neither this democratic tradition nor the written articles were born out of blue, rather it was a tradition that had been passed on from the time of buccaneers. As an eyewitness, Alexander Exquemelin explains how a buccaneering voyage starts at length: Before the voyage, the sailors hold a council in order to decide where to get provisions. After the provisions are provided, another council is held to decide where to go. Also, this council decides on the certain articles that bind every sailor on the ship. The articles also specify the shares of all sailors, from the captain, to the carpenter, from the surgeon, to the compensation given to the wounded. Of course, when these shares are specified the qualities and merits of the sailors are considered. For instance, the captain gets five or six shares while common sailors get one shares. In line with the articles, the order is observed, and it is strictly prohibited with a binding oath to take any more than one's share and to hide any of the plunder from the company. In the case that one breaks the oath taken and steals from the company, the oath-breaker is separated from the company.[545]

The collective, egalitarian and democratic character of principles represented by the council and the decision-making on buccaneers' ships passes on to the articles of the golden age pirates. "Although the articles might differ in various particulars from ship to ship, their general aim was always to safeguard individual liberties, especially the

[543] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 61.
[544] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 61.
[545] Alexander Oliver Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America*, (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1914), 39-41.

right of each crew member to a trial by his peers and an equal voice in the ship's affairs."[546]

In this line, Kuhn states that "Captain Johnson lists three detailed sets of articles: those of the companies of Captain Bartholomew Roberts, Captain George Lowther, and Captain John Phillips."[547]

According to Captain Charles Johnson, the articles of the Bartholomew Roberts's ship are as follows:

> *I. Every man has a vote in affairs of moment; has equal title to the fresh provisions or strong liquors at any time seized, and [may] use them at pleasure unless a scarcity (no uncommon thing among them) make it necessary for the good of all to vote a retrenchment.*
> *II. Every man to be called fairly in turn, by list, on board of prizes, because over and above their proper share they were on these occasions allowed a shift of clothes. But if they defrauded the Company to the value of a dollar, in plate, jewels or money, Marooning was the punishment. (This was a barbarous custom of putting the offender on shore on some desolate or uninhabited cape or island, with a gun, a few shot, a bottle of water and a bottle of powder, to subsist with or starve.) If the robbery was only between one another they contented themselves with slitting the ears and nose of him that was guilty, and set him on shore, not in an unhabited place but somewhere where he was sure to encounter hardships.*
> *III. No person to game at cards or dice for money.*
> *IV. The lights and candles to be put out at eight o'clock at night. If any of the crew after that hour still remained inclined to drinking, they were to do it on the open deck (which Roberts believed would give a check to their debauchs, for he was a sober man himself; but he found at length that all his endeavours to put an end to this debauch proved ineffectual).*
> *V. To keep their piece, pistols and cutlass clean and fit for service. (In this they were extravagantly nice, endeavouring to outdo one another in the beauty and richness of their arms, giving sometimes at an auction at the mast, £30 or £40 a pair for pistols. These were slung in time of service with different coloured ribbons over their shoulders in a way peculiar to these fellows, in which they took great delight.)*
> *VI. No boy or woman to be allowed amongst them. If any man were found seducing any of the latter sex, and carried her to sea disguised, he was to suffer Death. (So that when any fell into their hands, as it chanced in the Onslow, they put a sentinel immediately over her to prevent ill consequences from so dangerous an instrument of division and quarrel. But then here lies the roguery; they contend who shall be sentinel, which happens generally to one of*

[546] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 120.
[547] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 85.

the greatest bullies who, to secure the lady's virtue, will let none lie with her but himself.)
VII. To desert the ship or their quarters in battle was punished with Death or Marooning.
VIII. No striking one another on board, but every man's quarrels to be ended on shore, at sword and pistol. (Thus, the quartermaster of the ship, when the parties will not come to any reconciliation, accompanies them on shore with what assistance he thinks proper, and turns the disputants back to back at so many paces distant. At the word of command they turn and fire immediately or else the piece is knocked out of their hands. If both miss they come to their cutlasses and then he is declared victor who draws the first blood.)
IX. No man to talk of breaking up their way of living till each had a share of £1,000. If, in order to do this, any man should lose a limb or become a cripple in their service, he was to have 800 dollars out of the public stock, and for lesser hurts proportionately.
X. The Captain and Quartermaster to receive two shares of a prize; the master, boatswain and gunner, one share and a half, and other officers one and a quarter.
XI. The musicians to have rest on the sabbath day, but the other six days and nights none, without special favour.[548]

Captain Johnson lists the articles of Captain George Lowther and his company as follows:

I. The Captain is to have two full shares; the master is to have one share and a half; the doctor, mate, gunner, and boatswain, one share and a quarter.
II. He that shall be found guilty of taking up any unlawful weapon on board the privateer or any prize by us taken, so as to strike or abuse one another in any regard, shall suffer what punishment the Captain and majority of the Company shall think fit.
III. He that shall be found guilty of cowardice in the time of engagement shall suffer what punishment the Captain and Majority shall think fit.
IV. If any gold, jewels, silver etc., be found on board of any prize or prizes, to the value of a piece-of-eight, and the finder do not deliver it to the quartermaster in the space of 24 hours, shall suffer what punishment the Captain and Majority shall think fit.
V. He that is found guilty of gaming, or defrauding another to the value of a shilling, shall suffer what punishment the Captain and majority of the Company shall think fit.
VI. He that shall have the misfortune to lose a limb, in time of engagement, shall have the sum of £150 sterling, and remain with the company as long as he shall think fit.
VII. Good quarter to be given when called for.

[548] Johnson, *A General History*, 182-4.

VIII. He that sees a sail first, shall have the best pistol or small arm on board her.[549]

The articles of Captain John Phillips's ship, Revenge, are as follows according to Captain Johnson:

> *I. Every man shall obey civil command; the Captain shall have one full share and a half in all prizes; the master, carpenter, boatswain and gunner shall have one share and a quarter.*
> *II. If any man shall offer to run away or keep any secret from the company, he shall be marooned, with one bottle of Powder, one botde of water, one small arm, and shot.*
> *III. If any man shall steal anything in the company, or game to the value of a piece-of-eight, he shall be marooned or shot.*
> *IV. If at any time we should meet another Marooner (that is Pirate) that man that shall sign his articles without the consent of our company shall suffer such punishment as the captain and company shall think fit.*
> *V. That man that shall strike another whilst these articles are in force shall receive Moses's Law (that is 40 stripes lacking one) on the bare back.*
> *VI. That man that shall snap his arms, or smoke tobacco in the hold without a cap to his pipe, or carry a candle lighted without a lanthorn, shall suffer the same punishment as in the former article.*
> *VII. That man that shall not keep his arms clean, fit for an engagement, or neglect his business, shall be cut off from his share, and suffer such other punishment as the captain and the company shall think fit.*
> *VIII. If any man shall lose a joint in time of an engagement, he shall have 400 pieces-of-eight; if a limb, 800.*
> *IX. If at any time you meet with a prudent woman, that man that offers to meddle with her, without her consent, shall suffer present death*.[550]

Although each pirate ship had its own articles drawn up by its crew, when the articles given above are examined it is seen that they were more or less similar. Each set of articles emphasize the collective decision-making process in the ships. Although only one, the articles of Bartholomew Roberts's ship, clearly indicates that every sailor had a vote in the company's affairs, the other two also points out to that the each sailor on the ship had a say in the decision of punishment that would be meted out to the offenders of various crimes laid out in the articles. Aside from the decision-making process, the articles of each ship lay out the principles that regulate the rule of conduct on board such

[549] Johnson, *A General History*, 274-5.
[550] Johnson, *A General History*, 307-8.

as preventing fights on board the ship, always keeping guns ready in case of an attack by or attacking other ships, preventing fires on the ship, maintaining the unity of the crew and preventing desertion and preventing stealing from the company. Furthermore, the articles clearly indicate the shares of the crew and specify the shares that would be given as compensation to the wounded.

Although only three set of articles of three ships are presented here, as Kuhn suggests, "The versions of the pirate articles that existed on different ships appeared so similar in essence that they indeed constituted a common golden age pirate culture or, in Frank Sherry's words, a *commonwealth*."[551]

In all, these articles organized the allocation of authority, distribution of plunder and food and enforcement of discipline.[552] In line with these articles, the crew "permit him to be captain on condition that they may be captain over him."[553] Thus, the captain of a pirate vessel has a very limited authority when compared to the captain of a navy or merchant vessel, who as we have seen had such an absolute authority that he had the power of life and death above the sailors. Thus, as Captain Johnson puts it, the pirate captain's authority "is absolute and uncontrollable, by their own laws, viz., in fighting, chasing or being chased ; in all other matters whatsoever he is governed by a majority."[554] The account given by Walter Kennedy, a pirate, regarding the organization of pirates in *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals* further proves this point:

> *Kennedy took a particular Delight in relating what happened to him in these Expeditions, even after they had brought him to Misery and Confinement. The Account he gave of that form of Rule which these Wretches set up, in imitation of legal Government, and of those Regulations they made to supply the Place of moral honesty, was in substance this:*
> *They chose a captain from amongst themselves, who in effect held little more than that title, excepting in an engagement, when he commanded absolutely and without control. Most of them [the pirates] having suffered formerly from the ill-treatment of their officers, provided carefully against any such evil, now they had the choice in themselves*.[555]

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[551] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 88.
[552] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 65.
[553] Johnson, *A General History*, 185.
[554] Johnson, *A General History*, 108.
[555] Arthur L. Hayward, ed., *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals - Who Have Been Condemned and Executed for Murder: Previously Published 1735 and 1927* (Routledge, 2013), 41.

Besides, the elected captains could be deposed from their office as well. Rediker notes being coward, cruel, or refusing plunder English vessels, or being too 'Gentlemen-like' are sufficient to be deposed.

"Captains were snatched from their positions for cowardice, cruelty, or refusing to take and plunder English vessels. One captain incurred the class-conscious wrath of his crew for being too 'Gentleman-like.'"[556] For instance, Benjamin Hornigold, a pirate captain, separates from his crew: "After a quarrel among the crew, Hornigold with a few of his crew —Englishmen who are supposed to have refused quixotically to plunder English ships—parted company with the rest, and sailed away in the *Benjamin*. Samuel Bellamy then was made commander of the *Mary Anne* and the crew of ninety that remained with her."[557] Again, the account given by Captain William Snelgrave, a merchant captain who was captured and later released by a pirate crew, notes that "[a]nd indeed they told me, after I was taken, 'That they chose him for their Commander, on account of his Brutality and Ignorance; having resolved never to have again a Gentleman-like Commander, as, they said, Moody was.'"[558]

The position of captain in a pirate ship is not a privileged position regarding food, drink, or even space: "but every Man is allowed to eat what he pleases. Then they put all under the care of their Quarter-master, who discharges all things with and Equality to them all, every Man and Boy faring alike; and even their Captain, or any other Officer, is allowed no more than another Man; nay, the Captain cannot keep his own Cabbin to himself."[559] According to Rediker, "[t]he determined reorganization of space and privilege aboard the ship was crucial to the remaking of maritime social relations."[560]

The position of quartermaster, as the person who is charged with equal distribution of all things, stands out as a crucial position within the organization of the pirate ship. Indeed, "[t]o prevent the misuse of authority, pirates elected an officer called

[556] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 65.
[557] Richard B. Morris, "The Ghost of Captain Kidd," *New York History*, 19, no. 3 (July 1938). 280-97, 282.
[558] William Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts of Guinea: and the Slave-Trade*, (London: James, John, and Paul Knapton, 1734), 199.
[559] Clement Downing, A Compendious History of the Indian Wars, (London: T. Cooper, 1737), 108.
[560] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 65.

the quartermaster, whose powers counterbalanced those of the captain."[561] Snelgrave also proves this point when he notes that "[b]esides him, they choose another principal Officer, whom they call Quarter-master, who has the general Inspection of all Affairs, and often controuls the Captain's Orders."[562] Captain Charles Johnson also defines the duties of the quartermaster:

> *For the punishment of small offences which are not provided for by the articles, and which are not of consequence enough to be left to a jury, there is a principal officer among the Pirates called the Quartermaster, of the men's own choosing, who claims all authority this way (excepting in time of battle). If they disobey his command, are quarrelsome and mutinous with one another, misuse prisoners, plunder beyond his order, and in particular, if they be negligent of their arms, which he musters at discretion, he punishes at his own arbitrament, with drubbing or whipping, which no one else dare do without incurring the lash from all the ship's company. In short, this officer is trustee for the whole, is the first on board any prize, separating for the company's use what he pleases, and returning what he thinks fit to the owners, excepting gold and silver, which they have voted not returnable*.[563]

It should also be noted that "The quartermaster, who was considered not an officer in the merchant service but rather just a "smart" (that is, knowledgeable, experienced) seaman, was elevated among the pirates to a supremely valued position of trust, authority, and power."[564]

However, when it comes to the authority, "neither the captain nor the quartermaster represented the highest authority on the pirate ship. That honor belonged to the common council, which met regularly and included every man from captain to foremast man."[565] According to Rediker, the council's main purpose was the election of officers on the ship. However, the council also decided on the course that would be taken or how disagreements would be resolved. "When Edward England proposed that he and his consort ship attack Portuguese Goa on the western coast of India, the men gathered in council and debated the matter, but 'they could not agree on it, so proceeded to the southward" (Rediker, 2012, s. 68). Again, "Captains Sam Bellamy and Paul

[561] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 66.
[562] Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts,* 199.
[563] Johnson, *A General History*, 184-5.
[564] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 66.
[565] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 68.

Williams were 'for giving [merchant captain Samuel] Beer his Sloop again after they had took out her Loading, but the Ships Crew ordered her to be sunk."[566] In addition to these, the council also decided on the punishments that would be given to the crew members who violated the articles of the ship. In this line, "The decisions the council made were sacrosanct. Even the boldest captain dared not challenge its power."[567] The council had to authority to remove captains as well as to elect them. Marcus Rediker gives instances of captains losing their position due to the council's decisions:

> *Thomas Anstis lost his position as captain; he was, as the pirates put it, "turn'd before the Mast," that is, made a common seaman on the ship he had once commanded. Charles Vane was labeled a coward by his crew and removed from his captaincy. Captain Charles Martel's company deposed him on account of his cruelty in the treatment of crew and captives and chose a "more righteous" man in his place. A majority of Bartholomew Roberts's crew thought that David Simpson, an "old pirate," had grown vicious as quartermaster; he was "turn'd out by them*."[568]

At this point, Rediker even claims that for the pirates who had worked under totalitarian organization of merchant and navy ships, democracy as implemented on pirate ships might be intoxicating. He refers to the book *An Account of the Conduct and Proceedings of the Late John Gow, alias Smith, Captain of the Late Pirates*:

> *Nor does the calling him (I mean this Gow or Smith) their Captain denominate him any thing deeper in the Crime than the rest; for 'tis eminently known, that among such Fellows as these, when once they have abandon'd themselves to such a dreadful hight of Wickedness, there is so little Government or Subordination among them, that they are, on Occasion, all Captains, all Leaders. And tho' they generally put in this or that Man to act as Commander for this or that Voyage, or Enterprise, they frequently remove them again upon the smallest Occasion, nay, even without any Occasion at all, but as Humours and Passions govern at those times: And this is done so often, that I once knew a Buccaneering Pirate Vessel, whole Crew were upwards of 70 Men, who, in one Voyage, had to often changed, set up, and pull'd down their Captains and other Officers, that above Seven and Forty of the Ships Company had, at*

[566] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 69.
[567] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 69.
[568] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 69.

> *several Times, been in Office of one kind or other; and among the rest they had, in particular had, 13 Captains*.[569]

The articles drawn by the pirates also regulated the distribution of plunder in line with the crew members' duties and skills: "The captain and the quartermaster received between one and a half and two shares; gunners, boatswains, mates, carpenters, and doctors, one and a quarter or one and a half; all the others got one share each."[570] According to Rediker, this system of distribution regulated by the articles was radically different from the mainstream practices of the time and represented one of the most egalitarian practices of distribution in the context of the early eighteenth century. Moreover, Rediker argues that upon seizing the means of maritime production by mutinying on or capturing a ship, the pirates "abolished the wage relation central to the process of capitalist accumulation. So rather than work for wages using the tools and machine (the ship) owned by a merchant capitalist, pirates commanded the ship as their own property and shared equally in the risks of their common adventure."[571]

Furthermore, the distribution of food and drink was also regulated by the articles:

> *...for these very items had, for many, figured crucially in the decision to "go upon the account" in the first place. A mutinous sailor aboard the George Galley in 1724 responded to his captain's orders to furl the mizzen top by saying "in a surly Tone, and with a kind of Disdain, So as we Eat so shall we work." Other mutineers simply insisted that "it was not their business to starve," and that if a captain was making it so, hanging could be little worse. It was on old joke among underfed, angry sailors that should mutiny fail, the weight of their bodies would not be enough to hang them*.[572]

The reason that the distribution of provisions had such central importance that it was included in the pirate articles was that provisions for sailors were generally short in vessels other than pirate vessels.

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[569] Daniel Defoe, *An Account of the Conduct and Proceedings of the Late John Gow, Alias Smith, Captain of the Late Pirates*, (London: John Applebee, 1725), introduction.
[570] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 70.
[571] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 70.
[572] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 70.

One other aspect of the pirates' prefigurative and subversive social order was their social security system through which they "addressed the issues of health, safety, and security in their articles, making it a point to allocate a portion of all booty to a 'common fund' to provide for men who had sustained injury of lasting effect, whether the loss of eyesight or a limb"[573] Rediker argues that pirates tried to maintain their physical health, encourage and sustain recruitment and ensure loyalty by establishing their right to food and drink and implementing a social security system, which were not existent in merchant ships or the navy. The provisions were scarce in merchant and navy vessels while sailors sustaining an injury were put ashore.

In addition, the pirate articles regulated discipline, which according to Rediker, "perhaps is a misnomer for a system of rules that left large ranges of behavior uncontrolled."[574] The discipline on pirate ship was applied when an act was collectively regarded as a transgression: "Many misdeeds were accorded 'what Punishment the Captain and Majority of the Company shall think fit…"[575] Rediker lists three methods of discipline applied by the pirates: duel, marooning and execution. He refers to the eighth article of the crew of Bartholomew Roberts which states that a quarrel between two crew members should be resolved not on board the ship but on shore. In this regard, the duel was a method of discipline in the sense that it prevented quarrels and therefore disorder on the ship and limited quarrels to the shore. According to Rediker, the punishment of marooning also reflects the ideal of harmony. Marooning was reserved for "men who were incorrigibly disruptive or who transgressed important rules…" such as "… defrauding his mates…, deserting…, keeping secrets from the crew,… or stealing…"[576] Execution was the ultimate method of discipline and according to Rediker, although there were articles stating the crimes fit for execution, "In the end, execution was most commonly invoked to punish a captain who had abused his authority."[577]

The analysis of pirate economy also suggests a sheer contrast to the mainstream order of things. According to Sherry, "The crew of a pirate ship worked only as much as was necessary to handle the ship. As a result, they often omitted all but the most

[573] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 73.
[574] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 75.
[575] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 75.
[576] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 75.
[577] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 76.

necessary maintenance… For them a ship was primarily a means to an end, not a property in itself."[578] According to Kuhn, contemporay accounts on pirates agree that the pirates had no enthusiasm for work. Kuhn refers to Bromley who claims that "The authorities agree on their self-will, caprice, dislike of work;… So long as they had cash to spend, it was difficult to persuade them to the sea.[579] Bromley also refers to Pere Labat, "who sometimes sailed with them and counted some of their captains among his friends, attributes their preference for a simple sail-rig to a dislike of work in the first place."[580] Although this accounts are given with regard to buccaneers, Rediker's comparison of the crew numbers of merchant ships and pirate ships indicates that pirate ships offered a substantial decrease in the work required to operate the ship: "A transatlantic merchant ship of 250 tons, which would have had a working crew of 15 to 18 'hands,' would, if taken and refitted by pirates, have been manned by 80 to 90 men, each of whom, accordingly, had much less work to do. "[581]

In addition to their dislike for work, their attitude towards accumulation was also against the mainstream society's norms. "Contrary to popular belief, most buccaneers or pirates never demonstrated a big interest in accumulating wealth."[582]

Moreover, Kuhn argues that the work was not a distinct sphere of existence in pirate ships. In this sense, "that labor as an autonomous aspect of life did not exist within the pirate community, and hence none of the alienation processes associated with it existed either."[583] Kuhn also adds that "Apart from the relative lack of work, the refusal to engage in accumulative practices, and the absence of a distinct labor sector and alienation processes, the golden age pirates' economy distinguished itself in another important way from the capitalist development that surrounded it: namely, the pirates controlled their own means of production."[584] Of course, this resulted in that there was no exploitation in the pirate ship. While "some of these profits were shared by the crew in a way reminiscent of both Friedrich Engels' simple description of 'original

[578] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 127-28.
[579] J. S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies, 1600-1760*, (London: Hambledon Continuum, 1987), 9.
[580] Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 5.
[581] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 58.
[582] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 36.
[583] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 38.
[584] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 39.

communism' … and the 'generalized reciprocity' described by Sahlins and other anthropologists…"[585]

In this regard, the democratic and egalitarian organization of the pirate ship and the pirate society indicates prefigurative and subversive elements when compared to the organization of the naval and merchant vessels of the time. The limitation of the captain's authority, the emergence of the position of the quartermaster as a check against the already limited authority of the captain, the process that allows for the election and removal of the captain and the quartermaster, the existence of the pirate council, the distribution of plunder and, food and drink in an equal manner, the presence of a social security system, and regulation of discipline on board not in an arbitrary way but in a democratic manner altogether point out that the mainstream organization present on naval and merchant vessels was categorically rejected by the pirates. This rejection, on the other hand, culminated in the alternative organization of the pirate ship which not only subverted the mainstream ship organization but also manifested the prefigurative character of the pirate society.

4.3. Race and Nationality

The racial aspect of golden age piracy, particularly the number and roles of black crew members in pirate ships seems to be controversial. While some historians claim that the pirate ship was a multinational and multiracial place for resistance against the mainstream social and political setting of the time, others argue that pirates shared the same prejudices in terms of race with the other white men of the western society.

On the national composition of pirate ships, Rediker argues that simply it is not known. However, the authorities that tried to deal with piracy also tried to locate them when they captured them. Rediker states that the places of 348 pirates are known, although the places that were recorded could be their place of birth, places they had grown up or their bases. Nevertheless, according to Rediker it is clear that many pirates were of British (English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh) origins while almost 25 percent of the pirates were hailing from the America (the West Indies and North America). Apart from these, there were pirates coming from France, Denmark, Sweden, Holland,

[585] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 39.

Portugal, Belgium and Africa. Rediker states that according to official documents, the international members composed 6.9 percent of the pirates.[586] In addition to these, Rediker points out to official correspondences that refer to pirates as "banditti of all nations", "a Mix't Multitude of all Country's", "are compounded of all Nations", a motley crew that "acknowledged no countrymen, that they had sold their country and were sure to be hanged if taken, and that they would take no quarter, but do all the mischief they could."[587]

Then, it is quite clear that the pirates were predominantly Anglo-American. At the same time, there are instances indicating that there were some pirate captains and crews that showed national prejudices such as Bartholomew Roberts who hated people from Bristol, the Spanish, the Irish, and people from Barbados and Martinique.[588] Nevertheless, "they posed a significant threat to the nation-state—both confirmed by their reputation as 'banditti of all nations' and the fact that legal scholars have called piracy the 'first international crime.'"[589] Besides Kuhn points out to the instances where pirate crews acted beyond any national prejudices and refers, as an example, to a pirate of Spanish origin, Augustino Blanco whose crew composed of English, Portuguese, Scottish, Spanish, black and "mulatto" pirates.[590]

On the other hand, Kinkor argues that although the multiculturalism of the pirate ship does not stem from idealism but from pragmatic reasons as in rebelling against being oppressed by the same system, "If the revolutionary formula "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" is expanded to include the concept of transnationalism, pirates still fit this paradigm insofar as they were far less divided by national, religious, and racial differences than an oppressive and unjust society."[591]

However, according to Kinkor, how pirates treated captive Africans was unpredictable. When a slave ship was captured by pirates, the enslaved were sometimes left chained, sometimes they were freed in order them to take revenge from their captors, sometimes they were liberated and put on shore, sometimes they chose to join pirates

[586] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 51-2.
[587] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 53.
[588] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 60.
[589] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 60.
[590] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 60.
[591] Kenneth J. Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," in *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader*, ed. C. R. Pennell (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 196-197.

and strengthen their numbers. Some were forced to join pirates, sometimes they were sold by pirates and sometimes they were targeted by the pirates' rage.[592]

On the other hand, "Blacks acquainted with European language, culture, and/or seamanship routinely joined pirate crews as freemen… Whether slave or free, black able-bodies seamen were especially valuable pirate recruits."[593] According to the Table 1 prepared by Kinkor by drawing on various primary sources, about 25-30 percent of the pirates operating between 1715 and 1726 were black.[594] According to Kinkor, apart from Roberts's articles which exclude foreigners from being impressed into service, none of the articles of the pirate ships mentions nationality or race. In addition, black members have shares from the booty as equal members of the crew who had voting rights as well. In this line, it might be argued that being an equal member of the pirate crew depended not on race or nationality, but on merit.[595]

In this regard, Sherry also argues that the pirates in the Caribbean had an effect that disturbed the merchants and planters there: The black slaves working in the fields grew restless and attempted to run away after hearing they would be welcomed in the pirate society.[596] Sherry also notes that "The largest recorded mass escape of black slaves at this time took place in Martinique, where fifty blacks, supposedly stirred up by a white man, had risen against their French master and had fled the island 'to seek a career in piracy.'"[597] Moreover, Sherry adds that "In fact, blacks, who usually feared a return to slavery even more than they feared death, were often far more willing than white pirates to fight and die in defense of their ships and their freedom."[598]

With regard to nationality or anti-nationalism of the pirates, Rediker also notes that

> *… they did think of themselves as people without a nation. When pirates stitched together their black flag, the antinational symbol of a gang of proletarian outlaws, they "declared War against all the World." When hailed by another ship, pirates, who were multinational in origin, usually answered*

[592] Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," 198.
[593] Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," 198.
[594] Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," 200.
[595] Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," 200.
[596] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 208.
[597] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 208.
[598] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 208.

that they came "from the seas," not from any particular country. Some pirates explained to captives that they had "sold their nation" for booty.[599]

4.4. Women Pirates

Just as buccaneer community was almost exclusively male, and navy and merchant service were also almost exclusively male dominated. In fact, "…for hundreds of years seafaring was an almost exclusively male preserve."[600] In this line, "There can be little doubt that piracy was one of the most male-dominated activities in former times."[601] Piracy was a ruthless and violent activity full of masculinity. It was dangerous and uncomfortable, and it held "male values" such as profanity, drinking, brutality and violence in high regard. In practice, presence of women on board might prove disruptive for the crew in addition to the presence of superstitious beliefs about women on board.[602]

On the other hand, while Kuhn argues on buccaneer communities and pirate ships that "Whatever the individual buccaneers' attitudes towards women were, their community remained exclusively male throughout the 17th century and this exclusivity extended into the pirates' golden age"[603], it is a fact that Kuhn also acknowledges that there were certainly at least two women pirates in the golden age of piracy: Mary Read and Anne Bonny. "Apart from Mary Read and Anne Bonny, the only female pirates mentioned in any of the pirate histories are the Scandinavian pirate Alwilda, the Irishwoman Grace O'Malley, and the Chinese pirate leader Mrs. Cheng."[604]

In terms of the place of women in the pirate community, Appleby refers to women's role on land in the business of piracy: Women on shore received the plundered goods and helped in hiding pirates from the authorities. The hidden support provided by women fed piracy in some places. At this point, however, Appleby warns: "…by the same process it could easily turn women into victims: wherever piracy flourished so did the business of prostitution."[605]

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[599] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 8.
[600] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 83.
[601] John C. Appleby, "Women and Piracy in Ireland *From Gráinne O'Malley to Anne Bonny*," in *Bandits at Sea: A Pirates Reader*, ed. C. R. Pennell (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 283.
[602] Appleby, "Women and Piracy in Ireland," 283.
[603] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 71.
[604] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 89.
[605] Appleby, "Women and Piracy in Ireland," 284.

Charles Johnson starts the chapter on the women pirates, Mary Read and Anne Bonny by stating that

> *Now we are to begin a history full of surprising turns and adventures; I mean, that of Mary Read and Anne Bonny, alias Bonn, which were the true names of these two Pirates. The odd incidents of their rambling lives are such that some may be tempted to think the whole story no better than a novel or romance ; but since it is supported by many thousand witnesses, I mean the people of Jamaica, who were present at their trials and heard the story of their lives upon the first discovery of their sex, the truth of it can be no more contested, than that there were such men in the world as Roberts and Black-beard, who were Pirates*.[606]

According to Johnson, Mary Read's odd life began in England as an illegitimate child who were brought up by as a boy. After growing up, Mary Read, again, disguised as a young boy, enlisted in the army fighting in Flanders. She fell in love with a fellow soldier, married him after the campaign ended. They settled down and opened an eating-house in Breda. However, soon Read's husband died and her business in Breda worsened. She decided to go to the West Indies, but her ship was taken by some English pirates. After living as a pirate for some time, Read and her pirate fellows took the King's pardon. Then after her money grew short, she joined a privateering company. With some other crew members, she rose up against their commander and later joined the crew of Captain John Rackam where she met Anne Bonny. After they were caught by the authorities, she was found guilty and condemned to death along with Anne Bonny. However, she told the court that she was pregnant and her execution was delayed. However, she died of a fever in prison soon after the trial.[607]

When it comes to Anne Bonny, just as Mary Read, she was also an illegitimate child born in near Cork, Ireland. Her father was an attorney at law and a married man, and her mother was her father's maid. After Anne grew, her father became very fond of her and wanted to take her home to live with himself. In order to prevent a scandal which resulted in the discovery of his extra-marital relationship he disguised the girl as a boy and pretended he trained the boy to be his clerk. After his extra-marital relationship

[606] Johnson, *A General History*, 130.
[607] Johnson, *A General History*, 130-6.

with his maid was heard, the father, the mother and Anne Bonny moved to Carolina where the father became a successful merchant. Although the father wanted to find a good match for her for marriage, she married sailor and were turned out of doors by her father. Anne and his husband moved to the Island of Providence, where she met Rackam, fell in love with him and joined his crew in man's clothes.[608] After they were caught, "She was continued in prison to the time of her lying-in, and afterwards reprieved from time to time ; but what is become of her since we cannot tell; only this we know, that she was not executed."[609]

Kuhn acknowledges that Read's and Bonny's story in an inspirational story of emancipation however it gives too much credit to the pirate society whereas the credit is to be given to the two women themselves. He argues that while it has been suggested the women's story demonstrated that the pirate society allowed the emancipation of individuals and especially women in context of the Read's and Bonny's story, the pirates would never allow these two women on board their ships if they knew that they were women. As these two women could only entered the pirate society in men's disguise and their part in the society had to be proved again and again by their acting as men, the existence of women pirates on the pirate ship does not subvert the patriarchy.[610]

At this point, as Appleby refers to the trial records, it should be noted that witnesses gave detailed descriptions of the women pirates and their actions during the trial. For instance, Dorothy Thomas, once a captive of the Rackam's crew stated

> *That the Two Women, Prisoners at the Bar, were then on Board the said Sloop, and wore Mens jackets, and long Trouzers, and Handkerchiefs tied about their Heads; and that each of them had a Machet and Pistol in their Hands, and cursed and swore at the Men, to murther the Deponent; and that they should kill her, to prevent her coming against them, and the Deponent further said, That the Reason of her knowing and believing them to be Women then was, by the largeness of their Breasts*.[611]

[608] Johnson, *A General History*, 136-141.
[609] Johnson, *A General History*, 141.
[610] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 72.
[611] *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and other Pirates*, (Jamaica: Printed by Robert Baldwin, 1721), 18.

In addition, two other witnesses, Jean Besneck and Pierre Cornelian also stated that the two women were

> *very active on Board, and willing to do any Thing; That Ann Bonny, one of the Prisoners at the Bar, handed Gun-powder to the Men, That when they saw any Vessel, gave Chase, or Attacked, they wore Men's Cloaths; and, at other Times, they wore Women's Cloaths; That they did not seem to be kept, or detain'd by Force, but of their own Free-Will Consent*.[612]

On the other hand, Johnson also notes that before the execution of Rackam, Anne Bonny visited him in his cell, "but all the comfort she gave him was, *That she was sorry to see him there, but if he had fought like a man, he need not have been hanged like a dog*."[613]

In this line, Kuhn argues that the two women pirates' story confirms that being free required a status of male for a woman just like it required a status of noble for a man. "What makes their story a story of liberation is the remarkable strength and perseverance they demonstrated in a male-dominated world. In other words, Mary Read and Anne Bonny owe their achievements to *themselves* and not to pirate society."[614] However, Rediker's question "Did Anne Bonny and Mary Read, in the end, make their mark on the world? Did their daring make a difference? Did they leave a legacy?"[615] and his subsequent answer

> *…even though Bonny and Read did not transform the terms in which the broader societal discussion of gender took place, and even though they apparently did not see their own exploits as a call for rights and equality for all women, their very lives and subsequent popularity represented a subversive commentary on the gender relations of their own times as well as "a powerful symbol of unconventional womanhood" for the future*.[616]

seems plausible. Thus, even though Kuhn suggests that "The buccaneer diaries as well as Captain Johnson's General History abound with tales of women being

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[612] *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and other Pirates*, 18.
[613] Johnson, *A General History*, 141.
[614] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 72.
[615] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 118.
[616] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 118.

mistreated and raped."[617] and argues that "These stories correspond with the picture of the general social traits of the buccaneers and pirates."[618], he concludes that it might be an acceptable theory that pirates' desire for freedom is so great that it might have been enough to break their mainstream thoughts on gender. In this line, Kuhn considers the story of Anne Bonny and Mary Read as a perfect instance of the golden age piracy's radical potential, "a potential that lies in relating to the anti-authoritarian and rebellious spirit that lies at golden age piracy's core, elevating it beyond its cultural context, and situating it within contemporary struggles."[619]

4.5. Violence and Revenge

As stated before, there is no doubt that the pirate society was a violent one. Although it is a point of debate how violent they actually were, Kuhn states that "Overall, however, historians seem to agree that the reports on the buccaneers' and pirates' violence were exaggerated."[620] Firstly, the first-hand records on pirates and pirate violence were the accounts given by Exquemelin and Johnson whose books were written to sell as many as copies possible. Thus, exaggeration of violent acts might be a tool to attract readers. Secondly, the exaggeration could be seen as way of further decriminalization of pirates in the eyes of the public and of enabling their persecution. Thirdly, the reputation as violent cutthroats might have been to the interest of the pirates in the sense that it prevented resistance to the pirates.[621]

According to Rediker, pirates' use of violence had several reasons: "to avoid fighting; to force disclosure of information about where booty was hidden; and to punish ship captains."[622] In this regard, the first aspect of violence was to prevent fighting while capturing a ship. Rediker refers to Stanley Richards who claims that

> *It was their ambition to acquire plunder and live to enjoy the pleasures that it brought them. A battle might deprive them of that ease of life. Hence on the chance occasion when they had to go into action against another ship, it was*

[617] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 73.
[618] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 73.
[619] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 74.
[620] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 155.
[621] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 155.
[622] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 14.

looked upon by them as almost a repulsive necessity. They were after booty, not blood.[623]

The threat of violence, in this line, aimed at intimidating the crew of the defending ship in order to prevent them defending. The most crucial symbol of violence was the Jolly Roger, the black flag of the pirates that meant no quarter would be given if resisted.

Another reason for the use of violence was to learn the place of booty. However, according to Rediker, this was a method used by naval or privateer crews as well. "Indeed, a portion of pirate terror was the standard issue of war making, which pirates undertook without the approval of any nation-state."[624] In addition, Rediker notes the use of violence against the captured ships' cargo which culminated in "destroying massive amounts of property in the most furious and wanton ways, as once-captured ship captains never grew tired of recounting.[625]

When it comes to the punishing the captains, in other words taking revenge, Kuhn engages in a discussion of ethics. He answers the question whether there was a pirate ethics, by stating that the pirates had certain principles, which, in a basic sense, pointed out to an ethics that presented an understanding of justice. The particular understanding of justice in question emphasized a just distribution of property, an equal voice in decision-making, loyalty, and honesty.[626] Nevertheless, according to Kuhn, this ethics does not denote a universal application. In other words, pirates did not try to extend their principles to the outer world. Nor did they desire that: "In general, their ethical world seemed reduced to the confines of their own exclusive social realm."[627] However, there was one aspect of the pirate ethics that extended to the outer world: vengeance. According to Kuhn, the pirate's vengeance, with its notion of justice that equals justice with avenging injustice, presents us with the pirate as an ethical figure. Injustice, here, is what Rediker calls the third kind of terror, which is different from the terror represented by the gallows and the terror represented by the Jolly Roger. While

[623] Stanley Richards, *Black Bart*, (Llandybie, Wales: Christopher Davies, 1966), 104 quoted in Rediker, *Villains of All Nations,* 14.
[624] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 15.
[625] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 15.
[626] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 158.
[627] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 158.

the former is the terror seen in the harsh punishments given to the caught pirates, and the latter is the terror and violence employed by the pirates, the third terror is basically the "Bad Usage" suffered by sailors: "…the violent disciplinary regime of the eighteenth-century deep-sea sailing ship, the ordinary and pervasive violence of labor discipline as practiced by the ship captain as he moved the commodities that were the lifeblood of the capitalist world economy."[628]

Thus, the object of the vengeance of the pirate ethics was the captains of merchant or naval ships. Kuhn writes that perhaps the best expression of this ethics was the *Pirate Song* whose author was unknown: "'Tis to drink to our victory—one cup of red wine. / Some fight, 'tis for riches—some fight, 'tis for fame: / The first I despise, and the last is a name. / I fight, 'tis for vengeance! I love to see flow, / At the strike of my sabre, the life of my foe."[629]

According to Sherry, "While the opportunity to enjoy the widest possible personal freedom was clearly the primary reason for turning pirate, a secondary reason was almost as important: the chance to take vengeance on the cruel and unjust society that most pirates had left behind."[630] Land also argues that "once free from the discipline and domination of their previous employment one of the main motivators for a pirate was not profit but revenge, particularly upon merchant captains."[631] In addition, Land informs that "From a sample of recorded pirate vessels some 18 percent of ships' names made explicit reference to 'revenge'"[632] In this regard, Kuhn also refers to David F. Marley who confirms that "Unlike their precursors from the 1690s, this generation was noticeably not motivated by a lack of potential prizes in the New World, but rather by an excess of official retaliation."[633]

4.6. Religion

The pirates' attitude towards religion also shows subversive aspects that are contrary the mainstream society. Although Kuhn gives instances of religiousness of

[628] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 17.
[629] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 159.
[630] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 131.
[631] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 176.
[632] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 176.
[633] David F. Marley, *Pirates: Adventurers of the High Seas*, (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1997), 136-7, quoted in Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 159.

pirate crews, he also suggests that "Alongside tales about pirate adaptations of Christianity, there are also those of rejection, ridicule, and derision."[634] Rediker's account on the pirates' attitudes towards death gives an understanding regarding their attitudes towards religion as well. Rediker, in this sense, recounts anecdotes that prove that pirates would rather die than getting caught. While preferring to die rather than getting caught indicates that they knew what their fate would be in the hands of authority, torture, humiliation, and execution, it also suggests that they were not fearful for their afterlife.

For instance, Rediker refers to Captain Richard Hawkins who told of his capture by pirates:

> *They have no Thoughts of ever being taken; but swear, with the most direful Imprecations, that if ever they should find themselves over-power'd, they would immediately blow their Ship up, rather than do Jolly Roger the disgrace to be struck, or suffer themselves to be hang'd like Dogs*.[635]

Other instances include pledging that they would blow up the ships instead of being taken by the authorities, swearing that they would shoot each other should they had no chance to escape, announcing that they would die together as they lived together, keeping powder ready to blow the ship up in the moment of losing a battle.[636]

According to Rediker this death wish was not limited to the moments of capture, as he refers to Captain William Snelgrave who witnessed that during a fire on the pirate ship he was a captive he heard the pirates that gathered around the fire chanting "*For a brave blast to go to Hell with*." [637] Besides, as he also touches upon Charles Johnson tells of a particular pirate named Thomas Sutton after his capture:

> *Sutton used to be very profane; he happening to be in the same irons with another prisoner who was more serious than ordinary, and read and prayed often as became his condition, this man Sutton used to swear at, and ask him What he proposed by so much noise and devotion? Heaven, says the other, I*

[634] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 63.
[635] Abel Boyer, ed., *The Political State of Great Britain (London, 1711–40),* 33:149–53 quoted in Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 149.
[636] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 149.
[637] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 151.

> *hope. Heaven, you fool, says Sutton, Did you ever hear of any Pirates going thither? Give me Hell, it's a merrier place; I'll give Roberts a salute of 13 guns at entrance. And when he found such ludicrous expressions had no effect on him, he made a formal complaint, and requested that the officer should either remove this man, or take his prayer-book away, as a common disturber*.[638]

Kuhn, on the other hand, argues that the pirates' inversion of Christian values and turning the religious aspect of the social world upside down meant that "they only confirmed how deeply rooted in the Christian tradition their culture was…Positive or negative, reverent or defiant, earnest or mocking, Christian symbolism stood at the heart of golden age pirate culture."[639] Nevertheless, "In a society where all social relationships are laden with religious ideology, heresy and apostacy are both political choices and modes of social rebellion. Sailing under Old Roger was clearly a step against dominant Christian ideology, hence against repressive political and social structures."[640]

4.7. Sexuality

According to Rediker, another aspect of the pirate society that was subversive with regard to the mainstream society was the sexual liberty of the pirate society. One instance of this sexual liberty for Rediker was the system of *matelotage* which was established by the buccaneers and refers to "a relationship of shared property and mutual obligation that existed between two men, or in some instances, between a man and a youth."[641] Lucie-Smith also mentions this system: "Their most curious custom was that of living in *matelotage*, a kind of homosexual marriage. Two matelots agreed to hold everything in common and, in later years, when women were available, a matelot would even have the right to sleep with his partner's wife."[642]

However, Kuhn warns against the over-interpretation of the system of *matelotage* and refers to the Exquemelin's description of the system:

> *It is a constant custom among them all, to seek out a comrade or companion, whom we may call partner in their fortunes, with whom they join the whole*

[638] Johnson, *A General History*, 214.
[639] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 63-4.
[640] Stephen Snelders, *The Devil's Anarchy: The Sea Robberies of the Most Famous Pirate Claes G. Compaen and the Very Remarkable Travels of Jan Erasmus Reyning, Buccaneer* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2005), 175.
[641] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 74.
[642] Lucie-Smith, *Outcasts of the Sea*, 147-9.

> *stock of what they possess towards a common gain. This is done by articles agreed to, and reciprocally signed. Some constitute their surviving companion absolute heir to what is left by the death of the first: others, if they be married, leave their estates to their wives and children; others, to other relations*.[643]

In this regard, the *matelotage* system seems more of a union between two mates rather than a union between two homosexual partners. Nevertheless, Rediker argues that only two set of articles applied by the pirate crews included reference to sexual relations: "One was a prohibition enacted by the crew of Bartholomew Roberts around 1720: 'No Boy or Woman to be allowed amongst them.' The second, established by the pirates with John Phillips in 1723, outlawed "meddling" with a 'prudent Woman' without her consent."[644] There was no mentioning or prohibition of homosexuality. In this line, "Even if the buccaneer and pirate crews did not include an above average number of homosexuals, however, the acceptance of same-sex encounters within them seemed much stronger than in comparable groups."[645]

At this point, Kuhn refers to Bary R. Burg's theory that stated that a buccaneer culture in which homosexuality was ordinary and heterosexuality remained marginal existed and extended into the golden age of piracy.[646] However, Kuhn claims that this was an exaggeration as Rediker also explains that "It is, however, too much to state, as historian B. R. Burg has done, that pirates organized themselves as a 'sodomitical society.'"[647]

Despite the fact that Burg's theory was an exaggeration of the place that homosexuality had in the pirate society, Kuhn seems to agree with Burg when he says that

> *The almost universal homosexual involvement among pirates meant homosexual practices were neither disturbed, perverted, exotic, nor uniquely desirable among them, and the mechanisms for defending and perpetuating such practices, those things that set the modern homosexual apart from heterosexual society, were never necessary. The male engaging in sexual activity with another male aboard a pirate ship in the West Indies three*

[643] Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America*, 28.
[644] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 74.
[645] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 76.
[646] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 75.
[647] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 74.

centuries past was simply an ordinary member of his community, completely socialized and acculturated.[648]

On another note, with regard to sexuality and women, Kuhn rightfully tells of the atrocities committed by the pirates: "The buccaneer diaries as well as Captain Johnson's General History abound with tales of women being mistreated and raped."[649] Examples of buccaneer and pirate violent acts on women are buying native women and raping women prisoners. In this regard, although there is at least one instance of forbidding having sex with a woman against her consent, the recorded violent acts of buccaneers and pirates should be kept in mind.

4.8. Conclusion

All in all, the pirates of the golden age could constitute an alternative order that was posed against the order that was based on the emerging capitalist social relations and the emerging nation-state system. The alternative order in question was based on the shipboard democracy, which could be defined as direct and participatory democracy within the limits of the pirate ship that provided an equal say to all members of the pirate crew on matters related to the crew and the ship and which could be considered as a form of self-determination. In this regard, the pirate articles of which three sets were presented above could be considered as the constitution of the pirate ship, which was created collectively in the founding moment of the pirate crew. Despite the fact that every pirate crew created its own articles, "because of the similarity of these ship's articles, pirates—like the citizens of any commonwealth—always shared a general understanding of what was acceptable and unacceptable behavior, no matter what port they might be visiting or what ship they might be serving on."[650] In this regard, the articles in question ensured that the decision-making onboard was directly democratic and the wealth distribution was egalitarian as well as regulating discipline on the ship. Furthermore, the common council of the pirate ship as the highest authority proves that the pirate organization was a directly democratic, egalitarian, nonhierarchical, and horizontal organization. In this sense, the position of the captain was in fact a precarious

[648] Bary R. Burg, Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean, (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 173.
[649] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 73.
[650] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 90.

position and the pirate captains were elected officials that could be deposed any time. The pirate captain's authority was only valid during the time of battle, chasing, or boarding and the captain was dependent on the common council's decisions at other times.

In addition, the pirate society was a dissident one in the sense that it was a multinational and multiracial society comprising of pirates of different nations as well as pirates of African descent. Moreover, the historical records showing that there were at least two women pirates also suggest that the view of women onboard the pirate ship was radically different from the navy and merchant ships. Lastly, the pirates' attitudes towards religion and homosexuality were also dissident in contrast to the traditional attitudes. Thus, the pirate ship was an emancipatory space for dissidents, people of African descent, and women.

Yet, this account of the pirate society might seem an idealized and romanticized account. In this regard, it should be noted that despite focusing on the golden age of piracy that roughly covers the period between the years 1650 and 1730 in a general sense, and on the period between the years 1716 and 1726 in a more specific sense, the study does not cover piracy in a whole sense since on the one hand to study all practices of the pirates in the golden age would exceed the scope of the study and on the other it would be impossible to take the golden age piracy as a homogenous movement. Instead, the study concentrates on particular pirate practices that were radically democratic, egalitarian, nonhierarchical, and horizontal especially when compared to the practices onboard navy or merchant ships of those times. In the light of these, the next chapter analyzes the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement on the basis of the theoretical framework developed in the third chapter and the pirate organization presented in this chapter.

Table 1. Racial Compositions of Pirate Crews[651]

Captain	Year	Crew	White	Black	% Black
Anstis	1723	60	40	20	33
Bellamy	1717	180	<153	>27	>15
Charpes	1713	68	48	20	29
Cooper	1726	19	15	4	20
Davis		250	<210	>39	>16
Edmonson	1726	10	6	4	40
England (est. one)	1718	180	130	<50	<28
England (est. two)	1719	380	300	80	21
Franco	1691	89	39	50	56
Hamann	1717	25	1	24	96
Hamlin	1682	36	16	22	61
Harris	1723	48	42	6	13
La Bouche	1719	64			50
Lewis		80	40	40	50
Lowther	1724	23	16	9	39
Philips	1724	20	17	3	15
Roberts (est. one)	1721	368	280	88	24
Roberts (est. one)	1722	267	197	70	26
Shipton	1725	13	9	4	31
Thatch (est. one)	1717	100	40	60	60
Thatch (est. two)	1718	14	9	5	36
Unnamed	1721	50	1	<49	<98
Williams	1717	40	<25	>15	>38

[651] Kinkor, "Black Men under the Black Flag," 201.

CHAPTER 5

GOLDEN AGE PIRACY AS A PREFIGURATIVE COMMONING MOVEMENT

> *Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, "What thou meanest by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, whilst thou who dost it with a great fleet art styled emperor*."[652]

To reiterate the previous chapters, capitalism was born out as the byproduct of the class struggle between feudal nobility and peasants in England. During this struggle the common people were dispossessed of their direct access to means of subsistence and production through primitive accumulation. Yet the dispossession wave and primitive accumulation were resisted. These different instances of resistance, despite being suppressed in time, have continued, and taken many forms throughout history but insofar as primitive accumulation is taken as the separation of producers and their means of subsistence, the resistance against the separation in question can be taken as the struggle for the commons. In this way, the continuance of the struggles in question might be regarded as a one long movement of struggle, or in Federici's words which are worth repeating again: "Commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[653] In the light of the discussion on the anti-capitalist commons, the fight for the commons, or the class struggle can be understood in two forms: prevention and commonization. Thus, the struggle for the commons "is not only a matter of *preventing*

[652] St. Augustine, The City of God, Volume I (Edinburgh: Printed by Murray and Grib, for T.&T. Clark, 1871), 140.
[653] Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," 47.

enclosures (and thus an entrance into capital's time) but to actually *expanding* the commons into new areas of social life (and so exiting capital's time)."[654] In connection with the prevention and commonization, the commons, then, include common goods whose enclosure is to be prevented, commoning as in commonization in order to expand the commons, and the commoners who engage in the activity of commoning. In De Angelis's words, these are the three constituent elements of the commons:

> *– pooled material/immaterial resources or commonwealth;*
> *– a community of commoners, that is, subjects willing to share, pool, claim, commonwealth;*
> *– commoning, or doing in common, that is a specific multi-faceted social labour (activity, praxis), through which commonwealth and the community of commoners are (re) produced together with the (re)production of stuff, social relations, affects, decisions, cultures*.[655]

In this way, De Angelis defines commoning as "*doing* in common"[656] with reference to John Holloway and continues: "Commoning is the form of social doing (social labour) occurring within the domain of the commons, and thus is characterised by modes of production, distribution and governance of the commons that are participatory and non-hierarchical, motivated by the values of the commons (re)production, of the (re)production of commoners' commonwealth and of the affective, material, immaterial and cultural (re)production of the commoners and their relations."[657] Moreover,

> *There are two main moments that commoning takes on. One is the plural activity of doing, understood simply generally as social labour taking the form of commoning. The other is the decision-making process, the definition of rules for the collective governance of the commons, another form of doing in the form of self-reflective collective orienting of the commons towards the next step, the next event, a plan, a collective problematisation of an issue faced by some commoners, or embedded in the nature of the common- wealth, or a particular event, shock, opportunity emerging in the commons environment*.[658]

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[654] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 90-91.
[655] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 19.
[656] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 121.
[657] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 121.
[658] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 122-123.

Therefore, prevention and commonization do not correspond to "'backward-looking' struggles, they are 'outward-looking' ones."[659] This is also what John Holloway calls the "against-and-beyond" or "negation-and-creation". At this point, Holloway refers to the dual nature of labor in Marx that corresponds to the contrast between alienated labor and conscious life-activity during the early years of Marx and the distinction between concrete/useful labor and abstract labor in *Capital*. According to this distinction, "useful (or concrete) labour produces use-values, things that are useful."[660] Abstract labor, on the other hand, is the "specific social form" that useful labor takes "in capitalist society (or more generally, commodity-producing society)."[661] In this way, Holloway points out to Young Marx's reference to "a contrast between alienated labour and conscious life-activity", the latter of which might be considered "as past (a lost paradise) or as future (communist activity)."[662] Yet, Holloway finds these readings insufficient and locates the conscious life-activity in the present since the existence of alienation points out to that something that has been or is to be alienated. Nevertheless, the conscious life-activity in question is never completely conscious since capitalist society does not leave room for full control of one's own life-activity. In this sense, the life-activity in capitalist society corresponds to an aim towards fully conscious life-activity against the alienation.

A similar antagonism exists between abstract labor and concrete/useful labor in *Capital*. Holloway prefers to use concrete doing or doing instead of concrete/useful labor[663] and argues that "concrete doing, then, is an activity that is common to all phases of human existence, but exists in different forms in different phases. In capitalist society, concrete doing exists in the form of abstract labour."[664] In this way, the existence of doing in the form of abstract labor is a "constant living antagonism between abstract labour and concrete doing."[665] The said antagonism is based on "the constant revolt of human activity against the constraints of abstract labour," and "the dialectic relation

[659] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 89.
[660] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 90.
[661] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 92.
[662] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 97.
[663] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 97-98
[664] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 98.
[665] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 98.

between form and content."[666] The latter relation, on the other hand, refers to an overflowing: the content, in this case *doing*, "overflows from the form, or exists in-against-and-beyond the form."[667] More precisely, "concrete doing is the ecstasy of abstract labour: ecstasy as ek-stasis, standing outside abstract labour while existing within it, standing outside as actual and potential otherness."[668]

The constant living antagonism between labor and doing, on the other hand, is connected to the primitive accumulation that was explained in the previous chapter. According to Holloway, "labour did not always exist"[669], the existence of labor was based on the movement of separation discussed in the previous chapter. The result of this movement "was the interstitial creation and expansion of a new form of socialisation in which people related to one another through the market, through the exchange of commodities."[670] The new form of socialization corresponds to "the transformation of people's activity, the abstraction of doing into labour. The separation of people from the land was simultaneously the separation of labour from other forms of doing, the learning of a new form of activity called 'labour'."[671] In this way, Holloway calls the abstract labor as the great enclosure. Yet the movement of abstraction is not something that happened in the past, it is a continuous process. As discussed in the previous chapter, primitive accumulation as the separation of producers from their means of subsistence/production continues today: first as a fight to expand the enclosure through generating new private property and second as a struggle to maintain and reproduce the separation: "If we count not only security guards, police and army, but also judges, lawyers, social workers and teachers (not to mention parents), then a very significant part of the world's population is engaged in the constantly reiterated separation of people from the means of production."[672]

On the other hand, "The same can be said not only of primitive accumulation in its narrow sense but of all the forms of social relations that are moments of the abstraction of labour… The abstraction of doing into labour, then, is not just a past

[666] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 98.
[667] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 98.
[668] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 99.
[669] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 100.
[670] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 102.
[671] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 102.
[672] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 167.

process: it is present, everyday struggle, the struggle on which the existence of capital depends."[673] In line with this, Holloway suggests that the forms of social relations are in fact form-processes, which means that these are not forms established once and for all at a certain point in history but social relations-forming processes that are always in action and always contested. Money, in this sense, is not a form that has been established and exists without any challenge but a monetization process which is continuously repeated and challenged.[674] Therefore, capitalist "social relations are active battlegrounds, live antagonisms."[675] The battlegrounds in question carry the traces of past struggles as well as the potential of future: "the unredeemed struggles of the past, the unfulfilled promises and potentialities, are a present force" as well as "the world that is not yet but could be, exists not-yet as real anticipation in the struggles of past and present."[676]

Therefore, Holloway can talk about other-doing that has been subdued but not destroyed. The consideration of forms as form-process allows for the existence of an other side as the process of monetizing points out to something that is yet to be monetized or process of abstraction points out to something that is yet to be abstracted, which is the other side, other-doing as a live antagonism and potential: "To understand abstraction as present process means that that which is abstracted exists not just as potential, but as real force in the present."[677]

In connection with the above discussion, then, it is possible to posit that the struggle for the commons in the form of prevention and commonization is the revolt of doing against-and-beyond abstraction and of commoning, which "is the basic driving energy of any commons system"[678] is also "*doing* in common."[679] What is more, insofar as the struggle for the commons, or the revolt of doing against-and-beyond abstraction does not signify only a struggle for prevention or a revolt against but also presents a struggle for commonization and revolt pointing out to the beyond, we can detect a prefigurative movement, whose characteristics were summarized as means-ends equivalence, construction of alternatives, nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization,

[673] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 167-168.
[674] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 168.
[675] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 169.
[676] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 170.
[677] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 171.
[678] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 121.
[679] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 121.

direct democracy, forming of new subjectivities, direct action, rejection of engagement with state and construction of the future ideals in the present. After all, a prefigurative movement is defined as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal."[680]

In short, the prefigurative commoning movement of the golden age piracy that will be analyzed in this section corresponds to a movement that prefigured the ultimate goal of the movement in the present, a goal that represented the constant antagonism between commoning as doing in common and enclosure as the abstraction of labor. The movement comprised of common goods, the act of commoning, and commoners, and prevented the enclosure or was 'against' abstraction on the one hand, and on the other, commonized, that is, expanded the commons, "the area of life that is common"[681] or pointed out to the "beyond" abstraction. What is crucial in the movement, is then, commoning itself, whose main moments are doing and collective governance.

With regard to these, turning back to the thread connecting the history of the class struggle, or the past unredeemed struggles, it is also worth reiterating Caffentzis who argues "After all, the pirates expropriated the most advanced machine of their period, the ocean-going ship, ran it on new communalist rules and used it to plunder the plunders [sic] of American wealth."[682] In the light of these, the pirate movement of the golden age of piracy will be analyzed as a prefigurative commoning movement.

To summarize the social and political organization of the pirate ship in the early eighteenth century, the "world turned upside down" that manifested itself, or rather, was constituted by the pirate activity, "the pirate ship was democratic in an undemocratic age"[683], "egalitarian in a hierarchical age"[684] and "motley-multinational, multicultural, and multiracial"[685]. Moreover, "pirates were class-conscious and justice-seeking"[686] and "insisted upon their right to subsistence"[687].

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[680] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 100.
[681] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 90-91.
[682] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 34.
[683] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 162
[684] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 163
[685] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 164
[686] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 163
[687] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 164

Although Rediker posits that it is possible to define the struggles of the maritime workers in general between 1715 and 1737 as a class war since the parties that engaged were the buyers and sellers of labor power, the pirate movement can be best defined as the ur-class struggle, or the proto-class struggle, that aimed to prevent the enclosure in the sense of primitive accumulation as separating the producers from direct access to the means of production, eventually aimed to prevent the formation of the working class. In this line, the pirate movement as a prefigurative commoning movement can be analyzed on the basis of commoning, which comprises of doing in common that prevents and commonizes, and collective governance, common goods, and commoners.

5.1. The Golden Age Piracy as Commoning:

5.1.1. Doing in common, or pirating in common against-and-beyond abstraction:

To start with then, one form of resistance against enclosure, or abstraction, which I suggest can be used interchangeably, or the ur-class struggle touched upon above is firstly observed in the adoption of idleness as a way of life by the pirates. It was shown that idleness was a form of resistance against wage labor and the newly emerging labor discipline that wage labor entailed, and this resistance was evident as early as the fourteenth century. The same resistance can be observed in the pirates' attitude towards labor: working at the bare minimum to maintain the ship[688], hosting large crews in order to lessen the work to be done aboard the ship[689] so much so that a pirate ship that had more than eighty sailors in its crew would host twelve sailors when used in the merchant service[690], not being easily persuaded to sail when they had money to spend[691], or preferring smaller ships in order to minimize the work required.[692] The pirate attitude towards labor indicates that the pirates were not happy with the labor discipline imposed onboard navy or merchant ships and they resisted against that by adopting their much more loose discipline onboard their own ships. The idleness in this sense is an act of resistance against the strict labor discipline imposed in the navy or merchant vessels. In

[688] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 127
[689] Earle, *The Pirate Wars*, 11
[690] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 111.
[691] Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies*, 180
[692] Snelders, *The Devil's Anarchy*, 96.

this way, we can detect the revolt of doing against abstraction in this idleness as resistance: "The rebellion against abstraction is a 'No, we shall not do that, we shall not do it that way. We shall do it the way we think best. We shall do what we want to do, what we consider necessary or desirable.' The rebellion against abstract labour is concrete doing in movement."[693] What is necessary or desirable in the case of the pirates was, then, not the strict labor discipline imposed through abstraction but idleness that allowed for the release of doing. It was useful labor as doing, not abstract labor as alienation that the pirates strived for, which is also connected to self-determination since "abstract labour involves a drive towards determination of our activity by money, whereas useful labour implies a drive towards social self-determination."[694] Therefore, doing in the form of idleness was against, or prevented, determination by money while at the same time pointed out to the beyond in the form of social self-determination. In the words of Walter Kennedy, the pirates "had the choice in themselves"[695] by resisting against the labor discipline imposed through abstraction of doing by capital and determination of their lives by money and by adopting useful labor or doing in the form of idleness, they could organize their self-determination. The idleness in this sense was not just laziness with which the common people who did not and still do not adapt to the labor discipline imposed by capital were denounced throughout the history of capitalism. It was to work just enough to reproduce oneself or the community one was in. In this regard, the pirates did of course work but it was work sufficient to reproduce themselves, their communities and their ships. That way, the pirates could have the choice in themselves, could "do in common", could organize in a self-determined manner and reproduce their communities.

However, the adoption of new discipline along with the new government of the pirate ship, or having the choice in themselves, depended on challenging the separation of the producers from direct access to the means of production. The challenge in question, in turn, was made possible through the collective ownership of the ship by the pirates themselves. The collective ownership might be considered as the action of prevention that attempted to reject entrance into capitalist relations since the collective

[693] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 174.
[694] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 173.
[695] Hayward, *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals*, 37

ownership abolished the wage labor and thus averted the formation of working class. In this way, the act of taking the ownership of the ship collectively also corresponds to the doing in common as part of the commoning activity.

The collective ownership of the pirate ship is firstly witnessed in the organization of the space onboard: The pirate captain did not have a designated room for themselves on the ship and every member of the pirate crew had equal rights in accessing the cabins or parts of the ship. It was noted that "Nay, the Captain cannot keep his own Cabbin to himself."[696] As Snelgrave, a merchant who spent some time as a captive of the pirates, noted the captain was also not allowed to have a bed either: "It being by this time Midnight, my Schoolfellow desired the Captain, 'To have a Hammock hung up for me to sleep in;' for it seems every one lay rough, as they called it, that is, on the Deck; the Captain himself not being allowed a Bed."[697] Moreover, the pirates on the pirate ship took "the liberty of ranging all over the Ships."[698] In contrast with the merchant or navy ships which were owned by private merchants or the state and which were under the strictly hierarchical command of the captain, the pirate ship, then, proved to be a common good for the pirates. To recall the twofold character of a common good: "on the one hand it is a use value for a plurality; on the other it requires a plurality claiming and sustaining the ownership of the common good, and this can be done only through the creation of relational values, that is, values that select the 'goods and bads' of social action while at the same time sustaining and (re)producing one another, social relations, social practice and the ecology in which social practice is embedded."[699] Thus, the pirate ship was a use value for the plurality of pirates on the one hand, and on the other, the plurality of pirates claimed and sustained the ownership of the pirate ship as a common good. Furthermore, the plurality claiming and sustaining the collective ownership of the pirate ship did this through creation of relational values that allowed for the collective governance of the pirate ship, which will be explained in the next section. Thus, on the one hand, "the determined reorganization of space and

[696] Clement Downing, *A Compendious History of the Indian Wars*, (London: T. Cooper, 1737), 108.
[697] Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts*, 217.
[698] Clement Downing, *A Compendious History*, 108.
[699] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 30-31.

privilege aboard the ship was crucial to the remaking of maritime social relations."[700] And on the other, the same reorganization of space was a sign for the pirate movement that the members of the pirate crew collectively owned the space on the pirate ship as well as the pirate ship itself.

Apart from the use of space onboard the pirate ship, although the ship itself was not a means of production, it was, or increasingly had been becoming a crucial element of capitalist production through its role in the transportation and circulation of manufactured goods as well as raw materials at the time. It should also be stated, at this point, that Campling and Colas, within the context of Atlantic slave trade, argue that the ship and ocean were used as means of production in order to commodify the African captives through confining, socially disciplining, dehumanizing and taking away their autonomy.[701] In this way, the sailors' labor, both in the slave trade and other branches of trade as well as in the navy was also commodified and the sailors "were among the first industrial workers to be paid a regular wage, which, notwithstanding the coercive aspects of sailors' lives, corresponded to a compensation for abstract labour time."[702] While considering sailors as an industrial workforce might be problematic since the ship was not an industrial production site but a means of circulation, it is safe to take them as among the first wage laborers. In this sense, the pirate movement attempted to cease and prevent this process of commodification of labor, hence preventing enclosures or being against abstraction. On the other hand, the commonization of the ship itself also released the ship, which was now the pirate ship, from the commodification process. The ship of the commercial fleets or the navy that was a part of commodification process became the commonized pirate ship. In addition to the commodified labor and the ship as the embodiment of the enclosure, the ocean itself, which in fact "was a commons, a place to be used by many, including the sailor who dared to turn pirate"[703] was also in the process of being commodified, or, enclosure, and the pirate movement also attempted to commonize the ocean. The development of maritime state in England, the expanding of the navy and the merchant fleets, and the growing importance of international/maritime

[700] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 65.
[701] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea,* 7.
[702] Campling and Colás, *Capitalism and the Sea*, 9.
[703] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations,* 25.

trade discussed in the chapter on emergence of capitalism, in this sense, amounted to the English/British state's attempt to enclose the ocean. The pirate movement attempted to act against this.

Therefore, the ship as a means of production/subsistence was commonized by the pirate crew. In other words, despite the lack of industrial production onboard the ship, the pirates' sole means of subsistence was the ship itself. For instance, one Stephen Smith wrote in 1716 to the governor of Jamaica: "I was obliged to leave the Island on the account of the accident that happened, and now am forced to go a pirateing for to gett a living which is much against my will."[704] Charles Johnson, as a contemporary of the pirates of the golden age, as well, connects the increasing instances of piracy to the unemployment of sailors and the merchants' taking advantage of this fact: "I have not known a man-of-war commissioned for several years past but three times her complement of men have offered themselves in 24 hours. The merchants take their advantage of this, lessen their wages, and those few (sailors) who are in business are poorly paid and but poorly fed. Such usage breeds discontent amongst them and makes them eager for any change."[705] In connection with that, piracy was considered as a way out of misery by common sailors: One Robert Starkes, while trying to convince a fellow sailor to go pirate stated that "she would make a good Pirate Ship, for he believed she would be fitter and go better; for that they had better be than live in Misery."[706]

This suggests that piracy was a means of survival for at least some of the sailors who turned pirate. In line with this, an economy based on plunder meant that the pirates acquired the necessities of life onboard such as clothes and arms[707], medicine and food[708] or gear[709] required to maintain the ship such as sails and cables[710] from the plundered ships. Charles Johnson even notes that the crew of Edward Teach, who was in

[704]"America and West Indies: October 1716," in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: Volume 29, 1716-1717*, ed. Cecil Headlam (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1930), 182-193. *British History Online*, accessed May 12, 2023, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol29/pp182-193.
[705] Johnson, *A General History*, viii.
[706] *The Tryals of Captain Jack Rackam, and other Pirates*, 28.
[707] P. K. Kemp and Christopher Lloyd, *Brethren of the Coast: Buccaneers of the South Seas* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), 5.
[708] David Cordingly and John Falconer, *Pirates: Fact & Fiction* (London: Collins & Brown, 1992), 70
[709] Cordingly, *Life Among the Pirates*, 130
[710] Earle, *The Pirate Wars*, 176-177.

fact the notorious Blackbeard, demanded not money or gold but a chest of medicines from the government of Carolina province as a ransom for the captives onboard: "Teach detained all the ships and prisoners, and being in want of medicines, resolved to demand a chest from the government of the province… threatening that if they did not send immediately the chest of medicines, and let the pirate-ambassadors return without offering any violence to their persons, they would murder all their prisoners, send up their heads to the Governor, and set the sloops they had taken on fire."[711] In addition, Johnson also states that one reason for the pirates to choose the West Indies to operate was that they were "sure in the latitude of these trading islands to meet with prizes, booties of provision, clothing and naval stores and sometimes money, there being great sums remitted this way to England"[712], stressing that their booties generally consisted of necessities of life rather than money.

This, on the other hand, suggests that the motivation for plunder was not to acquire gold, silver or money for the sake of accumulation but to acquire the necessities of life in order to sustain their lives onboard. Therefore, it is possible to see the collective ownership of the ship as an action that prevented the divorce of the producers from their direct means of subsistence, the chief means of subsistence being the ship itself. The fact that the ship as a means of subsistence was used in order to plunder might seem problematic since on the one hand, it was not used for production and on the other the plundering action involved violence and stealing. Yet, it should be kept in mind that the pirate movement plundered the plunderers such as the state, merchants and trade companies of that time. Furthermore, the use of pirate ship as a means of subsistence indicates that the pirates did not engage either in the M-C-M, or M-C-M' cycle in which money is used to buy commodity that is to be sold in order to obtain money. On the contrary, the cycle in which the pirates engaged could be described as the C-M-C since they were not after the exchange value but use value. They either used the commodities they plundered from other ships or sold those commodities in order to obtain other commodities, not to accumulate wealth.

[711] Johnson, *A General History*, 47.
[712] Johnson, *A General History*, 7.

Thus, taking the ship as a means of production, the pirate movement's commonizing the ship amounts to the prevention of the enclosure of the ship as well as interruption of the separation of the producers from direct access to means of production. This communization, on the other hand, means the abolition of wage labor as well. In a similar way, Gabriel Kuhn lists the lack of alienation or division of labor among reluctance to work, non-accumulative practices, self-management, and lack of exploitation as parallels between pirate economy and "primitive" economy and states that "Since the daily work that had to be done by buccaneer and pirate communities (mainly the handling and maintenance of their ships) constituted no separate sphere of their existence, one could argue that labor as an autonomous aspect of life did not exist within the pirate community, and hence none of the alienation processes associated with it existed either. The same would be true for a division of labor since it is hard to divide something that does not exist."[713] Therefore, the abolition of wage labor is at the same time release of doing from the abstraction process. In other words, the work they did was aimed at use value, not exchange value. Therefore, the pirate movement, abolishing wage labor and replacing it with a share system that had been rooted in the ancient maritime history, suspended the commodification of labor, even abolished labor and (re)introduced "doing" on the pirate ship. Thus, as Rediker argues "By expropriating a merchant ship (after a mutiny or a capture), pirates seized the means of maritime production and declared it to be the common property of those who did its work. They abolished the wage relation central to the process of capitalist accumulation. So rather than work for wages using the tools and machine (the ship) owned by a merchant capitalist, pirates commanded the ship as their own property and shared equally in the risks of their common adventure."[714] Furthermore, "Popular stories about the exploits of the Brethren of the Coast formalized public images of an upside down world in which seamen were no longer powerless subjects shackled to wage labor, but creators of their own utopias."[715]

Yet, the utopia here also indicates that the abolition of wage labor and its replacement with a share system based on maritime tradition is not only a "primitive"

[713] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 38.
[714] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 70
[715] Snelders, *The Devil's Anarchy,* 168-169.

practice and does not correspond to "'backward-looking' struggles, they are 'outward-looking' ones."[716] Thus, the struggle for doing against abstraction is a struggle against-and-beyond. In terms of the resistance of the pirate movement, the labor onboard the ship is equal to the enclosure of doing and the pirate movement is an attempt to prevent this enclosure as in the against aspect of the resistance. The prevention corresponds to the against. On the other hand, the release of "doing" through this resistance, points out to the commonization, thus, the commonization corresponds to the beyond. In other words, the abolition of wage labor by way of a radically egalitarian share system by the pirates can be characterized as the revolt of doing against labor. In fact, it could be argued that the utopia in question was so close to be realized that Johnson could compare the potential pirate commonwealth to Rome when he wrote: "Rome, the Mistress of the World, was no more at first than a refuge for thieves and outlaws; and if the progress of our Pirates had been equal to their beginning, and had they all united and settled in some of those islands, they might by this time have been honoured with the name of a commonwealth, and no power in those parts of the world could have been able to dispute it with them."[717]

At this juncture, it is possible to take the collective ownership of the ship achieved by the pirates at the moment of going pirate and 'occupying' the ship as a precursor of occupation of workplaces and factories by the workers in the following centuries. For instance, the workplace recuperations, which despite being a method of working-class struggle through history, has become widespread after the recuperations in Argentina during the 2000-2001 crisis.[718] These recuperations transform the capitalist and hierarchical workplace into an operation based on democratic self-management of the workers, which in turn changes the subjectivities of workers. "A workplace recuperation is therefore not only an economic process but also – or even primarily – a social process."[719] Then, regarding the pirate ship as a recuperated workplace signifies the "beyond" aspect of doing.

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[716] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 89.
[717] Johnson, *A General History*, xi.
[718] Dario Azzellini, "Labour as a Commons: The Example of Worker-Recuperated Companies," *Critical Sociology* 44, no. 4-5 (August 7, 2016): 763–76. https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920516661856., 5.
[719] Azzellini, "Labour as a Commons," 6.

In connection, capital mobilizes labor either by direct coercion or by subjecting the laborer to wage relation through leaving no choice but wage labor in order to ensure access to means of subsistence whereas the mobilization of labor by the commons takes radically different forms. While De Angelis calls "these communal labour and reciprocal labour"[720], we can rename these mobilization ways as communal doing and reciprocal doing in line with Holloway's proposition. In this sense, the main difference between capitalist mobilization of labor and mobilization of doing in the commons is that capital determines the way, the time, the amount, and the quality of labor according to measures such as compatibility and markets, the commons have its own autonomous measures: Communal doing is the social doing "that a community of commoners pulls together for particular common objectives following convocation" while reciprocal doing is the social doing "that is intertwined with perceptions of reciprocity, gift, or mutual aid."[721]

With regard to the pirate movement, after the founding of a particular pirate crew, pirate community, the work required for the maintenance of the pirate ship, the work required for the sailing of the pirate ship, the work required in time of battle, chase, boarding, and plunder were all instances of communal doing since the work in question represented the doing carried out by the community of pirates in order to reach common objectives decided upon by the community itself. Furthermore, comparing the character of communal doing in Western societies and the indigenous people of South America, the communal doing in the former had a voluntary character while in the latter there was a moral obligation to partake in communal doing in addition to the rules put in place in order to ensure participation, which could punish the repeated non-participation with "the maximum penalty: expulsion from the group."[722] In a similar way, the pirate movement punished those "who were incorrigibly disruptive or who transgressed important rules" such as "defrauding his mates by taking more than a proper share of plunder, for deserting or malingering during battle, for keeping secrets from the crew, or for stealing"[723] with marooning, that is leaving the perpetrator on an uninhabited island, which amounts to expulsion from the pirate crew.

[720] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 210.
[721] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 210.
[722] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 215.
[723] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 75.

The reciprocal doing of the pirate movement, on the other hand, when taken as mutual aid, is observed in the social security system implemented by the movement. The pirates who had lost any limbs, who had suffered disabilities were provided by the pirate community. The buccaneers stated payments of compensation for injuries but these were only compensations, not a social security system. The pirate movement of the golden age, on the other hand, precisely introduced a social security system.[724] For instance, the sixth article of Captain George Lowther's pirate crew stated that "he that shall have the misfortune to lose a limb, in time of engagement, shall have the sum of £150 sterling, and remain with the company as long as he shall think fit."[725] This indicates that in addition to the monetary compensation, the disabled pirate was granted a place within the pirate community. This was in stark contrast to the treatment of injured sailors in those times: "While injured naval ratings were cast ashore to beg or starve, pirates looked after their own. Pirate codes were revolutionary social charters for their time."[726] In this sense, "Pirates therefore addressed the issues of health, safety, and security in their articles, making it a point to allocate a portion of all booty to a 'common fund' to provide for men who had sustained injury of lasting effect, whether the loss of eyesight or a limb…By guaranteeing food and drink and creating a sort of welfare system, pirates attempted to protect their health, enhance recruitment, and promote loyalty within the group."[727] Thus, reciprocal doing as mutual aid was existent in the pirate movement, especially with regard to the disabled pirates. In this way, doing in the forms of communal doing and reciprocal doing in the pirate movement amounts to a "social cooperation" that "occurs notwithstanding the fact that diverse social activities are subjected not to the one measure of profit, but rather to the plural measure of a community that reproduces itself, its relations and its resources."[728] This social cooperation was, as stated, possible through the collective ownership of the pirate ship, which was "not only an economic process but also – or even primarily – a social process."[729]

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[724] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 81.
[725] Johnson, *A General History*, 274-5.
[726] Angus Konstam, *The History of Pirates* (New York: The Lyons Press, 1999), 187.
[727] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 73-74.
[728] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 221.
[729] Azzellini, "Labour as a Commons," 6.

The social process in terms of the collective ownership of the pirate ship, on the other hand, is observed in the pirate articles, three sets of which were previously presented. According to the contemporary resources, the articles differed from pirate crew to pirate crew, yet the essence of the articles remained the same: "the new government of the ship"[730] which meant the collective and democratic government of the ship, maintaining order onboard, equal distribution of shares and provisions. This brings us to "the decision-making process, the definition of rules for the collective governance of the commons, another form of doing in the form of self-reflective collective orienting of the commons"[731] as the other main moment of commoning.

5.1.2. Collective Governance

Recalling Barnaby Slush's description of pirate organization that, in short, states that the captain did not dare to violate the laws of equity, every member of the crew got their share, and these common enemies of humankind were just among themselves[732], it is evident that the pirate movement had a democratic and egalitarian organization: "the pirate ship was democratic in an undemocratic age"[733] and "egalitarian in a hierarchical age."[734] For that matter, turning back to the six criteria of the commons proposed by Caffentzis and Federici, the fifth criterion states that "Commons require regulations stipulating how the wealth we share is to be used and cared for, the governing principles being equal access, reciprocity between what is given and what is taken, collective decision making, and power from the ground up, derived from tested abilities and continually shifting through different subjects depending on the tasks to be performed" while the sixth one states that "Equal access to the means of (re)production and egalitarian decision making must be the foundation of the commons."[735] These two criteria are also reflected in the second moment of commoning defined by De Angelis: "the decision-making process, the definition of rules for the

[730] Newgate Calendar, vol.2 266.
[731] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 122-123.
[732] Slush, *The Navy Royal*, vi.
[733] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 162
[734] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra,* 163
[735] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 102.

collective governance of the commons, another form of doing in the form of self-reflective collective orienting of the commons towards the next step."[736]

In connection with this, the organization of the pirate movement in the golden age is traced back to the buccaneers of the 1640s, and their code of conduct that was called Custom of the Coast or Jamaica Discipline: "The Tortuga buccaneers began to call themselves the Brethren of the Coast about 1640. To become a member of this democratic confraternity a man vowed to subscribe to a strict code called the Custom of the Coast."[737] Regarding this custom, Kuhn quotes in length Exquemelin, a contemporary buccaneer, who writes:

> *The ship being well victualled, they call another council, to deliberate towards what place they shall go to seek their desperate fortunes. In this council, likewise, they agree upon certain articles, which are put in writing, by way of bond or obligation, which every one is bound to observe, and all of them, or the chiefest, do set their hands unto. Herein they specify, and set down very distinctly, what sums of money each particular person ought to have for that voyage, the fund of all the payments being the common stock of what is gotten by the whole expedition; for otherwise it is the same law, among these people as with other Pirates : No prey, no pay…They observe among themselves very good orders. For in the prizes they take, it is severely prohibited unto every one to usurp anything in particular unto themselves. Hence all they take is equally divided, according to what has been said before. Yea, they make a solemn oath to each other not to abscond, or conceal the least thing they find amongst the prey. If afterwards any one is found unfaithful, and has contravened the said oath, immediately he is separated and turned out of the society. Among themselves they are very civil and charitable to each other. Insomuch that, if any wants what another has, with great liberality they give it one to another.*[738]

Through this account on the buccaneer organization, we observe that the commons as in the buccaneer ship or the spoils earned was regulated with rules stating how the wealth was used and divided somewhat equally. Again, as the share system was used, the wage labor was non-existent. The means of production/subsistence as the buccaneer ship was collectively owned and governed. The commonwealth was pooled as

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[736] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 122-123.
[737] Jenifer G. Marx, "The Brethren of the Coast" in *Pirates: An Illustrated History of Privateers, Buccaneers, and Pirates from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, ed. David Cordingly (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 41.
[738] Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America*, 59-61.

the common stock that was obtained during the expedition and shared equally. The management of the common stock was strictly and, again, collectively overseen. The violators of these rules were excluded from the community. The members of the community were generous towards each other, which proves that the commodification process was resisted on the buccaneer ship. More importantly, the rules were a result of a collective decision-making process, which is the second form of doing. Following the generation of buccaneers, the pirate movement of the golden age of piracy organized alongside a similar code of conduct. Yet, according to Kuhn, "What distinguishes the buccaneers' articles most notably from those of the golden age pirates are the division of shares (they would become more equitable in the golden age), and the temporal character of the contract that remains bound to a certain expedition rather than constituting a design for possible long-term company."[739] In this way, the buccaneer articles were collective governance rules for temporal institutions of commons whereas the pirate movement of the golden age could create a commons, or a commoning movement that was somewhat more durable.

The pirate articles drawn and adopted by pirate crews, three sets of which were presented as example in the chapter on the pirates were so comparable that Sherry argued that "Because of the similarity of these ship's articles, pirates—like the citizens of any commonwealth—always shared a general understanding of what was acceptable and unacceptable behavior, no matter what port they might be visiting or what ship they might be serving on."[740] In short, the pirate articles ensured an egalitarian and collective decision-making process by giving every pirate a vote in matters regarding the crew and the ship as well as regarding the punishment for violation of the rules; stipulated the distribution of wealth (albeit mostly plundered wealth) by specifying the shares of each member of the pirate crew, which was the most egalitarian distribution of the time; regulated discipline onboard the ship and among the crew by imposing certain bans such as stealing from the company, fighting onboard, gambling, required every member to be ready for fighting, chasing or engaging by requiring the arms to be clean at all times; forbade desertion; ensured the ship's wellbeing by forbidding careless carrying of

[739] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 85.
[740] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 90.

candles or smoking tobacco onboard, specified the compensation for being wounded or losing a limb during fights. In this way, the pirate articles were "regulations stipulating how the wealth we share is to be used and cared for, the governing principles being equal access, reciprocity between what is given and what is taken, collective decision making, and power from the ground up"[741] and indicated "the decision-making process, the definition of rules for the collective governance of the commons, another form of doing in the form of self-reflective collective orienting of the commons towards the next step."[742]

The pirate organization based on egalitarian and collective decision-making went further than the pirate articles drawn and adopted at the moment of the constitution of the pirate crew, though. As stated, "neither the captain nor the quartermaster represented the highest authority on the pirate ship. That honor belonged to the common council, which met regularly and included every man from captain to foremast man."[743] With regard to the common council, or general council on the pirate ships, Johnson recounts many instances where the council was held in order to decide on matters that concern the pirate crew: For instance, when the pirates on the Providence Island were offered a general pardon by the King through his governor Woodes Rogers, "the Proclamation was sent to them; which they took as Teague took the Covenant, that is they made prize of the ship and Proclamation too. However, they sent for those who were out a-cruising and called a general Council; but there was so much noise and clamour that nothing could be agreed on."[744] On another note, Johnson refers to the Blackbeard's and his crew's council: "The chief of them were brought before Black-beard, the Pirates' General, who acquainted them with the occasion of that extraordinary procedure, and that they were only put out of the way while a general council was held, at which time they suffered no prisoner to be present."[745] Again, he describes the council where Howel Davis was elected captain: "After this, a council of war was called over a large bowl of punch, at which it was proposed to choose a commander. The election was soon over, for it fell upon Davis by a great majority of legal pollers; there was no

[741] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 102.
[742] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 122-123.
[743] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 68.
[744] Johnson, *A General History*, 14.
[745] Johnson, *A General History*, 60-61.

scrutiny demanded, for all acquiesced in the choice."[746] The council was called for deciding where to sail as well: "Having called a council of war they agreed to sail down the coast together, and for the greater grandeur, appointed a commodore, which was Davis."[747]

Even the most daring captains such as Bartholomew Roberts who "is said to have exceeded his fellows in these respects, and when advanced, enlarged the respect that followed it, by making a sort of privy-council of half a dozen of the greatest bullies, such as were his competitors, and had interest enough to make his government easy. Yet even those, in the latter part of his reign, he had run counter to in every project that opposed his own opinion."[748]

The pirate organization, "that form of Rule which these Wretches set up, in imitation of legal Government"[749] was so pleasant for the pirates that Walter Kennedy, who was tried for piracy on July 26th, 1721, recounted the government on the pirate ship in a delighted manner, which it should be quoted here in length:

> *They chose a Captain from amongst themselves, who in Effect held little more than that Title at any other time, except in an Engagement, when he commanded absolutely and without control. Most of them having suffered formerly from the ill treatment of Officers, provided thus carefully against any such Evil now they had the choice in themselves. They provided by their Orders especially against any quarrels which might happen amongst themselves, and appointed certain Punishments for anything that tended that way; for the due Execution thereof, they constituted other Officers besides the Captain; so very industrious were they to avoid putting too much Power into the hands of one Man. The rest of their Agreement consisted chiefly in relation to the manner of dividing the Cargo of such Prizes as they should happen to take, and though they had broken through all Laws, Divine and Human, yet they imposed an Oath to be taken for the due Observance of these, so inconsistent a thing is Vice, and so strong the Principles imbibed from Education*.[750]

The account given by Kennedy here summarizes the pirate organization in a clear way. The pirate captain was elected democratically. The captain's authority was

[746] Johnson, *A General History*, 144.
[747] Johnson, *A General History*, 151.
[748] Johnson, *A General History*, 185.
[749] Hayward, *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals,* 37
[750] Hayward, *Lives of the Most Remarkable Criminals,* 37

limited to engagements with other ships. Thus, the captain acted like a military commander and only in time of war. They were cautious against disorder on the ship and devised ways to prevent disorder. And they regulated the distribution of plunder among themselves. The pirate captain's role and their limited authority on the ship as well as the distribution of authority was also noted by William Snelgrave as well:

> *I think it necessary to observe in this place, that the Captain of a Pirate Ship, is chiefly chosen to fight the Vessels they may meet with. Besides him, they choose another principal Officer, whom they call Quarter-master, who has the general Inspection of all Affairs, and often controls the Captain's Orders: This Person is also to be the first Man in boarding any Ship they shall attack; or go in the Boat on any desperate Enterprise. Besides the Captain and Quarter-master, the Pirates had all other Officers as is usual on board Men of War*.[751]

In this line, "the democratic selection of officers stood in stark, telling contrast to the near-dictatorial arrangement of command in the merchant service and Royal Navy."[752] Charles Johnson also approves the radically limited authority of the pirate captain when he explains "the principal customs and government of this roguish commonwealth" and describes the position of pirate captain and

> *...what privileges he exerts in such anarchy and unruliness of the members. Why, truly, very little. They only permit him to be captain on condition that they may be captain over him; they separate to his use the great cabin, and sometimes vote him small parcels of plate and china (for it may be noted that Roberts drank his tea constantly) but then every man, as the humour takes him, will use the plate and china, intrude into his apartment, swear at him, seize a part of his victuals and drink, if they like it, without his offering to find fault or contest it…The captain's power is uncontrollable in chase or in battle; drubbing, cutting or even shooting anyone who dares deny his command. The same privilege he takes over prisoners, who receive good or ill-usage mostly as he approves of their behaviour*.[753]

Again, Johnson explains the pirate captain's authority as limited to the time of battle or chasing and argues that the pirate crew was captain over the pirate captain. The captain's authority, in this sense, did ensure a privileged position for them neither in

[751] Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts,* 199-200
[752] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 66.
[753] Johnson, *A General History*, 185.

terms of using the space on the pirate ship nor dishware nor food or drink. This proves that the pirates used the pirate ship in common. Furthermore, despite the fact that Johnson considered the pirate organization anarchy and disorder, the pirate articles and their strict observance suggest that the pirate organization was far from disorder. In addition, the pirate captain's position was precarious as well. In this sense, Johnson notes an instance in which a captain, Charles Vane, was deposed for what the pirate crew deemed cowardice despite the captain's absolute authority during fight:

> *At length the captain made use of his power to determine this dispute which, in these cases is absolute and uncontrollable, by their own laws, viz., in fighting, chasing or being chased; in all other matters whatsoever he is governed by a majority…But the next day the captain's behaviour was obliged to stand the test of a vote and a resolution passed against his honour and dignity, branding him with the name of coward, deposing him from the command, and turning him out of the company with marks of infamy; and with him went all those who did not vote for boarding the French man-of-war*.[754]

In connection with this, the pirates did not really care about who was the captain among them since they were aware that in reality the pirate crew had the right to collective governance and absolute authority. Therefore, a pirate named Dennis, summarized the crew's opinions on collective governance during the election of Bartholomew Roberts as captain:

> *That it was not of any great signification who was dignified with title; for really an in truth, all good Governments had (like theirs) the supreme power lodged with the community, who might doubtless depute and revoke as suited interest or humour. We are the original of this claim (says he), and should a captain be so saucy as to exceed prescription at any time, why, down with him! It will be a caution after he is dead, to his successors, of what fatal consequence any sort of assuming may be*.[755]

Thus, the position of the pirate captain was so insignificant and the captain's replaceability was so high that there was a pirate ship whose "whole Crew were upwards of 70 Men, who, in one Voyage, had to often changed, set up, and pull'd down their

[754] Johnson, *A General History*, 108
[755] Johnson, *A General History*, 167.

Captains and other Officers, that above Seven and Forty of the Ships Company had, at several Times, been in Office of one kind or other; and among the rest they had, in particular had, 13 Captains." [756] Therefore, it could be argued that "there is so little Government or Subordination among them, that they are, on Occasion, all Captains, all Leaders."[757]

All these instances witnessed in the contemporary accounts suggest that the pirate ship was governed in a directly democratic manner. In Rediker's words, "Shipboard democracy, especially to those who had labored long and hard in a totalitarian work environment, could be intoxicating."[758] Therefore, we can observe that the collective decision-making process was not limited to the specification of the pirate articles but continued after the signing of those articles. In this way, the pirate ship is governed through "collective decision making, and power from the ground up" and "egalitarian decision making" as "the foundation of the commons"[759], which is "another form of doing"[760] The "another form of doing" in question, on the other hand, invokes the political character of commoning. After all, De Angelis also suggests that "commoning… is a highly *political* activity, even when the commoners themselves are unaware of this."[761] In this line, just as the pirate movement of the golden age can be described as the ur-class struggle, or the proto class struggle, the common council based on egalitarian and collective decision-making on the pirate ship can be considered as the ur-assembly form and the common pirate council strived "to overcome the division between the economic and political spheres."[762] In contrast to the commoning of the political in terms of the contemporary movements corresponds to the assembly form as the commonization of the enclosed politics in the form of representational politics, the commoning of the political by the pirate movement of the golden age which commonized the politics on the ship in the sense that the extremely hierarchical organization of the life onboard the merchant or navy vessels was rejected and instead a

[756] Daniel Defoe, *An Account of the Conduct and Proceedings of the Late John Gow, Alias Smith, Captain of the Late Pirates*, (London: John Applebee, 1725), iii.
[757] Daniel Defoe, *An Account of the Conduct*, iii.
[758] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 69.
[759] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 102.
[760] De Angelis, 122-123.
[761] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 203-204.
[762] Thorburn, "A Common Assembly," 267.

directly democratic and collective organization was instituted onboard the pirate ship. In fact, there was never a form of representational politics onboard the merchant and navy vessels. The social and political organization on the ships that were contemporaries of the pirate ships was a capitalist organization on the one hand. The wage relation had been established and the sailors were waged employers whereas captain was the employer or the representative of the employer. On the other hand, the same organization could be considered an organization based on slavery since the sailors were confined to the ship and there were many instances where the captain or in general the capital and the state, had the power over their lives and deaths, be it by regulating and limiting provision, punishing desertion, impressment or as a measure of discipline. Therefore, "each ship was 'a little kingdom' whose captain held a near-absolute power which he often abused."[763] In this line, the commoning of the political by the pirate movement meant that this hierarchical organization was an enclosure of the autonomy of the sailors and rejecting and instituting a radically different organization was the "another form of doing" in the form of collective doing.

Furthermore, the radical democratic organization in question was deemed disruptive by the then contemporary authorities as well. For instance, during the trial of eight pirates in 1717, the prosecutor made a speech in which he traces the word pirate's roots and concludes that "yet the Laws of all Nations, that have setled into regular Governments, define & declare a Pirate to be an Enemy of Mankind. And therefore he can claim the Protection of no Prince, the privilege of no Country, the benefit of no Law; He is denied common humanity, and the very rights of Nature, with whom no Faith, Promise nor Oath is to be observed, nor is he to be otherwise dealt with, than a wild & savage Beast, which every Man may lawfully destroy."[764] After that, the prosecutor argues that the pirates were a threat to all states and governments, comparing the pirate movement to the Spartacus's revolt:

> *The Third Circumstance, which blackens exceedingly and augments a Pirates Guilt, is the Danger, wherewith every State or Government is threatened from*

[763] Rediker, Marcus. "'Under the Banner of King Death': The Social World of Anglo-American Pirates, 1716 to 1726." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1981): 203–27. https://doi.org/10.2307/1918775. 206.
[764] Trials of 8 Persons, 6.

> *the Combinations, Conspiracies and Confederacies of Profligate and Desperate Wretches, united by no other tie (for what other can there be among such?) than a mutual Consent to extinguish first Humanity in themselves, and to Prey promiscuously on all others…Hannibal's Victorious Army was never more terrible to Rome, than that of Spartacus, who in three set Battles shook the power of that Mighty Empire, flew their Consuls, and cut down the flower of Italy.*[765]

In this sense, surely the pirates were a threat to all states and governments by way of their combinations, conspiracies and confederacies since collective governance as another form of doing, as a crucial part of commoning indicated an alternative to the monarchies, constitutional monarchies, or the labor discipline imposed by capital especially on the ships. To recall the alternative posed by commoning:

> *Commoning thus is an alternative way to make decisions and act upon those decisions to shape the future of communities without being locked into market competition and its anxieties, the blackmail of profit-driven companies, and state agencies. Commoning is the way the struggle for freedom is actualised: by being free…The freedom that the commons gives you is a freedom you will find nowhere else: that is, the freedom to shape, together with others, the condition of your doing, of your caring, of your commoning. Freedom as auto-determination, to determine autonomously*.[766]

As Rediker argues, then, "By 1720 the main purpose was no longer booty. It was, rather, the perpetuation of a 'life of liberty.'"[767] The life of liberty, or autonomy through doing in common against-and-beyond abstraction, on the other hand, entailed a new subjectivity: the golden age pirate as a commoner.

5.2. The Golden Age Pirate as a Commoner: The Pirate Subjectivity

To recall the social and collective aspect of commoning activity, it is worth reiterating De Angelis's example of a forest common:

> *in order to share the wood of a forest for construction or to burn it to create heat in the houses of a town, it is necessary to share not only the trees but also*

[765] Trials of 8 Persons, 7.
[766] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 204-205.
[767] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 37.

> *the logs, which obviously involves a collective process to produce them. A collective production process is at the same time a process both of social labour – the mental and physical exertion of energies towards a goal – and of social relations among the commoners. In this light, commoning is thus the recursive social force and life activity that regenerate and develop the social relations constituting the commons; it is the socially defined life activity that reproduces the social relations among subjects and their metabolism with the common resources*.[768]

In this way, commoning is a collective process as the definition of commoning as doing in common also suggests. The collective process in questions denotes both social labor as doing in common in order to achieve a common goal and social relations that are produced and reproduced by the commoners and that are, in turn, produce and reproduce the commoners. Without overlooking the fact that Rediker argues that "seamen were, by their experiences in the maritime labor market and labor process, among the first collective laborers"[769], the pirate movement's collectiveness was unique as "theirs was truly a case of hanging together or being hanged separately."[770]

The collectiveness and solidarity that was part of the pirate movement could be firstly observed in their aim to distribute justice according to their ethics regarding the treatment of sailors by ship captains. Rediker refers to William Snelgrave's letter to his employer, Humphrey Morice, that states "they pretend one reason for these villainies is to do justice to sailors."[771] In this line, Rediker notes many instances in which the pirates punished (albeit in gruesome and violent ways) ship captains who mistreated the sailors on their ships in accordance with the testimonies given by the sailors on the captured ships or the pirates who have worked as employers of the captured captains or treated well the captured captains who were regarded "honest fellows". The justice in question was sometimes so elaborative that one pirate who had worked on a captured ship owned by the Royal African Company argued that they should have burned the ship since he had been mistreated during his employment in the Company whereas another pirate argued that the ship was not worth much and burning the ship would be in the interest of

[768] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 228.
[769] Between the Devil, 78.
[770] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 95.
[771] William Snelgrave to Humphrey Morice, August 1, 1719, Humphrey Morice Papers from the Bank of England, *Slave Trade Journals and Papers* (Marlboro, Wiltshire, England: Adam Mathew Publications, 1998), microfilm, quoted in Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 89.

the Company since it would be freed of paying the wages of sailors on the ship, which was estimated to be more than the value of the ship. After that discussion, the pirates agreed to return the ship to the crew.[772] Captain Skinner who was captured by a pirate crew among which his former boatswain, who he had punished by imprisoning and withholding his wage, was whipped, and killed.[773] The pirate captain, Bartholomew Roberts, beat Thomas Tarlton, a slave-trading captain, whose brutal and dictatorial methods he knew from his employment in slave trade.[774] Another form of punishment was the burning or sinking of the captain's vessel. Walter Kennedy, for instance, punched Thomas Grant and wanted to kill him, yet the crew decided to forgive his life, sinking his ship instead. Or, Edward England learned that the Captain Creed who he captured had mistreated his brother, John, so the pirate crew decided to burn his ship.[775] On the other hand, the captains who were regarded honest fellows by their crew or the pirates themselves were let go with their ships and cargo. "The fate of a ship and its cargo frequently depended on the pirates' investigation of the character of the ship's captain and owner."[776]

In connection with the captains' treatment of the sailors, some pirates stated that the mistreatment in merchant or navy service was one of the main reasons for going pirate. In his final speech on the day of his execution in 1724, for example, the pirate John Rose Archer stated that "I could wish that masters of vessels would not use their men with so much severity, as many of them do, which exposes to great temptations."[777] Or, as Cotton Mather notes witnessing pirate William Fly's execution, "When he was called upon, to Speak what he should judge proper to be spoken on that sad occasion, at least for the Warning of Survivers, he only said, That he would advise the Masters of Vessels to carry it well to their Men, lest they should be put upon doing as he had done."[778] John Gow also stated "that the captain's inhumanity had produced the

[772] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 89.
[773] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 89-90.
[774] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 91.
[775] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 91.
[776] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*,, 92.
[777] Johnson, *A General History*, 315.
[778] Cotton Mather, The vial poured out upon the sea. A remarkable relation of certain pirates brought unto a tragical and untimely end. Some conferences with them, after their condemnation. Their behaviour at their execution. And a sermon preached on that occasion, 48.

consequences which had happened"[779] after he and his comrades took the command of the ship and became pirates.

All in all, the pirate movement's preoccupation with doing justice to sailors and connecting the piracy to the mistreatments and inhumanity of the merchant or navy captains suggest that the movement had a somewhat coherent ethic code which included being just and being honest were core positive values. In this way, taking the pirate ship as a common good and taking the golden age piracy as a commoning movement, the pirate ship was a use value for the plurality of the pirates while at the same time the pirate ship necessitated the plurality of pirates to claim and sustain the common good. In addition, the claiming and sustaining in question required creating relations values that specified the good social actions and bad social actions, i.e., being a just and honest fellow in contrast to being unjust and dishonest, and that helped sustain and reproduce the pirates, and their social relations and practices. Furthermore, the fact that justice and honesty were considered values with regard to the captain's treatment of sailors, the pirates showed solidarity not only with their fellow pirates but also with all maritime laborers, from whose ranks they themselves had come.

When it comes to the solidarity among pirates, especially among different pirate crews, Rediker stresses the "profound sense of community" among different pirate crews which "showed a recurring willingness to join forces at sea and in port, even when the various crews were strangers to each other."[780] Snelgrave noted that the crews of two pirate ships, for instance, who had realized an approaching ship felt relieved after seeing the black flag and these ships saluted each other with cannon fire.[781] Or, "the *Mary Anne* cruised northward along the Atlantic coast, and off Cape May joined forces with a French pirate sloop, the *Postillion*, Captain Laboos commanding. Together they reversed the course. Off Jamaica they seized the Elizabeth."[782] In line with this, Rediker could argue for "an unwritten code of hospitality to forge spontaneous alliances" that "transcended nationality."[783] The spontaneous alliances, in this sense, hint at a sense of solidarity among the pirates, who were called "the brethren of the coast" in the

[779] Newgate Calendar, vol.2, 266.
[780] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 94.
[781] Snelgrave, *A New Account of Some Parts*, 198-199.
[782] Morris, "The Ghost of Captain Kidd," 282.
[783] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 94.

buccaneering period, "the Brotherhood", "a loose-knit but powerful confederacy—a rough-and-ready republic of rebels, robbers, and rovers"[784], a "Republic of Rogues"[785].

The transnational solidarity in question included black crew members and even women pirates as well. "Hundreds of people of African descent found places within the social order of the pirate ship."[786] Despite the fact that, then, an important number of pirates had been employed in the slave trade before going pirate and some pirate crews captured and sold slaves as cargo on occasion, there were numerous pirates of African descent[787]: "Black pirates sailed with Captains Bellamy, Taylor, Williams, Harris, Winter, Shipton, Lyne, Skyrm, Roberts, Spriggs, Bonnet, Bellamy, Phillips, Baptist, Cooper, and others. In1718, sixty out of Blackbeard's crew of one hundred were black, while Captain William Lewis boasted '40 able Negroe Sailors' among his crew of eighty. In 1719, Oliver La Bouche's ship was 'half French, half Negroes.'"[788] In this sense, the relatively free life onboard pirate ships was a possible motivation for slave revolt and "authorities in the American colonies did indeed fear alliances of pirates and revolting slaves."[789] The fear was based on a real foundation, though. "The largest recorded mass escape of black slaves at this time took place in Martinique, where fifty blacks, supposedly stirred up by a white man, had risen against their French master and had fled the island 'to seek a career in piracy.'"[790] Thus, "piracy clearly did not operate according to the black codes enacted and enforced in Atlantic slave societies. Some slaves and free blacks found aboard the pirate ship freedom, something that, out- side of the maroon communities, was in short supply in the pirates' main theater of operations, the Caribbean and the American South."[791]

When it comes to women pirates, it is a fact that there were at least two women pirates that took part in the commoning movement of the golden age piracy, Mary Read and Anne Bonny. They proved that despite the fact that maritime labor as well as piracy was male-dominated practices, piracy was not exclusive to males. They "showed, sword

[784] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 16.
[785] Grey, 19.
[786] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 165.
[787] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 165.
[788] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 165-166.
[789] Kuhn, *Life Under the Jolly Roger*, 70.
[790] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 212?
[791] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 167.

and pistol in hand, that the many freedoms of the pirates' life might be enjoyed by women."[792] Thus, "Operating beyond the reach of the traditional powers of family, state, and capital, and sharing in the rough solidarity of life among maritime outlaws, they added another dimension altogether to the subversive appeal of piracy by seizing the liberties usually reserved for men, at a time when the sphere of social action for women was narrowing."[793]

Therefore, the solidarity within the pirate movement disregarded the social origins of the pirates as well as, albeit to some extent, their races, nations, and genders. The subjectivity of the pirate as a commoner, in this regard, rejected the social norms imposed by capital and state and established its own autonomous subject. The subject in question was based on new social relations and values that were, again, against the social norms of capital and state. Instead of the wage laborers who should have been disciplined; captains who represented the state authority, who should have been obeyed, and who most of the time abused their authority; people of African descent who were bought and sold as commodities; women who were confined within households and families, the pirate movement instituted the pirate subject who was autonomous both from state and capital, who took their lives into their hands, abolished wage relation and hierarchical order of the ship as well as the society.

The solidarity that transcended nationality brings the discussion to the most crucial symbol of the pirate movement: the Jolly Roger, the black flag. In truth, the flags used by various pirate crews differed from each other, yet all flags included similar themes such as skeletons, crossbones and skulls, hourglasses, hearts that were bleeding, and cutlasses. In this line, apart from representing death both in order to strike fear into those ships that put up resistance against pirates and the pirates' disregard of their own deaths[794], the black flag "made explicit their rejection of the nation state as a foundation for community and their challenge to its monopoly on violence" and declared "their rejection of the very foundation of the contemporary geo-political order, placing themselves outside its sphere of government and justice."[795] Furthermore, "when pirates

[792] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 167.
[793] Linebaugh and Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra*, 167.
[794] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 177.
[795] Land, "Flying the Black Flag,", 178.

created a flag of their own, as they did for the first time in the early eighteenth century, they made a new declaration: they would use colors to symbolize the solidarity of a gang of proletarian outlaws, thousands strong and self-organized in daring ways, in violent opposition to the all-powerful nation-states of the day. By flying the skull and the crossbones, they announced themselves as 'the Villains of all Nations.'"[796] In connection with the rejection of the nation state, some pirates declared "war against the whole world"[797] or even "took a small vessel, and went in her, made a black Flag and declared war against all the world"[798] as well as "they did think of themselves as people without a nation" and "when hailed by another ship, pirates, who were multinational in origin, usually answered that they came "from the seas," not from any particular country."[799] In addition, Rediker also notes that the pirates developed a peculiar speech of which swearing, blaspheming, and cursing was a great part. Although the common sailors also cursed, swore and blasphemed, the pirates' speech included these to a greater extent so much so that not only clergymen such as Cotton Mather but also captains such as Snelgrave were shocked upon hearing this exclusive and separate style of pirate speech.[800] In the light of these, it is evident that the pirate movement symbolized by the black flag considered itself as a distinct community that rejected the European society and the nation state and their organizational principles and that organized along alternative, democratic and non-hierarchical lines.

The creation of a distinct community, in turn, amounted to the creation of a new subjectivity in the sense that the creation of values that determined the good and bad social actions such as honesty vs. dishonesty and justice vs. injustice; the sense of community that was instituted through considering the movement as a brotherhood (although the use of brotherhood as a denominator excluded the women) and through the creation of temporary alliances among different pirate crews that were recognized by the use of black flag; the use of black flag as the rejection of national identities and confirmation of the pirate movement as a distinct community; and the devising of a separate and distinct dialect as the pirate dialect both sustained and reproduced the social

[796] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 164.
[797] Johnson, *A General History*, 144.
[798] Johnson, *A General History*, 285.
[799] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 8.
[800] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 97-98.

practice and social relations on the one hand, and the subjects that engaged in these social practices and social relations, the pirates as commoners. Both the external and internal social relations of the pirate movement were shaped around the pirate's own code of ethics that did not regard the labor discipline imposed by capital that considered the common laborers as lazy and idle people who had to be disciplined in order to be subjected to wage labor or the hierarchical order of the ship imposed by state in connection with the capitalist labor discipline that allowed no room for autonomy to the extent that the sailors had no control over their bodies or lives. The pirate code of ethics, instead, valued honesty in the sense of treatment of sailors on the ships and justice in the sense of punishing the captains who did not treat the sailors well. The code of ethics in question, in this regard, helped create, sustain and reproduce a new subjectivity as the honest and just pirate in contrast to the dishonest and unjust capitalist nation state system and its embodiment in the merchant or navy captain. The sense of community that was represented by considering the movement as a brotherhood, designing black flags that varied from pirate crew to pirate crew but utilized similar themes, and devising a separate pirate dialect, again, sustained and reproduced both the community alongside with the members of the community, and the social practices and social relations of the community. In this line, the pirate movement produced, reproduced, and sustained the pirates as common subjects since "if commoning has any meaning, it must be the production of ourselves as a common subject . . . as a quality of relations, a principle of cooperation and responsibility to each other, the forests, the seas, and the animals."[801]

On the other hand, "this understanding of the commons has been organized around the notion of *buen vivir* (a sense of collective well-being rooted in the dual sense of 'living well' and 'living properly'). These, and others, offer different ways to articulate understandings of the commons around a vision of working to live not living to work."[802] At this point, the motto of Bartholomew Roberts should be included in length: "In an honest service, says he, there is thin commons, low wages, and hard labour. In this, plenty and satiety, pleasure and ease, liberty and power; and who would

[801] Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," 7.
[802] Casas-Cortés, Maribel, Sebastian Cobarrubias, and John Pickles. "The Commons." In A Companion to Urban Anthropology, edited by Donald Macon Nonini, 449–69. Oxford: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2014. 457

not balance creditor on this side, when all the hazard that is run for it, at worst, is only a sour look or two at choking. No, a merry life and a short one shall be my motto."[803] The similarity between "buen vivir" and the "merry life" is telling. The idea of "buen vivir" emphasizes that wage labor prevents living well or properly whereas commoning that is organized around use value, i.e., working to live in contrast to exchange value, i.e., living to work allows for a well or proper life. The idea of merry, albeit short life, as well, implies that wage labor, particularly on the ship, provided insufficient wages and provisions despite the hard work it entailed whereas commoning as pirates provided sufficient subsistence in addition to freedom and power over the pirates' own their lives and thus allowed for a well or proper life.

Therefore, considering that "enclosures are not just about taking resources away from people, but the first step towards attempting to define new subjects normalised to the capitalist market…The integration of the social body predicated on enclosures requires the constitution of social subjects who are normalised to the commodity-form"[804], rejection of that normalization to the capitalist system and commodification through commoning as pirating, the rejection of wage labor and the nation state system amounts to the rejection of the subjectification imposed by enclosure and, instead, the institution of another, alternative subject (as the commoner pirate) that could place themselves outside the limits of wage labor and commodification through which the pirates as commoners could attempt social self-determination. The self-determination of the alternative subject entailed both rejection of the subjectification imposed by capital and state and creation of a new subject as Boonen argues with reference to Dardot and Laval: "To be more precise, 'common acting' (*agir commun*) produces a collective subject, and not the other way around."[805] In connection, "commons are not only the means by which we share in an egalitarian manner the resources we produce, but a commitment to the creation of collective subjects, a commitment to fostering common interests in every aspect of our life. Anti-capitalist commons are not the end point of a struggle to construct a non-capitalist world, but its means."[806] Therefore, the rejection of

[803] Johnson, *A General History*, 212.
[804] De Angelis, "Separating the Doing and the Deed," 82.
[805] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 59.
[806] Caffentzis and Federici, "Commons against and beyond Capitalism," 103.

nation state as part of the pirate subject as commoner amounts to both the pirate movement's disregard of the state and its autonomy from the state, which might be summarized by the fiery speech of Captain Samuel Bellamy, whose "views were distinctly Socialistic"[807] according to Philip Gosse. When Captain Bellamy and his crew captured a ship commanded by one Captain Beer, the said Captain Beer asked for the return of his ship. According to Johnson, Captain Bellamy's response was:

> *D—n my b—d, says he, I am sorry they won't let you have your sloop again, for I scorn to do anyone a mischief, when it is not for my advantage; damn the sloop we must sink her, and she might be of use to you. Though, damn ye, you are a sneaking puppy, and so are all those who will submit to be governed by Laws which rich men have made for their own security, for the cowardly whelps have not the courage otherwise to defend what they get by their knavery. But damn ye altogether. Damn them for a pack of crazy rascals, and you, who serve them, for a parcel of hen-hearted numskulls. They vilify us, the scoundrels do, when there is only this difference, they rob the poor under the cover of Law, forsooth, and we plunder the rich under the protection of our own courage. Had you not better make one of us, than sneak after the a—s of those villains for Employment?*[808]

Then, after Beer told Bellamy that he could not let Bellamy break the law,

> *You are a devilish conscientious rascal, d—n ye, replied Bellamy. I am a free prince, and I have as much authority to make war on the whole world as he who has a hundred sail of ships at sea, and an army of 100,000 men in the field, and this my conscience tells me. But there is no arguing with such sniveling puppies, who allow superiors to kick them about deck at pleasure and pin their faith upon a pimp of a parson, a squab, who neither practices nor believes what he puts upon the chuckleheaded fools he preaches to.*[809]

What this speech indicates that Bellamy as a "distinctly Socialistic" representative of the pirate movement held a high contempt towards the law as well as he was fully aware that the law was made by the rich for the rich. Thus, considering the law illegitimate, Bellamy saw only one difference between the rich and the pirates, which was the fact that the former stole from the poor using the law while the latter stole

[807] Gosse, *The Pirates' Who's Who,* 82.
[808] Johnson, *A General History* 482.
[809] Johnson, *A General History* 482.

from the rich relying on nothing but their own courage. This implies that Bellamy did not trust the state in order to prevent what he deemed an injustice and took the solution into his hands with his pirate comrades. Furthermore, by declaring himself a free prince, which should be considered with the Barnaby Slush's statement that "Pyrates and Buccaneers, are Princes to such Animals"[810] so this declaration should not be interpreted as Bellamy's self-proclamation as a prince but as an assertion that all pirates are princes, he rejected the state's monopoly of the legitimate use of violence.

In this sense, since the state and law served the rich, the pirate movement's rejection and disregard of the state imply that the pirates were fully aware of the fact that change could not come from the state. Therefore, as Boonen argues, again with reference to Dardot and Laval: "the revolutionary change they envisage does not involve a violent conquest of the state. In contrast, Dardot and Laval imagine an 'auto-institution of society' as practices of commoning more or less spontaneously proliferate in spite of and autonomously from the state."[811] The auto-institution of society or self-institution of society, in turn, brings us to the prefigurative aspect of the pirates' commoning movement.

5.3. Doing/Pirating in Common as a Prefigurative Movement

To reiterate, a prefigurative movement actualizes the goals of the movement, which include the social relations and practices, decision-making processes, and experiences during the course of the movement and in the present; disrupts the false dichotomy of everyday life and political life; brings about self-emancipation; is against the reproduction of hierarchical relations; and is anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist. In short, it "refers to a political action, practice, movement, moment or development in which certain political ideals are experimentally actualised in the 'here and now', rather than hoped to be realised in a distant future."[812] Thus, its characteristics could be summarized as means-ends equivalence, construction of alternatives, nonhierarchical

[810] Slush, *The Navy Royal,* vi.
[811] Boonen, "A (Non-)Violent Revolution," 59.
[812] Mathijs van de Sande, "The Prefigurative Politics of Tahrir Square–an Alternative Perspective on the 2011 Revolutions," *Res Publica* 19, no. 3 (2013): 223–39, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11158-013-9215-9, 230.

and bottom-up organization, direct democracy, forming of new subjectivities, direct action, rejection of engagement with state and construction of the future ideals in the present. In line with this, the struggle for commons, or commoning as the revolt of doing against-and-beyond abstraction, which denotes doing in common against the abstraction of doing into labor as well as the collective process of making decisions regarding the commons as another form of doing, amounts to a movement that actualizes the political and economics ideals of the commons in the present, hence the prefigurative aspect of commoning.

To start with, then, the maritime labor on the merchant and navy ships meant impressment, in other words, recruitment of maritime labor by force; containment; militarized hierarchical order; the dangerous conditions of maritime labor; insufficient provisions; insufficient wages; and hard labor, all of which might be summarized as abstraction of doing in the form of wage labor and loss of self-determination for the sailors. Against these, the sailors employed forms of resistance such as strikes, mutinies, and as the most extreme form of resistance outright piracy.

As stated, the golden age piracy amounted to the collective ownership of the ship and using the ship in common. In this way, the pirate subject as the commoner claimed and sustained the ownership of the pirate as a common good, which was done through creation of relational values such as honesty, justice, solidarity, self-government/determination, horizontal and democratic decision-making, and egalitarian distribution of the common goods. Furthermore, through this claiming and sustaining in common the pirate subject instituted itself as the commoner.

On the basis of these, the pirate community established by the pirate movement was a rejection of the nation state whose embodiment was the ship as "'a little kingdom' whose captain held a near-absolute power which he often abused"[813], the capitalist labor discipline and organization on the ship, and wage labor on the one hand. On the other, the institution of the pirate community on the pirate ship corresponded to the alternative posited by the pirate movement. Thus, the movement did not confine itself to the rejection of the wage labor, the hierarchical organization of the ship whose pinnacle was

[813] Marcus Rediker, "'Under the Banner of King Death': The Social World of Anglo-American Pirates, 1716 to 1726," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (1981): 203–27, https://doi.org/10.2307/1918775, 206.

the nation state and capitalist labor discipline and organization, all of which amounted to the abstraction of doing and its drive towards determination by commodification and money but opposed these with the abolition of wage labor onboard through an egalitarian distribution of the common goods through commoning and the democratic organization and society instituted on the pirate ship, all of which amounted to the commoning as doing in common both in terms of social labor and collective governance. This also meant that the alternative society envisioned by the pirate movement was constructed on the pirate ship.

The construction of the alternative society, on the other hand, indicates that the ends of the pirate movement, namely the abolition of wage labor, self-government, liberty, democratic organization, and equality in economic terms were reflected in the means of the pirate movement and these ends, which might be interpreted as future ideals as well were actualized in the present rather than left to a distant future. In this way, the pirate movement aimed to abolish wage labor and actualized that aim in the present by the act of claiming and sustaining the collective ownership of the ship. The movement aimed to take control over their lives, to put "the choice in themselves", to live autonomously from capital and state and actualized that aim in the present by the same act. Comparing that act of the pirate movement to the definitions of prefiguration presented above such as "efforts to manifest and build, to the greatest extent possible, the world we would like to see through our means of fighting in this one"[814] or "prefigurative organizing means organizing now the way you want to see the world later"[815] or ""the attempted construction of alternative or utopian social relations in the present"[816], then it is clearly seen that the pirate movement was a prefigurative movement in terms of means-ends equivalence and actualizing the future ideals in the present. Therefore, the world the pirate movement would have liked to see was an egalitarian and democratic society in which the hierarchical organization as well as the wage relation was abolished and the members could live their merry lives and they actualized that world through instituting their visionary values as well as practicing those values. Just as "commoning is the way the struggle for freedom is actualised: by

[814] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 83.
[815] Dixon, *Another Politics*, 84-85.
[816] Yates, "Rethinking Prefiguration," 1.

being free… Freedom as auto-determination, to determine autonomously" [817], the commoning movement of the golden age pirates realized their self-determination and freedom by being free.

To practice the values of the movement or means-ends equivalence, in turn, are directly connected to direct action, whose roots Graeber traces back to libertarian tradition and anarchism: "The very notion of direct action, with its rejection of a politics which appeals to governments to modify their behaviour, in favour of physical intervention against state power in a form that itself prefigures an alternative—all of this emerges directly from the libertarian tradition. Anarchism is the heart of the movement, its soul; the source of most of what's new and hopeful about it."[818] Thus, direct action involves the rejection of state as an institution that is to be applied, or that is to be captured in order to bring about change, rather it creates, or prefigures alternative to the state power. In this line, the golden age piracy represented a very fine example of direct action through the expropriation of the ship, after which the pirates "made a black Flag and declared war against all the world"[819] as the movement did physically intervene against nation states and prefigured an alternative order. Furthermore, according to Brissette, "direct action...seeks… to immediately and directly create new social relations, new practices and new understandings within the (expanding) interstices of the old… to actualize a (vision of) collective life."[820] In this sense, the pirate movement took direct action and created new social relations and new practices based on solidarity, democratic organization and egalitarian distribution, autonomy, and abolition of wage labor. The new social relations and new practices included "collectivism, anti-authoritarianism, and egalitarianism. "[821] In terms of the collectivism, it was "constituted in the confrontation with capital, created over and against the logic of discipline and cooperation for the sake of profit. Collective labor passed easily into collective self-defense as seamen sought to protect themselves from harsh conditions, excessive work, and oppressive authority… was formed instead from the conflicts inherent in the social

[817] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 204-205.
[818] David Graeber, "The New Anarchists," in *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?*, ed. Tom Mertes (London: Verso, 2004), 202–15, 203.
[819] Johnson, *A General History*, 285.
[820] Brissette, "The Prefigurative Is Political," 116.
[821] Rediker, *Villains of All Nations*, 26.

relations of production in shipping and the consequent negotiations of waged work."[822] The anti-authoritarianism, on the other hand, shocked the authorities:

> *When the authorities came into contact with the pirates, they were often shocked by their democratic tendencies. The Dutch governor of the stopover colony of Mauritius commented after meeting a pirate crew, "Every man had as much say as the captain and each man carried his own weapons in his blanket. These customs were unnerving to anyone accustomed to the hierarchical nature of European society, where guns normally were confined to the upper classes and democracy was unknown. Whole communities of men who lived by consensus appeared very threatening*.[823]

The egalitarianism in question was based "on the belief that, at bottom, held that all sailors benefited from a relatively equal distribution of risks, resources, and rewards aboard the ship. This value was reflected in a preference for "shares" over "wages" as a means of compensation for labor."[824] The collectivism, anti-authoritarianism and egalitarianism were reflected in the non-hierarchical and democratic organization of the pirate movement as well. Therefore, recalling that the state encloses politics as a professional activity and confines politics to representational politics, the politics in the case of the pirate movement is enclosed in the body of the ship captain as the highest authority representing the nation state and the monarch since "Merchant captains variously referred to themselves as masters (of servants or apprentices), fathers (of children), and kings (of subjects)."[825] Against that enclosure, however, every pirate, considered himself "in his own imagination, a captain, a prince or a king."[826] In this sense, as Rediker argues when every pirate could consider themselves a king or a captain, the meaning of these authority positions dissolved.[827] Through the claiming of these authority positions based on the non-hierarchical and democratic organization instituted on the pirate ship, the prefigurative politics of the pirate movement as the commoning of the politics de-professionalized politics and abolished

[822] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,* 243.
[823] Ritchie, *Captain Kidd*, 124
[824] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,* 246-247.
[825] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,* 207.
[826] Johnson, *A General History*, 194.
[827] Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea,* 248.

politics as a special activity reserved to certain people be they nobles, government officials, or professional politicians.

All in all, the sailors during and before the golden age of piracy had grievances towards capitalism, and primitive accumulation that was both the precondition of and the principle that sustained capitalism, which took the form of wage relation, which of course did not even provide sufficient wages, the militarized and hierarchical discipline on the ship that put the absolute authority in the captain as a miniature monarch on the ship as a miniature state. Against these grievances, the pirate movement took direct action through the occupation of the ship and taking the collective ownership of the now pirate ship. The result of that direct action was the abolition of wage labor, egalitarian social and economic relations onboard, horizontal democracy that allowed for the putting "choice in themselves" and instituting self-determination and autonomy (both from capital and state as well as society) for the pirates, creation of a collective society that also produced and reproduced a new subjectivity as the pirate as commoner against the subjectivities imposed by capital and nation state such as laborer and monarch's subject. The direct action of the pirate movement, in this sense, constructed an alternative order autonomous from capital and state and by doing so actualized its ideals in the present and reflected its ends in the means employed to reach those ends. Thus, the pirate movement was a prefigurative movement as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal."[828]

5.4. Conclusion

In this regard, though it has been repeated many times, it is crucial, as it is one of the central points of this study, to note again "Commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[829] As many other instances of the fight for the commons have been, the pirate movement was also defeated, yet the defeat in question seems somewhat problematized from the perspective of the commons and prefigurative

[828] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 100.
[829] Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," 47.

politics, or the prefigurative commoning movement. On the one hand, despite their defeat against the state, they won the fight over "*Popular Imagination*"[830] in Rediker's words. On the other, the pirate movement represented a crack as "negation-and-creation"[831] as in negation of abstraction and creation of an alternative. However, the crack's validity

> *does not depend on the future, but being part of a movement can transform its significance. We throw a stone at the sheet of ice that covers the lake of possibility. The stone makes a hole in the ice, but the ice is thick, the day is cold and soon it freezes over again. We are left with the inspiring memory of something beautiful, we have caught a glimpse of a possible future. We throw another stone, and this time not only do we make a hole, but cracks shoot out in different directions, some of them connecting up with the cracks that radiate outwards from the hole made by a stone thrown by someone else. If the ice is to be broken completely, then that is the only way it can happen: by lots of people throwing stones and by the shooting out of cracks that sometimes connect*.[832]

Thus, when taken as a stone thrown on the surface on the ice, that is capitalism, the defeat of the pirate movement becomes the memory of a momentary and beautiful peek at the future that was possible. The resistance struggles of the past continue to live, as memories, in the present. In this way, "the unredeemed struggles of the past, the unfulfilled promises and potentialities, are a present force… And similarly, one can say of the possible future that the world that is not yet but could be, exists not-yet as real anticipation in the struggles of past and present."[833] Just as "the witches live on: not a rhetorical phrase, but the real force of memory and possible future in the present"[834], the pirates also continue to live on. In this sense, memory and remembrance are also a part of commoning: "Memory, as imagination, is a quality of commoning."[835] Furthermore, "To be resilient, commoning must depend on an open attitude that embraces traditions and projection into the future, history and contemporaneity, memory and immanence. We are not just discovering the commons – we are (re)inventing them as well."[836]

[830] Rediker, Villains of All Nations, 175.
[831] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 18.
[832] Holoway, *Crack Capitalism*, 73.
[833] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 170.
[834] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 170.
[835] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 207.
[836] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*,, 208.

Therefore, the analysis of the pirate movement also presents a discovery of the commons in order to (re)invent them. In this regard, Sitrin and Azzellini, while they start to analyze the global wave of post-2010 movements, refers to the long history of the new practices instituted by these movements as a secret that was hidden from us. The secret in question was the practices of the former Latin American movements in the 1990s and 2000s as well as the indigenous practices.[837] Yet, the analysis of the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement indicated that the secret was hidden for a longer time than Sitrin and Azzellini suggested. There are many instances in history that show that prefigurative movement practices have been employed in struggles against capitalism, and the pirate movement was one of them.

All in all, the prefigurative commoning movement of the golden age piracy was defeated, yet they could constitute an alternative order that was against-and-beyond capital and state and could show that an alternative to capitalism was possible. In the words of Cohn-Bendit, a revolutionary aimed at "launching an experiment that completely breaks with that society, an experiment that will not last, but which allows a glimpse of a possibility; something which is revealed for a moment and then vanishes. But that is enough to prove that something could exist.'"[838] In line with this, the pirate movement was an experiment completely breaking with the society and it does not matter that the pirate experiment did not last since it allowed for a glimpse to an alternative, it was a proof that an alternative could exist. Against the normalization of the idea that there is no alternative, it is valuable to assert and to remind that there is an alternative, there has always been an alternative. One aspect of this reminder is to show the existence of these alternatives in the history as in the history of the golden age piracy, which could be considered a "secret rendezvous between past generations and our own."[839] After all, "It's one thing to say, 'Another world is possible'. It's another to experience it, however momentarily."[840] In line with this, it's another thing to show the

[837] Sitrin and Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us*, 14.
[838] Stephen Spender, *The Year of the Young Rebels* (New York: Random House, 1969). 111.
[839] Walter Benjamin, "Geschichtsphilosophische Thesen," in Walter Benjamin, *Zur Kritik der Gewalt und andere Aufsätze* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1965), 88, quoted in Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us!* (London and New York: Verso, 2014), 14.
[840] Graeber, "The New Anarchists," 214.

existence of the experience of a possible another world, no matter how momentarily it was.

In the end, pirates were defeated, and lost their war against the whole world. What they succeeded in was to establish an autonomous society from the state and capital and to live accordingly, albeit for a limited time. Yet, we might infer some points from the commoning movement of the golden age pirates for today's movements. First, the similarities: (1) Both the pirate movement and the contemporary commons movements, be it the Occupy movement of the previous decade or the alter-globalization movement, were against the enclosures. The pirate movement was against primitive accumulation just like the Levellers and Diggers before them, while the contemporary commons movements are against the accumulation by extra-economic means such as privatization, intellectual property rights, and commodification of public goods and services. (2) Both the pirate movement and the contemporary commons movements were struggles to prevent the enclosures happening, and at the same time to expand the already operating commons. (3) Both organize in an egalitarian, non-hierarchical, and directly democratic manner. (4) Both movements do not conform to the social movement conceptualizations centering on the state whether as the receiver or mediator of claims and connecting the political to the state. For instance a social movement, according to Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, is a synthesis of three elements that are campaign, social movement repertoire, and WUNC (worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment) displays. Within this framework the campaign element corresponds to "a sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities."[841] This emphasizes making claims, but more crucially it emphasizes the authorities as the receiver or mediator of claims. Although the authorities in question is not limited to government or state, making claims on any kind of authority is antithetic to the idea of prefigurative movements. Thus, both movements reject making claims of any kinds and engagement with the state in the sense of seizing state power or making demands from the state. Instead, both movements attempt to constitute what they claim on their own: "The logic of demands gives way to the simple assertion of our own rule."[842]

[841] Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015) 153.
[842] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 23.

On the other hand, (1) the possibility of the pirate movement and its relative sustainability for at least a decade might be attributed to the role of violence. After all, the pirates commonized the most advanced machine of the era and used it against the state, which was starting to claim the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence. Furthermore, (2) the mobility provided by the ships made the pirate movement more equipped against the state's repression. In this sense, mobility proved to be an advantage, yet, as the Midnight Notes Collective argues, not being able to create a space against capital condemned pirates to displacement, exhaustion, and extermination.[843] (3) Despite the pirate movement's attempts to separate themselves from capital and market, they had to sell the goods they plundered. Although the stories of pirate treasures of gold and silver were not true, although most goods appropriated from other ships were the goods required for the maintenance of the pirate ship or the sustenance of the crew, and although most of the time the money obtained by selling off the plundered goods did not serve accumulative purposes in the sense of M-C-M cycle but used for subsistence in the sense of C-M-C cycle, the pirates needed markets to sell. This suggests a dependence on capital. Therefore, plundering and looting in common might not be enough; production in common is also required. Hence, “Occupy, Resist, Produce” instead of “Occupy, Resist, Plunder.”

[843] Midnight Notes Collective, 14.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

> *We are passing through Leeds city centre, attracting looks of disbelief from passing shoppers. We are a motley crew, some on bikes, others on foot, bike sound-system in tow and all clustered around a pirate ship, flying the Jolly Roger flag. The "ship" is constructed from discarded shopping trolleys and covered in salvaged wood to make a deck, mast and body for the ship. The sails are emblazoned with a huge squatting symbol. We are handing curious onlookers leaflets explaining that we are "A- Spireates" from a local squatted social centre called "A-Spire" and have been evicted to make way for luxury apartments. The leaflet outlines some of the principles of A-Spire: people before profit, mutual aid, and cooperation*.[844]

Pirates live on. They live on in the imagination of common people. They live on as "A- Spireates" through the constructed pirate ship by the squatters of the "A-Spire." More crucially their anti-hierarchical and democratic organization and their rejection of state and capital as well as their creation of an alternative live on in the contemporary movements. In this way, the pirate movement represents a moment of the thread of the struggle for the commons that connects the history to the present moment.

In this regard, the first main objective of this study was to present and emphasize the continuous character of primitive accumulation/enclosures as the separation of producers from their means of subsistence. In connection with the continuity of primitive accumulation/enclosures, the struggle against enclosures in the form of struggles for the commons becomes relevant for the contemporary struggles and social movements. In connection with this, the struggle for the commons was analyzed as a prefigurative movement insofar as the struggle for the commons did not only prevent enclosures but pointed out to an alternative to capitalism in the form commonization of commodified areas of life. The second main objective of the study

[844] Pusey, "Social Centres and the New Cooperativism of the Common," 176.

was to analyze the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement by emphasizing the alternative society constituted on the pirate ship that was, to some extent, autonomous from capital and state and reflected the vision of society the pirates had in their minds in order to indicate that capitalism is not and never has been without alternatives. In this sense, the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement represented a crack on the surface of capitalism, which was connected to the struggles of their past such as the Leveller and Digger movements, sailor resistances and to the struggles of their future such as the American Revolution, which could be interpreted as starting with the mobilization of the common sailors but later being "enclosed" by the political elite, or even the contemporary social movements. In this way, the study aimed to explore the alternative society constituted by the pirate movement in the golden age that rejected both capital and state through abolition of wage labor onboard by way of collectively owning the pirate ship and introducing the share system that was the most egalitarian pay system of the period, challenging the hierarchical organization of the ship as the embodiment of nation state and replacing that organization with a democratic, antihierarchical and egalitarian organization, and creating a new subjectivity of the pirate as a commoner. Furthermore, the pirate movement was a prefigurative one in the sense that movement took direct action autonomously from the state that aimed to construct an alternative that reflected the ends of the movement in the means employed in order to achieve those ends on the basis of democratic, horizontal and egalitarian organization that also produced new subjectivities. Thus, the movement could show that an alternative society that was more egalitarian and democratic and that could be relatively autonomous from capital and state was possible even in the late 17th and late 18th centuries. Therefore, the pirate movement of the golden age as one instance of "the unredeemed struggles of the past, the unfulfilled promises and potentialities" lives in the present and "the possible future that the world that is not yet but could be, exists not-yet as real anticipation in the struggles of past and present."[845]

The second chapter discussed the emergence of capitalism and the resistance against capitalism. Drawing heavily on political Marxism, the transformations in

[845] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism*, 170.

economy in terms of separation of producers from means of subsistence and their subjection to wage labor, in law in terms of the redefinition of crime, in culture in terms of the changing attitude towards the poor and idleness, and in politics in terms of the centralization of maritime state in England/Britain was analyzed. Following these transformations, the conditions of labor at sea were investigated as being part of a transitionary phase and as a unique practice. After that resistance against the emergence of capitalism in the form of idleness as well as the resistance attempts put forward by the Leveller and Digger movements were presented and these instances of resistance were connected to the sailors' movement, of which the most extreme form was the piracy. In this regard, capitalism means dispossession for the common people since it is based on the complete separation of producers from their means of subsistence and production. In this way, the producers were subjected to wage labor in order to be able to ensure their access to means of subsistence, which also subjected the producers as the sellers of labor power as well as the capitalists as the buyers of labor power to the imperatives of market. Although markets have existed since long before the emergence of capitalism, this transformation amounts to a transformation in effects of the market as in the replacement of market opportunities with market imperatives. Under the market imperatives, the copyhold rights hold by peasants were turned into leaseholds, whose rents were depended on the market, which required the tenants to compete in the market as well. The ones who could not compete or could not lease lands became wage laborers culminated in the new class composition of the landowners, capitalist tenant farmers and wage laborers employed by the capitalist tenant farmers. This transformation, in short, is the primitive accumulation which is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production."[846] In this way, as the abolition of serfdom as the result of a class struggle ended the extra-economic extraction of surplus from peasantry, the subjection of common people to wage labor through primitive accumulation emerged as a new way of exploitation through economic means.

On the other hand, the enclosures pointed out to a transformation in the legal arena in terms of redefinition of property and crime. Through this redefinition, the commons rights as in the usufruct rights of land was abolished and private property

[846] Marx, *Capital,* 874.

rights triumphed over commons rights, redefining the latter as a crime. The redefinition was so severe that "the number of capital statutes grew from about 50 to over 200 between the years 1688 and 1820. Almost all of them concerned offences against property."[847] In addition to the redefinition of property and crime, the view on the poor people also redefined and the holiness of poverty transformed into the holiness of work whereas the poor were started to be seen as lazy and idle masses which had to be disciplined in order to become wage laborers. Yet, the poor was also started to be seen as an integral part of society since if there had been no poor people, there would not have been wage laborers. The continuous existence of the poor people, then, was required for the capitalist system. The political transformation, in turn, was the emergence of the centralized nation state in England/Britain as well as the dependence of that on maritime trade. Therefore, "although capitalism did not give rise to the nation state, and the nation state did not give rise to capitalism, the social transformations that brought about capitalism, with its characteristic separation of economic and political spheres, were the same ones that brought the nation state to maturity."[848] Furthermore, the nation state in question was a maritime state that was based on maritime trade which was organized around the newly and ongoing emerging discipline of capitalist social relations. In connection, the chapter presented the labor conditions on ship, which was a precursor of the factory. On the one hand, wage relation was established on the ship, and on the other impressment, harsh discipline and the captain's absolute authority that included power over the lives of the sailors through discipline or providing victuals, and the dangers of laboring at sea indicated pre-capitalist characteristics, even the characteristics of slave labor.

In this sense, the chapter lastly focused on the resistance against the emergence of capitalist social relations through the use of idleness as a form of resistance. Following this form of resistance, the chapter explored the Leveller and Digger movements as the instances of struggles for the commons against enclosure and traced their legacies in the West Indies and connected the sailors' resistance, the Leveller and Digger movements, the radical legacy that was transported to the West Indies, the

[847] Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," 18.
[848] Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism*, 171.

golden age piracy, and the American Revolution. At last, the chapter concluded that the golden age piracy proved to be the most radical and extreme form of resistance as the pirates could establish a society of their own and could escape, albeit for a limited time, the grasp of the state and capitalism.

The third chapter discussed the struggle for the commons as both a historical and contemporary struggle. In this sense, the chapter was primarily focused on the ongoing character of primitive accumulation as separation of producers from their means of existence. Although the orthodox Marxist tradition localizes primitive accumulation in the pre-capitalist historical period and considers it as a one-time process that paved the way for the emergence of capitalism, another reading, especially from the autonomous Marxist perspective, interprets primitive accumulation and enclosures as a continuous movement of capital. In this regard, when taken not as only the historical enclosure movement, but as the use of extra-economic force in order to separate producers from their means of subsistence, primitive accumulation continues to enclose since attempts on the workers' side that aims to challenge the separation in question through organizing are reacted against through the use of extra-economic forces by capital. This suggests that the struggle for the commons against primitive accumulation has a contemporary relevance, yet this relevance also presents a risk in the sense of cooptation of the commons by capital. In this regard, the recent revival of discussion on the commons in mainstream economics against George Hardin's famous defense of the enclosures in "The Tragedy of the Commons", provides an expansion of the discussion of the commons on the one hand, and on the other paves the way for the cooptation of the cooptation. Against the liberal understanding of the commons as mere shared resources, then, the anti-capitalist understanding of the commons emphasizes the collective and relational aspect of the commons, which is signified by the term "commoning."

The commoning activity, in this sense, amounts to "a struggle to prevent the establishment of the preconditions of capitalism and to transcend these conditions once they are established as well. It is not exactly a 'class struggle' for it is an attempt to either deny the presuppositions of class existence or to transcend them."[849] Therefore,

[849] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 88.

the anti-capitalist commons in question comprises of the common goods, commoning activity, and the community of the commoners. On the other hand, the prevention and transcendence stressed in the struggle for the commons underlines the prefigurative aspect of the commoning activity. Insofar as the prefigurative politics is defined as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal"[850], the chapter summarized the characteristics of the prefigurative politics as means-ends equivalence, construction of alternatives, nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization, direct democracy, forming of new subjectivities, direct action, rejection of engagement with state and construction of the future ideals in the present. In this regard, the commoning activity as a movement was analyzed as a prefigurative movement since the commoning activity was a direct action that was autonomous from state and reflected its ends as the commons in the means employed as commoning while constructing the alternative of future ideals in the present. Moreover, the commoning activity produced and reproduced new subjectivities of the commoners while at the same time being produced and reproduced by those commoners. In addition, the commons was based on nonhierarchical and bottom-up organization and employed direct democracy.

The fourth chapter discussed the society constituted by the golden age piracy on the pirate ship as a society based on a radically democratic, antihierarchical, horizontal and egalitarian organization. In this line, the chapter briefly introduced the life onboard merchant and navy vessels on which the majority, if not all, of the pirates had been employed before turning pirate. After that, the chapter outlined the democratic, horizontal and egalitarian organization of the pirate ship, which was supported by the pirate articles which were drawn collectively in the founding moment of a pirate crew. The three sets of articles included in the *A General History of the Pirates* written by Captain Charles Johnson were provided in length. Despite the fact that every pirate crew created its own articles, "because of the similarity of these ship's articles, pirates—like the citizens of any commonwealth—always shared a general understanding of what was acceptable and unacceptable behavior, no matter what port they might be visiting or

[850] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 100.

what ship they might be serving on."[851] In a nutshell, the pirate articles guaranteed democratic decision-making, egalitarian distribution of wealth and resources, and regulated discipline onboard. In addition to the pirate articles, the common council on the pirate ship, as the highest authority onboard, ensured the pirate organization based on direct, egalitarian, and nonhierarchical organization. In addition, the society constituted by the pirates was multinational as it included pirates of different nations as well as pirates of African descent. The historical records showing that there were at least two women pirates also suggest that the view of women onboard the pirate ship was radically different from the navy and merchant ships. Lastly, the pirates' attitudes towards religion and homosexuality were also dissident in contrast to the traditional attitudes. Thus, the pirate ship was an emancipatory space for dissidents, people of African descent, and women.

The fifth chapter analyzed the golden age piracy as a prefigurative commoning movement. Firstly, it was argued that the struggle for the commons included common goods whose enclosure is to be prevented, commoning as in commonization in order to expand the commons, and the commoners who engage in the activity of commoning. In this way, the commoning activity against enclosure and primitive accumulation was related to "doing" against abstraction of labor and prevention and communization were related to the "against-and-beyond" abstraction. Therefore, the two main moments of commoning were posited as "the plural activity of doing, understood simply generally as social labour taking the form of commoning" and "the decision-making process, the definition of rules for the collective governance of the commons, another form of doing."[852]

In connection with this, the chapter argued that the movement of golden age piracy corresponded to doing in common, or pirating in common against-and-beyond abstraction, firstly as a resistance of idleness as useful doing against abstract labor, which also allowed the pirates to institute their autonomy and self-determination. The self-determination, in turn, was only possible through the challenge of separation of producers from their means of subsistence. Thus, the pirates took the collective

[851] Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 90.
[852] De Angelis, *Omnia Sunt Communia*, 122-123.

ownership of their means of subsistence that was the merchant or navy ship that belonged to capital or state and commonized it, transforming the ship into the commonized pirate ship. On the one hand, the organization of space onboard the pirate ship indicated that the pirate ship belonged collectively to the crew. On the other, the pirate ship was chiefly used in order to acquire the means of subsistence or the means required to maintain the ship rather than acquiring and accumulating wealth, thus removing both the pirate ship and the pirate crew from commodification process. In addition, the institution of the egalitarian pay system based on share abolished the wage relation on the pirate ship. In this way, doing in common or pirating in common on the pirate ship took the form of communal doing as the doing aimed towards the goals collectively decided and reciprocal doing as indicated by the introduction of a social security system among pirates.

In connection with this doing in common, the collective governance as another form of doing was based on the pirate articles that were drawn collectively, and ensured democratic decision-making, egalitarian distribution of wealth and resources, and regulated discipline onboard the pirate ship. The collective governance was not limited to the pirate articles, though. The common council as the absolute authority on the pirate ship was an egalitarian and democratic institution that was inspired by the contempt held against the hierarchical organization on navy and merchant vessels and that allowed every member of the pirate crew an equal say on matters regarding the pirate ship and the pirates themselves. Thus, the pirate movement constituted an alternative government of the ship in contrast to the government of merchant and navy ships as the embodiment of capital and state as well as an alternative way of living to the former lives of the pirates that were determined by money and commodification. the pirate movement, in this sense, aimed to put “choice in themselves”, to take control of their lives, to decide and act without any limits posed by capital and state on their lives, to do in common.

On the other hand, doing in common, the commoning activity produced and reproduced the community of commoners while at the same time being produced and reproduced by the latter. In this way, the pirates movement constituted a new subjectivity of pirate as a commoner. The new subjectivity in question was based on creation of relational values such as justice and honesty. In addition, pirating in common

created a solidarity among various pirate crews as shown by their spontaneous cooperation at sea. The solidarity in question was a transnational one as it was not based on national identities, and it included pirates of African descent and women pirates as well. The most crucial and famous symbol of the transnational solidarity was the Jolly Roger, the black flag of pirates.

Lastly, the golden age of piracy was a prefigurative movement since against the grievances of the common sailors against capital, primitive accumulation, and state, the pirate movement took direct action by occupying the ship and taking the collective ownership of the ship. The direct action in question resulted in the abolition of wage labor, egalitarian social and economic relations onboard, horizontal democracy that allowed for the putting "choice in themselves" and instituting self-determination and autonomy (both from capital and state as well as society) for the pirates, creation of a collective society that also produced and reproduced a new subjectivity as the pirate as commoner against the subjectivities imposed by capital and nation state such as laborer and monarch's subject. The direct action of the pirate movement, in this sense, constructed an alternative order autonomous from capital and state and by doing so actualized its ideals in the present and reflected its ends in the means employed to reach those ends. Thus, the pirate movement was a prefigurative movement as "the embodiment, within the ongoing political practice of a movement, of those forms of social relations, decision-making, culture, and human experience that are the ultimate goal."[853]

The pirates of the golden age could be considered as violent plunderers, yet it should also be noted that they mostly plundered the plunderers operated on behalf of the state and capital. As Caffentzis rightly puts, "after all, the pirates expropriated the most advanced machine of their period, the ocean-going ship, ran it on new communalist rules and used it to plunder the plunders [sic] of American wealth."[854] On the other hand, it should also be noted that violence used in the context of the hierarchical order on merchant and navy ships was one of the chief reasons that a sailor turned pirate and the pirates used violence mainly to punish those who had been violent towards common

[853] Boggs, "Marxism, Prefigurative Communism, and the Problem of Workers' Control," 100.
[854] Caffentzis, "The Future of 'the Commons'," 34.

sailors. Thus, as Metallica once said, "but violent use brings violent plans."[855] On the other hand, the pirate movement could be seen as employing parasitic tactics that preyed upon the maritime trade and being based on zero production, thus it could be argued that the pirate movement could not transform relations of production and could not constitute an alternative to relations of production. Yet, the movement could, to some extent, separate itself from the relations of production through the revolt of their doing against abstraction. In this sense, it should be recalled that "concrete doing is the ecstasy of abstract labour: ecstasy as ek-stasis, standing outside abstract labour while existing within it, standing outside as actual and potential otherness."[856] Thus, the pirate movement stood outside the relations of production while existing within the relations of production while at the same time existing as "actual and potential otherness."

In sum, this study argued that primitive accumulation and enclosure as the separation of producers from their means of subsistence was not a one-time process that was only the prerequisite for capitalism but it belongs to the concept of capital since accumulation proper is the expanded reproduction of this separation through economic means, yet when the reproduction in question is faced by challenges against the separation, "rigidities", primitive accumulation, enclosure, come into the play as accumulation by extra-economic means. Therefore, neither primitive accumulation and enclosure nor the struggle against enclosure in the form of struggle for the commons are a relic of history. In this sense, the study, following Federici, argued that "commons have been the thread that has connected the history of the class struggle into our time, and indeed the fight for the commons is all around us."[857] In line with this, the pirate movement of the golden age was discussed as a commoning movement, as a moment on that thread connecting the history to the present. In addition, it considered this commoning movement as a prefigurative movement that reflected its ends through its means and constructed the ideal and alternative vision in the present. The significance of this analysis was that the pirate movement, on the one hand, an inspiration for the contemporary struggles and movements, was a crack on the surface of capitalism that

[855] James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett, "Welcome Home (Sanitarium)," Metallica. Accessed July 13, 2023, https://www.metallica.com/songs/welcome-home-sanitarium.html
[856] Holloway, *Crack Capitalism,* 99.
[857] Silvia Federici, "Feminism and the Politics of the Commons," 47.

was closed in time yet produced a memory to look upon to. On the other hand, the organization of the pirate movement was a precursor for both the organizational methods of the early 20th century such as soviets, councils, and the contemporary movement organizations such as forums and assemblies. Furthermore, the abolition of wage labor on the pirate ship that the movement attempted and successfully carried on, albeit for a limited time, could prove to be a lesson for the contemporary movements and class struggle that primarily focus on struggles within linear and circular time such as struggles over the length of workday, boycotts, strikes, mobility of workers and simple rejection of biological reproduction. In this way, instead of struggles that remain within the confines of abstraction of labor, the revolt of doing against abstraction might be a more relevant approach as "a struggle to prevent the establishment of the preconditions of capitalism and to transcend these conditions once they are established as well."[858]

As a final note, I'd like to refer to Samwise Gamgee's thoughts when he saw a white star in Mordor: "Sam saw a white star twinkle for a while. The beauty of it smote his heart, as he looked up out of the forsaken land, and hope returned to him. For like a shaft, clear and cold, the thought pierced him that in the end the Shadow was only a small and passing thing: there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach."[859] The pirate movement of the golden age showed that just as the Shadow, capital and abstraction of labor could be a passing thing beyond whose reach there could be doing in common. The hope remains.

[858] Caffentzis, "Three Temporal Dimensions of Class Struggle," 88.
[859] John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, *The Return of the King: Being the Third Part of the Lord of the Rings*. (1955; repr., Harper Collins, 2011), 1206.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

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WORK EXPERIENCE

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2011-Present	Başkent University Department of Political Science and International Relations	Research Assistant

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English (Advanced)

PUBLICATIONS

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Örküp, Aykut. “Zapatista as a Case of Impossible Identification: Subjectification in Rancière and the EZLN.” *Yönetim ve Ekonomi Dergisi*. (Forthcoming)

Paper Presentations

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B. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışma, kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilere karşı direnen ve ona alternatif oluşturan bir hareket olarak korsanlığın altın çağını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu anlamda çalışma, kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışını ve ona eşlik eden ekonomik, yasal, kültürel ve politik dönüşümleri, yalnızca tarihsel bir olgu olarak değil, aynı zamanda kapitalizme içkin, süregelen bir süreç olarak ilksel birikime özel bir vurgu yaparak analiz etmektedir. Bununla bağlantılı olarak çalışma, müşterekler mücadelesinin çağdaş hareketler için ilksel birikim kadar alakalı olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Altın çağdaki korsan hareketi bir müştereklestirme hareketi oluşturmaktadır zira korsanlar, gemilerinin mülkiyetine kolektif olarak sahip olmak ve ücretli emeği ortadan kaldırmak yoluyla müştereken eyleyebilmişlerdir. Hiyerarşik olmayan bir örgütlenme ve doğrudan ve yatay demokrasiye dayalı bir karar alma süreci yoluyla gemiyi kolektif olarak yönetebilmişlerdir. Dahası, iştirakçi korsan olarak yeni bir öznellik oluşturabilmişlerdir. Ayrıca, söz konusu müştereklestirme hareketi, yalnızca kapitalist toplumsal ilişkileri reddetmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda doğrudan eyleme ve araç-amaç denkliğine dayalı olarak ideallerin şimdiki zamanda gerçekleştirilmesi anlamında alternatif bir toplum oluşturduğu ölçüde, prefigüratif bir hareket anlamına gelmektedir. Altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif bir müştereklestirme hareketi olarak analizi, hareketin çağdaş hareketler için bir ilham kaynağı olduğunu ve kapitalizmin yüzeyinde zamanla kapanan ancak bakılıp hatırlanacak bir hatıra üreten bir çatlağı temsil ettiğini göstermenin yanı sıra çağdaş hareketler için bazı dersler sunduğunu öne sürmektedir.

Korsanlık tanımlaması zor bir kavramdır. Kimin korsan olduğu, kimin olmadığı çoğu zaman muallakta kalan bir konudur. Geniş anlamıyla korsanlık, denizlerde yapılan soygun anlamına gelmektedir. Öte yandan, korsanlar antik çağlardan beri hostis humani generis olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Latince olan bu terim "tüm insanlığın düşmanı" anlamına gelmektedir. Dahası bu terim vasıtasıyla, özellikle İngiltere/Birleşik Krallık'ta on yedinci yüzyıl sonu, on sekizinci yüzyıl başında yapılan korsan yargılamalarında,

korsanların insanlıktan çıkarıldığını, vahşi hayvanlara benzetildiğini, doğal haklardan yoksun bırakıldığını, kanunun ve devletlerin/hükümdarların korumasının dışında bırakıldığını görmekteyiz. Yani korsanlık devletler ve devlet görevlileri tarafından oldukça ciddi bir suç olarak görülmektedir.

Dolayısıyla, geniş anlamıyla denizlerde yapılan soygun tanımının korsanlığı tanımlamak için pek de uygun olmadığını öne sürebiliriz. Bu yüzden daha dar anlamda bir korsanlık tanımı daha faydalı olacaktır. O halde bu dar tanım, herhangi bir yasal otorite tarafından verilmiş bir izni olmadan, tabi oldukları devlete/millete bakmadan tüm gemileri hedef alan deniz soyguncularını korsan olarak ele almaktadır. Yine de bu tanım da sorundan yoksun değildir. Örneğin İngiltere hesabına ve İngiliz hükümdarının izniyle korsanlık yapan, 1577-1580 yılları arasında yaptığı yolculukla dünyanın çevresini dolaşan ilk İngiliz olan Francis Drake, İngiltere için yaptığı hizmetler sayesinde Sir ünvanı alıp şövalye ilan edilmiştir. Fakat İngiltere hükümdarının izniyle İspanyol gemilerine saldıran, Amerika kıtasındaki İspanyol yerleşimlerine akınlar düzenleyen ve yağma yapan, İngiltere'nin ulusal kahramanı Sir Francis Drake'in İspanyol tahtı tarafından bir korsan, hostis humani generis, tüm insanlığın düşmanı olarak görülmüş olduğuna şüphe yoktur.

Yine İngiltere tahtı tarafından korsanları avlaması için görevlendirilen fakat çıktığı yolculukta korsanlık yapmış olan Kaptan William Kidd, yüksek yerlerde tanıdıkları olduğu için korsanlık suçlamasından çok korkmamış ve İngiltere'ye geri dönmüştür. Fakat Tory'ler ve Whig'ler arasındaki siyasi çekişmeye kurban giderek yargılanmış ve ölüme mahkûm edilmiştir. Dolayısıyla, kimin korsan olduğu, kimin olmadığı siyasi koşullara değişkenlik gösterebilmektedir.

Her halükarda, korsanlığın deniz ticareti kadar eski bir pratik olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Korsanlığın birçok tarihsel örneği bulunmaktadır: Sekizinci ve dokuzuncu yüzyıllarda akınlar düzenleyen Vikingler, on dokuzuncu yüzyılda faaliyet gösteren Çinli korsanlar, hatta günümüze dair bir örnek olarak Somalili korsanlar. Bu tez ise korsanlığın altın çağı olarak adlandırılan dönemi kapsamaktadır. Korsanlığın altın çağı dönemselleştirmesi tarihçiden tarihçiye değişiklik göstermektedir. Yine de bu dönemi kabaca 1650 ile 1730 yılları arasındaki dönem olarak alabiliriz. Tez, spesifik olarak ise 1716 ile 1726 yılları arasında Atlantik Okyanusu'nda faaliyet gösteren korsanları

incelemektedir. Zira bu dönemde faaliyet gösteren korsanlar sayıca gayet fazladır, herhangi ayrım gözetmeden tüm devletlerin gemilerine saldırmıştır ve Atlantik ticaretini büyük ölçüde sekteye uğratmıştır.

1713 yılı Atlantik korsanlığı açısından önemli bir ana işaret etmektedir. 1701 yılında başlamış olan İspanya Veraset Savaşı, 1713 yılında imzalanan Utrecht Anlaşmasıyla sona ermiştir. Bu savaşın sona ermesiyle, savaşın tarafları, Britanya, Fransa ve İspanya donanmalarını demobilize etmeye başlamıştır. Örneğin Britanya Kraliyet Donanmasının 1712 yılında 49,860 olan mevcudu, 1714 yılında 13,475'e inmiştir. Bu demobilizasyon süreci ise yalnızca denizciliği ve deniz savaşını bilen birçok denizcinin işsiz kalmasına yol açmıştır. Bu işsizlik artışına bağlı olarak savaşın sonunda korsan sayısı ciddi bir artış göstermiştir.

1716 ile 1726 yılları arasında faaliyet gösteren korsanların önemi tüm dünyaya savaş açmaları, açık bir şekilde devleti reddetmeleri ve ücretli emeği ortadan kaldırmalarında yatmaktadır. Bu şekilde, bu dönemdeki korsanlar ya tüccarda vücut bulunan kapitale ya da kaptanda vücut bulan devlete ait olan gemiyi müşterekleştirebilmiş ve bu gemiyi korsan mürettebatının kolektif olarak sahip olduğu korsan gemisi haline dönüştürebilmiştir. Korsan gemisine kolektif olarak sahip olmak ise, üreticileri, geçim/üretim araçlarına doğrudan erişimlerinden ayırma ve dolayısıyla üreticileri geçim araçlarına ulaşabilmek için ücretli emeğe mahkum etme sürecine bir karşı çıkışa tekabül etmektedir.

Bu bağlamda çalışma, üreticileri, geçim/üretim araçlarına doğrudan erişimlerinden ayırma anlamında ilksel birikimi, süregelen bir süreç, kapitalizmin süregelen bir bileşeni olarak ele almaktadır. Daha iyi anlatmak gerekirse, kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilerin var olması için üreticilerin geçim araçlarından ayrılması gerekmektedir fakat aynı zamanda kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilerin yeniden üretiminin devamı için de bu ayrım bir gerekliliktir. Dolayısıyla, kapitalizm bir kez tesis edildikten sonra üreticilerin geçim araçlarından ayrımını, kendi kavramının öncülü ve içkin bir gerekliliği olarak yeniden üretmek zorundadır. Bu ayrımın yeniden üretimi ise genellikle kapitalizmin ekonomik yasaları aracılığıyla gerçekleşmektedir zira kapitalizm, eğitim, gelenek ve alışkanlık yoluyla bu üretim biçiminin gerekliliklerini tartışmasız doğal yasalar olarak gören bir işçi sınıfı yaratır. Ancak, söz konusu yeniden üretim herhangi

bir meydan okumayla karşılaştığında, bu ayrımı yeniden üretmek için ekonomi-dışı güçler müdahale etmektedir.

İlksel birikimin süregelen karakterine karşı müşterekler mücadelesi de süregelen bir mücadele olarak öne sürülebilir. Bu bağlamda tez, altın çağ korsanlığını, sınıf mücadelesini günümüze bağlayan bir iplik olarak düşünebilecek müşterekler mücadelesinin bir anına işaret ettiğini öne sürmektedir. Dahası tez, müşterekler mücadelesini yalnızca çitlemeleri engellemeye yönelik bir hareket olarak değil aynı zamanda müşterekleri toplumsal hayatın yeni alanlarına genişletmeye yönelik bir mücadele olarak ele almakta, böylelikle de müştereklerin prefigüratif karakterini ortaya koymaktadır zira prefigüratif siyaset bir hareketin süregelen siyasi pratiği içinde, nihai hedef olan toplumsal ilişki, karar alma, kültür ve insan deneyimi biçimlerinin somutlaştırılması anlamına gelmektedir.

Böylece korsanlar söz konusu ayrımı ortadan kaldırarak, müşterekleştirdikleri korsan gemilerindeki ücretli emeği de ortadan kaldırmış olmuşlardır. Buna ek olarak, neredeyse tamamı ticaret ya da donanma hizmetinde çalışmış olan ve ticaret ve donanma gemilerinde sermaye ve devlet tarafından dayatılan hiyerarşik düzeni deneyimleyen korsanlar, kökleri Jamaika Disiplini'ne uzanan ve yatay, demokratik ve eşitlikçi bir karar alma sürecine dayanan alternatif bir gemi yönetimi tasarlamışlardır. Dolayısıyla altın çağın korsanları gemide hem sermayeye hem de devlete karşı alternatif bir toplum yaratmışlardır. Ancak söz konusu alternatif geriye dönük bir alternatif değil, dışa dönük bir alternatiftir; zira altın çağ korsanlarının hareketi, yalnızca devleti, sermayeyi ve ücretli emeği reddetmekle kalmayıp, aynı zamanda korsanların müşterekleştirilmiş korsan gemilerinde hayal ettikleri ideal toplumu öngören alternatif bir toplum yaratmaları anlamında prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketiydi.

Altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak önemi çok yönlüdür. Bu çalışma bir yandan kapitalizmin kaçınılmaz olmadığını ve alternatifsiz olmadığını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. İlk olarak, kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışı İngiltere'de köylüler ve toprak sahibi soylular arasında yaşanan sınıf mücadelesinin bir yan ürünüdür. Bununla bağlantılı olarak, bu çalışmanın göstermeyi amaçladığı ilksel birikimin süregelen karakteri, müştereklerin ve müşterekler mücadelesinin günümüzde de geçerli olduğu ve kapitalizme karşı direniş tarihi boyunca da geçerli olduğu anlamına

gelmektedir. Müştereklerin güncelliği, müşterekleri kapitalizme bir alternatif olarak öne çıkarmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, korsanlığın altın çağı, tarihte tarım kapitalizminin ortaya çıktığı, merkantilizmin yükselişte olduğu ve sanayi kapitalizminin henüz ortaya çıkmadığı bir döneme tekabül etmektedir. Oysa hem gemi inşa sanayi hem de deniz ticareti ve dolaşımında kullanılan gemiler fabrikanın öncülü olarak görülebilir ve denizciler ilk kolektif ücretli işçiler arasındadır. Altın çağ korsanlığının, üreticilerin geçim araçlarından ayrılması anlamında ilksel birikime karşı prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak incelenmesi, söz konusu alternatifin 17. yüzyılın sonları ve 18. yüzyılın başlarında oluşturulabildiğini göstermektedir. Bu hareketin sonunda yenilgiye uğramış olması önemli değildir, çünkü korsan hareketi kapitalizmin yüzeyinde bir "çatlak" yaratabilmiş ve bu çatlak sayesinde güzel bir alternatifin hatırasını yakalayarak potansiyel ve alternatif bir geleceğe dair anlık bir görüntü elde edebilmişizdir.

Bu bağlamda tez, altın çağ korsanlığının kapitalizme karşı bir direniş olarak, özellikle de sermayeye ve kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilere karşı ve bunların ötesinde, kapitalizme karşı çağdaş hareketler ve mücadeleler için çıkarımlara yer bırakan prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak analiz edilip edilemeyeceğine cevap aramaktadır. Daha genel anlamda, çalışma kapitalizmin alternatifsiz olduğu iddiasını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu anlamda tez, genellikle kapitalizm öncesi tarihin bir kalıntısı olarak görülen müşterekler için mücadelenin kapitalizme bir alternatif oluşturup oluşturmadığını sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bununla bağlantılı olarak, çalışma, hem kapitalizmin tarihsel kuruluşunun bir önkoşulu hem de kapitalizmin yeniden üretimi için bir gereklilik olarak ele alınan ilksel birikimin süregelen karakterini araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca tez, müşterekler için verilen mücadelenin prefigüratif bir karaktere sahip olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Buna dayanarak, çalışma altın çağ korsanlığının kapitalizme bir alternatif oluşturup oluşturamayacağını ve bu alternatifin müşterekler için verilen prefigüratif bir mücadele olarak kabul edilip edilemeyeceğini incelemektedir.

Bu soruyu yanıtlamak için çalışma, mevcut birincil kaynaklara ve birincil kaynakların mevcut olmadığı durumlarda ikincil kaynaklara dayalı karşılaştırmalı bir tarihsel araştırma yürütmektedir. Korsanlığın altın çağına ilişkin mahkeme kayıtları veya

yazışmalar gibi birincil kaynakların bulunmaması ve bu kaynaklara dijital erişimin kısıtlı olması, tez için bir sınırlama teşkil etmekte ve tez bu sınırlamayı ikincil kaynakları kullanarak aşmaya çalışmaktadır. Çalışma, kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışı ve altın çağ korsanlığının örgütlenmesine ilişkin tarihsel arka planı, aşağıdan yukarıya tarihi veya toplumsal tarihi merkeze alan bir perspektife dayalı tarihsel analiz yoluyla inceledikten sonra, müşterekler ve prefigüratif siyasete ilişkin kavramsal analizlere başvurarak teorik bir çerçeve inşa ediyor. Son olarak, çalışma, altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olduğunu göstermek için teorik çerçevede geliştirilen kavramları kullanarak altın çağ korsanlığının karşılaştırmalı bir analizini yapmaktadır.

Tezde kullanılmış olan bazı temel kavramları açıklamak gerekirse;

- İlksel birikim: Kısaca, üreticinin üretim araçlarından koparıldığı tarihsel süreç anlamına gelmektedir. Ancak çalışma, ilksel birikimi sadece üreticilerin mülksüzleştirilmesini ve sermaye birikimini amaçlamadığı, aynı zamanda iki farklı meta sahibinin, sermaye sahibi ve emek gücü sahibinin piyasada karşı karşıya gelmesi anlamında kapitalist toplumsal ilişkileri ortaya çıkarmayı amaçladığı için devam eden bir süreç olarak görmektedir. Dolayısıyla, bu toplumsal ilişkilere meydan okunmadığı sürece birikim devam eder, ancak bu toplumsal ilişkilere meydan okunduğunda ayrımı sağlamak için ilksel birikim devreye girer.

- Müşterekler: ortak mallar, müşterekleştirme ve iştirakçilerden oluşan sosyal sistemlerdir. Müştereklerin en önemli bileşeni müşterekleştirme eylemidir: Sürekli müşterekleştirme, ortaklaşa (yeniden) üretme faaliyetleri olmadığı müddetçe müştereklerden bahsetmek imkansızdır.

- Müşterekleştirme: müşterek malları olduğu kadar iştirakçileri de üreten ve yeniden üreten ve aynı zamanda iştirakçiler tarafından üretilen ve yeniden üretilen eylemdir. Müşterekleştirme eyleminin iki temel anı vardır: müştereken eylemenin çoğul faaliyeti ile eylemenin başka bir biçimi olarak kolektif karar verme süreci.

- Prefigüratif Siyaset: “Bir hareketin süregelen siyasi pratiği içinde, nihai hedef olan toplumsal ilişki, karar alma, kültür ve insan deneyimi biçimlerinin somutlaştırılması.”

Tüm bunların ışığında, tezin ikinci bölümü kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışını ve kapitalizme karşı çeşitli direniş örneklerini ve bunlara eşlik eden dönüşümleri sunmayı

ve tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bölümde ilk olarak, kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışına eşlik eden gelişmeler ve dönüşümler ile kapitalizme karşı direniş ve mücadele ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda bölüm, söz konusu gelişme ve dönüşümleri ekonomi, hukuk, kültür ve siyaset olmak üzere dört ana başlık altında ele almaktadır. İlk olarak, mülksüzleştirme yoluyla sıradan insanların geçim araçlarına erişiminin tek yolu haline getirilen ücretli emek ilişkisi açıklanmaktadır. Kapitalizm İngiltere'de feodal soylular ve köylüler arasındaki sınıf mücadelelerinin bir yan ürünü olarak ortaya çıkmış ve köylülerin ve diğer sıradan insanların mülksüzleştirilmesi ve doğrudan geçim araçlarından koparılmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. Böylece, emeğin metalaşması olarak ücretli emek, geçime erişim için tek yol haline gelmiştir. Bu ekonomik dönüşüme hukuki bir dönüşüm eşlik etmiştir. Gelişmekte olan kapitalizm doğrultusunda mülkiyetin yeniden tanımlanmasının yanı sıra suçun da yeniden tanımlanması bu dönüşümün temelinde yer almıştır. Mutlak özel mülkiyet anlayışı çitleme hareketiyle birlikte müşterekler kavramının aleyhine ağırlık kazanmıştır. Buna ek olarak, mülkiyete karşı ölümle cezalandırılan yeni suçların yaratılması, mülkiyetin yeniden tanımlanmasının yanı sıra mülkiyetin artan kutsallığını da vurgulamıştır. Bu dönüşümlere eşlik eden kültürel dönüşüm ise yoksulluğun toplumsal düzenin vazgeçilmez bir parçası haline geldiğini ve aylaklığın kapitalist büyümenin önünde bir engel olduğunu göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla mülksüz yoksulların ücretli emekçi olabilmeleri için disipline edilmeleri, kolayca disipline edilebilmeleri için de yoksul kalmaları gerekmekteydi. Siyasi dönüşüm, devletin tarımsal kapitalist sınıfın elinde merkezileştiğine işaret etmekteydi, öte yandan devlet ticari kapitalist çıkarları da göz ardı etmiyordu, böylece taşrada yükselen kapitalizm uluslararası ticaretle gelişti. Büyüyen uluslararası ticaret, mülksüz kitlenin ücretli emeğe artan bağımlılığına rağmen, önemli bir oranda baskı yoluyla, zorla askere alma yoluyla sağlanması gereken büyük bir deniz emeğine ihtiyaç duymaktaydı. Bu istihdam taktiği, hapsedilme, sıkı disiplin ve deniz işçiliğinin tehlikeleri gibi denizdeki diğer çalışma koşullarıyla birlikte, deniz işçiliğinin benzersizliğine işaret etmekteydi. Mülksüzleştirme dalgası, ücretli emeğe bağımlılık, ortaya çıkan çalışma disiplini, mülkiyetin yeniden tanımlanması, devletin merkezileşmesi hem karada hem de denizde dirençle karşılanmıştır. Ücretli emek ilişkisine direnildi, çağdaş yazarların kınamalarına rağmen aylaklıktan vazgeçilmedi, gıdanın metalaşmasına karşı gıda isyanları yaşandı.

Ayrıca, İngiliz İç Savaşı sırasında, özel mülkiyeti hedef almanın yanı sıra genel oy hakkını da amaçlayan daha radikal hareketler, Leveller ve Digger hareketleri ortaya çıkmıştır. On yedinci yüzyıldaki bu direniş örneklerini, altın çağ korsanlığı, denizci grevleri, baskıya karşı mücadeleler ve Amerikan Devrimi ile bağlantılı olan denizci direnişi izlemiştir. Bu bağlamda, altın çağ korsanlığı, korsanların kendilerine ait bir toplum kurabilmeleri ve sınırlı bir süre için de olsa devletin ve kapitalizmin kıskacından kaçabilmeleri nedeniyle direnişin en radikal ve aşırı biçimi olduğunu kanıtlamıştır.

Tezin üçüncü bölümü, ilksel birikimin tarihsel bir olay değil, devam eden bir süreç olduğunu, dolayısıyla sadece kapitalizm öncesi tarihe değil, olgun kapitalizm dönemine de ait olduğunu öne sürmektedir. O halde, ilksel birikimin süregelen karakterine dayanarak, müşterek kavramı da tarihsel bir olgu değildir, aksine şimdiki zamanda mevcuttur. Ancak bu varoluş, müşterekleri çantada keklik saymamız gerektiği anlamına gelmez çünkü sermaye bir yandan daha önce metalaştırılmamış alanları metalaştırmak ve üreticilerin kapitalist olmayan geçim araçlarına erişimini daha da zorlaştırmak için mevcut müşterekleri çevrelemeye çalışırken, diğer yandan da kendi toplumsal ve ekolojik yeniden üretim tahribatını engellemek için bir strateji olarak müşterekler sayesinde onarımı ya da müştereklerin kooptasyonunu kullanır. Dolayısıyla müşterekler için mücadele, sermayenin müşterekleri kuşatma ya da ele geçirme girişimlerine karşı aralıksız bir direniş anlamına gelir. Bu bağlamda, anti-kapitalist müştereklerin ortak mallar, iştirakçiler ya da topluluk ve müşterekleştirme faaliyeti olmak üzere üç bileşeni vardır.

Bu bağlamda, Caffentzis ve Federici, katı bir kılavuz olmamakla birlikte, anti-kapitalist müştereklere ulaşmak için genel bir çerçeve sağlayacak gevşek ilkeler olarak altı kriter önermektedir ve bunlarda da öznelliğin üretimi meselesi görülmektedir: (1) Her ne kadar etrafımızda hava ve dil gibi müşterekler olsa da, müşterekler sadece maddi şeylere değil, aynı zamanda kurucu sosyal pratiklere ve ilişkilere de atıfta bulundukları için sosyal eylem yoluyla yaratılırlar. Bununla birlikte, yaşamın sürdürülmesi için gerekli olduklarından yeniden üretken bir yönleri de vardır. (2) Yaşamın sürdürülebilmesi için müşterekler, meta olarak değil kullanım değerleri için kullanılması gereken toprak, su, bilgi, iletişim gibi doğal veya sosyal kaynakları içermelidir. Ancak

bu kaynaklar biçimindeki ortak zenginlik, insanların kontrolü dışında ve devlet kontrolü altında olduğu için kamu malı değildir. (3) Yine de kamusal mal ve hizmetlerin özelleştirilmesine karşı mücadele müşterekler mücadelesiyle bağlantılı olmalıdır çünkü kamusal mal ve hizmetler hem sosyal güvenlik ya da kamusal sağlık hizmetleri için geçmişte verilen mücadeleleri hem de bunların inşası için harcanan toplumsal emeği içerir. (4) Topluluk müştereklerin vazgeçilmez bir parçasıdır, ancak söz konusu topluluk, üyelerini seçen kapalı topluluklara atıfta bulunmaz. Müşterekler topluluğunun üyeleri müştereklerin yeniden üretimine yaptıkları katkıya göre seçilirler. Bu aynı zamanda topluluğun müşterekler içindeki ilişkiler tarafından hem yeniden üretilmesini hem de yaratılmasını gerektirir. (5) Müştereklerin kullanımı ve yeniden üretimini düzenleyen kurallar müşterekler için gereklidir ve bu kurallar genel olarak kolektif karar alma, iktidarın hiyerarşik olmayan örgütlenmesi ve eşit erişimden oluşur. (6) Eşitlikçi ilişkiler, üretim ve yeniden üretim araçlarına eşit erişim gibi müştereklerin temelidir. Bu ilkeler açısından müşterekler yalnızca paylaşılan kaynaklara değil, aynı zamanda yeni, kolektif öznelliklerin oluşumuna da işaret eder. Bu anlamda müşterekler, ortak mallar, topluluk/iştirakçiler ve müşterekleştirme eyleminden oluşur.

Müşterekleştirme faaliyeti bir yandan müşterek malların üretimini ve yeniden üretimini sağlamak için müşterekler arasında yeni ilişkiler kuran, diğer yandan da metalaştırılmış alanları müştereklere dönüştüren bir faaliyet olduğu için ilişkisel bir süreçtir. Dolayısıyla, bu yeni ilişkiler kurma ve metasızlaştırma eylemleri aracılığıyla, müşterekleştirme faaliyeti bir yandan çitlemeye veya kooptasyona karşı bir direnişe işaret ederken, diğer yandan da sermayeye alternatiflerin inşası anlamına gelir. Dolayısıyla, önleme ve ortaklaştırma. Müştereklerin genişlemesinde olduğu gibi sermayeye alternatiflerin inşası, kısacası müşterekleştirme, müştereklerin prefigüratif ve politik yönünü temsil eder. Böylelikle müşterekler hareketleri, örneğin, özel mülkiyetin olmadığı bir toplum ve müştereklere dayalı bir toplumsal örgütlenme vizyonu ortaya koymakta ve tam da bu vizyonu inşa ederek bu alternatif vizyona ulaşmayı hedeflemektedir. Dahası, sermayeye alternatif bir toplum ve toplumsal örgütlenme inşa etmek, müşterekler arasında kurulan yeni ilişkiler ve yeni öznelliklerin yanı sıra doğrudan demokrasiye dayalı, hiyerarşik olmayan ve aşağıdan yukarıya bir örgütlenme

anlamına gelir. Sonuç olarak, müşterekler ve onun prefigüratif yönü politik ve dönüştürücü bir pratiğe işaret etmektedir.

Böylelikle bu bölümde, müşterekler için mücadele hem tarihsel hem de güncel bir mücadele olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu anlamda, bölüm öncelikle üreticilerin geçim araçlarından ayrılması olarak ilksel birikimin süregelen karakterine odaklanmıştır. Ortodoks Marksist gelenek ilksel birikimi kapitalizm öncesi tarihsel döneme yerleştirerek kapitalizmin ortaya çıkışına zemin hazırlayan tek seferlik bir süreç olarak değerlendirse de özellikle otonom Marksist perspektiften yapılan bir başka okuma ilksel birikimi ve çitlemeyi sermayenin sürekli bir hareketi olarak yorumlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, sadece tarihsel çitleme hareketi olarak değil, üreticileri geçim araçlarından ayırmak için ekonomi dışı güç kullanımı olarak ele alındığında, ilksel birikim çitlemeye devam eder çünkü işçilerin örgütlenme yoluyla söz konusu ayrıma meydan okumayı amaçlayan girişimlerine sermaye tarafından ekonomi dışı güç kullanımı yoluyla tepki verilir. Bu durum, ilksel birikime karşı müşterekler için verilen mücadelenin güncel bir geçerliliğe sahip olduğunu, ancak bu geçerliliğin aynı zamanda müştereklerin sermaye tarafından ele geçirilmesi anlamında bir risk teşkil ettiğini göstermektedir. Bu bağlamda, George Hardin'in “The Tragedy of the Commons” (Müştereklerin Trajedisi) adlı ünlü çitleme savunusuna karşı ana akım iktisatta müşterekler tartışmasının son dönemde yeniden canlanması, bir yandan müşterekler tartışmasının genişlemesini sağlarken, diğer yandan da müştereklerin sermaye tarafından ele geçirilmesinin önünü açmaktadır. Müşterekleri salt paylaşılan kaynaklar olarak gören liberal anlayışa karşı, anti-kapitalist müşterekler anlayışı, müştereklerin "müşterekleştirme" terimiyle ifade edilen kolektif ve ilişkisel yönüne vurgu yapar.

Bu anlamda müşterekleştirme faaliyeti, “kapitalizmin önkoşullarının oluşmasını engellemek ve oluştuktan sonra da bu koşulları aşmak için verilen bir mücadele anlamına gelir. Bu tam olarak bir ‘sınıf mücadelesi’ değildir, çünkü sınıf varlığının önkoşullarını ya reddetme ya da aşma girişimidir.” Dolayısıyla söz konusu anti-kapitalist müşterekler, ortak mallar, müşterekleştirme faaliyeti ve iştirakçiler topluluğundan oluşmaktadır. Öte yandan, müşterekler için mücadelede vurgulanan önleme ve aşma, müşterekleştirme faaliyetinin prefigüratif yönünün altını çizmektedir. Prefigüratif siyasetin “bir hareketin süregelen siyasi pratiği içinde, nihai hedef olan

toplumsal ilişki, karar alma, kültür ve insan deneyimi biçimlerinin somutlaştırılması" olarak tanımlandığı bu bölümde, prefigüratif siyasetin özellikleri araç-amaç denkliği, alternatiflerin inşası, hiyerarşik olmayan ve aşağıdan yukarıya örgütlenme, doğrudan demokrasi, yeni öznelliklerin oluşumu, doğrudan eylem, devletle angajmanın reddi ve gelecek ideallerinin bugünden inşası olarak özetlenmiştir. Bu bağlamda, bir hareket olarak müşterekleştirme faaliyeti prefigüratif bir hareket olarak analiz edilmiştir, çünkü müşterekleştirme faaliyeti devletten özerk doğrudan bir eylemdir ve müşterekleştirme olarak kullanılan araçlarda müşterek olarak amaçlarını yansıtırken şimdiki zamanda gelecek ideallerinin alternatifini inşa etmiştir. Dahası, müşterekleştirme faaliyeti müştereklerin yeni öznelliklerini üretip yeniden üretirken aynı zamanda iştirakçiler tarafından da üretilip yeniden üretiliyordu. Buna ek olarak, müşterekler hiyerarşik olmayan ve aşağıdan yukarıya örgütlenmeye dayanıyor ve doğrudan demokrasiyi kullanıyordu.

Tezin dördüncü bölümü, korsanlığın altın çağını 1650-1730 yılları arasındaki dönem olarak tanımladıktan sonra, korsanların siyasi ve toplumsal örgütlenmesini tartışmaktadır. Bunu yapabilmek için öncelikle ticaret ve donanma gemilerindeki yaşam anlatılmaktadır. Gemideki bu yaşamın koşulları arasında askerileşmiş disiplin, katı hiyerarşi, işin tehlikeli doğası yer almaktadır. İkinci olarak, bu ağır çalışma koşullarından bir kaçış yolu olarak korsanlığa yönelme ve korsan gemilerindeki özerk ve demokratik toplumsal ve siyasal örgütlenme incelenmiş ve Kaptan Charles Johnson tarafından sıralanan üç grup korsan sözleşmesi açıklanmıştır. Bu şekilde korsan demokrasisi, korsan topluluğunun korsan olma kararıyla kurulduğu anda imzalanan sözleşmelere dayandırılmıştır. Bu maddeler bir yandan korsanlara bir kaptan seçme ve kaptanı görevden alma hakkı verirken, diğer yandan da gemi ve mürettebatla ilgili tüm konularda son sözü söyleme hakkı tanımaktaydı. Daha sonra korsanların ırk, milliyet, ulus ve devlete karşı tutumları açıklandıktan sonra, korsanlığın altın çağının tarihindeki kadın korsanların, Mary Read ve Anne Bonny'nin hikayeleri sunulmuştur. Ardından, korsanlığın şiddet yönü ve bir motivasyon olarak intikam analiz edilmiştir. Son olarak, korsanların din ve cinsellik konusundaki tutumları, dönemin ana akım tutumlarından farklılaşan tutumlar olarak açıklanmakta ve korsan toplumu çağının toplum yapısına muhalif bir toplum olarak sunulmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, altın çağın korsanları,

gelişmekte olan kapitalist toplumsal ilişkilere ve ulus-devlet sistemine dayanan düzene karşı alternatif bir düzen oluşturabilmiştir. Söz konusu alternatif düzen, korsan gemisinin sınırları içinde, mürettebat ve gemiyle ilgili konularda korsan mürettebatının tüm üyelerine eşit söz hakkı tanıyan, doğrudan ve katılımcı demokrasi olarak tanımlanabilecek ve bir tür kendi kaderini tayin etme biçimi olarak değerlendirilebilecek gemi demokrasisine dayanmaktaydı. Bu bağlamda, üç örneği sunulan korsan sözleşmeleri, korsan mürettebatının kuruluş anında kolektif olarak oluşturulan, korsan gemisinin anayasası olarak düşünülebilir. Bu bağlamda, söz konusu sözleşmeler gemideki karar alma mekanizmasının doğrudan demokratik ve kaynak dağılımının eşitlikçi olmasını sağlamanın yanı sıra gemideki disiplini de düzenlemekteydi. Ayrıca, korsan gemisinin ortak konseyinin en yüksek otorite olması, korsan örgütlenmesinin doğrudan demokratik, eşitlikçi, hiyerarşik olmayan ve yatay bir örgütlenme olduğunu kanıtlamaktadır. Bu anlamda, kaptanlık pozisyonu aslında güvencesiz bir pozisyondu ve korsan kaptanlar her an görevden alınabilecek seçilmiş görevlilerdi. Korsan kaptanının otoritesi sadece savaş, takip ya da gemiye çıkma sırasında geçerliydi ve kaptan diğer zamanlarda ortak konseyin kararlarına bağlıydı.

Ayrıca korsan toplumu, farklı uluslardan korsanların yanı sıra Afrika kökenli korsanlardan oluşan çok uluslu ve çok ırklı bir toplum olması bakımından da muhalif bir toplumdu. Dahası, en az iki kadın korsan olduğunu gösteren tarihi kayıtlar da korsan gemisinde kadınlara bakışın donanma ve ticaret gemilerinden radikal bir şekilde farklı olduğunu göstermektedir. Son olarak, korsanların din ve eşcinsellik konusundaki tutumları da geleneksel tutumların aksine muhalifti. Dolayısıyla, korsan gemisi muhalifler, Afrika kökenli insanlar ve kadınlar için özgürleştirici bir alandı.

Yine de korsan toplumunun bu anlatımı idealize edilmiş ve romantize edilmiş bir anlatım gibi görünebilir. Bu bağlamda, genel anlamda kabaca 1650 ile 1730 yılları arasını kapsayan korsanlığın altın çağına, daha özel anlamda ise 1716 ile 1726 yılları arasındaki döneme odaklanılmasına rağmen, çalışmanın bir yandan altın çağdaki korsanların tüm pratiklerini incelemek çalışmanın kapsamını aşacağından, diğer yandan da altın çağ korsanlığını homojen bir hareket olarak ele almak imkansız olacağından, korsanlığı bir bütün olarak ele almadığını belirtmek gerekir. Bunun yerine, çalışma, özellikle o dönemin donanma veya ticaret gemilerindeki uygulamalarla

karşılaştırıldığında radikal bir şekilde demokratik, eşitlikçi, hiyerarşik olmayan ve yatay olan belirli korsan uygulamalarına odaklanmaktadır.

Tezin beşinci bölümü, korsanlığın altın çağını prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak analiz etmektedir. İlk olarak, altın çağ korsanlarının aylaklığa verdiği yüksek değer, ticaret ve donanma gemilerindeki çalışma disiplinine karşı bir direniş olarak açıklanmaktadır. Böylelikle korsan gemisinde yaratılan aylak yaşam biçimi, soyut emeğe karşı eylemenin isyanı olarak ele alınmaktadır. Ardından söz konusu aylak yaşam biçimi, korsan hareketinin üreticilerin geçim araçlarından, yani geminin kendisinden ayrılmasına meydan okuyabileceği ve korsan gemisinin kolektif mülkiyeti yoluyla korsanlara geri verilebileceği gerçeğiyle ilişkilendirilmiştir. Daha sonra korsan gemisinde ücretli emeğin ortadan kaldırılması, korsan gemisinin kolektif mülkiyeti ile bağlantılı olarak tartışılmakta ve geminin işgali ile çağdaş işyeri işgalleri arasındaki paralellikler kısaca ele alınmıştır. Müştereken eylemenin/müştereken korsanlık yapmanın komünal ve karşılıklı yönleri açıklandıktan sonra, korsan gemisinin kolektif yönetimi anlamındaki toplumsal yönü de bir başka eyleme biçimi olarak tartışılmıştır. Geminin kolektif mülkiyeti yoluyla ücretli emeğin ortadan kaldırılması ve pay sisteminin getirilmesi ile gemide benimsenen yatay, demokratik ve eşitlikçi karar alma süreci yoluyla geminin hiyerarşik yönetiminin ortadan kaldırılmasıyla bağlantılı olarak, müşterekleştirme faaliyetinin ürettiği ve yeniden ürettiği ve aynı zamanda müşterekleri de üreten ve yeniden üreten yeni öznellik, bir müşterek olarak korsan olarak tartışılacaktır. Son olarak, müştereken eyleme/müştereken korsanlık yapma devlete dayanmak yerine doğrudan eyleme geçtiği, yeni öznellikler yaratmanın yanı sıra hareketin hedeflediği alternatif düzeni inşa ederek ve amaçlarını kullandığı araçlarla yansıtarak, gemide ücretli emeğin ve hiyerarşik disiplinin ortadan kaldırılması, demokratik ve yatay örgütlenme gibi hareketin gelecek ideallerini şimdide kurduğu için prefigüratif bir hareket olarak nitelendirilmiştir.

Örneğin, Kaptan Sam Bellamy'nin el koyduğu bir geminin kaptanıyla yaptığı konuşma bize korsan hareketinin "belirgin bir şekilde Sosyalist" bir temsilcisi olarak Bellamy'nin yasaları küçümsediğini ve yasaların zenginler tarafından zenginler için yapıldığının tamamen farkında olduğunu göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla, yasaları gayrimeşru gören Bellamy, zenginler ile korsanlar arasında tek bir fark görmekteydi; o

da birincilerin yasaları kullanarak fakirlerden çalması, ikincilerin ise kendi cesaretlerinden başka hiçbir şeye güvenmeden zenginlerden çalmasıydı. Bu da Bellamy'nin adaletsizlik olarak gördüğü bu durumu engellemek için devlete güvenmediğini ve korsan yoldaşlarıyla birlikte çözümü kendi ellerine aldığını göstermektedir

Sonuç olarak, korsanlığın altın çağı ve öncesinde denizcilerin kapitalizme, kapitalizmin hem önkoşulu hem de sürdürülmesini sağlayan ilksel birikime, elbette yeterli ücreti bile sağlamayan ücret ilişkisine, gemide mutlak otoriteyi minyatür bir hükümdar olarak kaptanda toplayan militarize ve hiyerarşik disipline ve minyatür bir devlet olarak gemiye karşı şikâyetleri vardı. Bu rahatsızlıklara karşı korsan hareketi, geminin işgal edilmesi ve artık korsan gemisi olan geminin kolektif mülkiyetinin alınması yoluyla doğrudan eyleme geçmiştir. Bu doğrudan eylemin sonucu, ücretli emeğin ortadan kaldırılması, gemide eşitlikçi sosyal ve ekonomik ilişkiler, korsanlara kendi seçimlerini yapma ve kendi kaderlerini tayin etme ve (hem sermaye ve devletten hem de toplumdan) özerklik sağlayan yatay demokrasi, sermaye ve ulus devlet tarafından dayatılan işçi ve hükümdarın öznesi gibi öznelliklere karşı iştirakçi olarak korsan olarak yeni bir öznellik üreten ve yeniden üreten kolektif bir toplumun yaratılması olmuştur. Bu anlamda korsan hareketinin doğrudan eylemi, sermaye ve devletten özerk alternatif bir düzen inşa ederek ideallerini şimdide hayata geçimriş ve amaçlarını bu amaçlara ulaşmak için kullanılan araçlara yansıtmıştır. Dolayısıyla korsan hareketi, "bir hareketin süregelen siyasi pratiği içinde, nihai hedef olan toplumsal ilişki, karar alma, kültür ve insan deneyimi biçimlerinin somutlaşması" olarak prefigüratif bir harekettir.

Müşterekler için mücadelenin diğer pek çok örneğinde olduğu gibi, korsan hareketi de yenilgiye uğramıştır, ancak söz konusu yenilgi müşterekler ve prefigüratif siyaset ya da prefigüratif müşterekleştirme hareketi açısından sorunlu bir noktadır. Bir yandan, devlet karşısındaki yenilgilerine rağmen, korsanlar hayal gücü üzerine olan mücadeleyi kazanmışlardır. Diğer yandan

hareketi, soyutlamanın olumsuzlanması ve bir alternatifin yaratılması anlamında "olumsuzlama ve yaratma" olarak bir çatlağı temsil etmektedir

Böylece, kapitalizmin yüzeyine atılan bir taş olarak ele alındığında, korsan hareketinin yenilgisi, mümkün olan geleceğe anlık ve güzel bir bakışın hatırası haline gelmektedir. Geçmişin direniş mücadeleleri bugünün içinde birer anı olarak yaşamaya devam etmektedir. Aynı şekilde, korsanlar da yaşamaya devam etmekte. Bu anlamda hafıza ve hatırlama da müşterekleştirmenin bir parçasıdır. Dolayısıyla, korsan hareketinin analizi aynı zamanda müştereklerin (yeniden) icat edilmesi için bir keşfi de ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bağlamda Sitrin ve Azzellini, 2010 sonrası hareketlerin küresel dalgasını analiz etmeye başlarken, bu hareketler tarafından tesis edilen yeni pratiklerin uzun geçmişine bizden saklanan bir sır olarak atıfta bulunmaktadır. Söz konusu sır, eski Latin Amerika hareketlerinin 1990'lar ve 2000'lerdeki pratikleri ile yerli pratikleridir. Ancak altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif bir müşterekleştirme hareketi olarak analizi, bu sırrın Sitrin ve Azzellini'nin öne sürdüğünden daha uzun bir süre saklı kaldığını göstermektedir. Tarihte prefigüratif hareket pratiklerinin kapitalizme karşı mücadelelerde kullanıldığını gösteren pek çok örnek vardır ve korsan hareketi de bunlardan biridir.

Sonuç olarak, altın çağ korsanlığının prefigüratif müşterekleştirme hareketi yenilmiştir, ancak sermaye ve devletin karşısında ve ötesinde alternatif bir düzen oluşturabilmişlerdir ve kapitalizme bir alternatifin mümkün olduğunu gösterebilmişlerdir. Bu doğrultuda, korsan hareketi toplumdan tamamen kopan bir deneydi ve korsan deneyinin sürmemesi önemli değildi, çünkü bir alternatife göz kırpmaya izin veriyordu, bir alternatifin var olabileceğinin kanıtıydı. Alternatifin olmadığı fikrinin normalleştirilmesine karşı, bir alternatifin olduğunu, her zaman bir alternatifin var olduğunu iddia etmek ve hatırlatmak değerlidir.

Korsanlar eninde sonunda yenildiler ve tüm dünyaya karşı verdikleri savaşı kaybettiler. Başardıkları şey, sınırlı bir süre için de olsa, devletten ve sermayeden özerk bir toplum kurmak ve buna göre yaşamak oldu. Yine de altın çağ korsanlarının müşterekleştirme hareketinden günümüz hareketleri için bazı çıkarımlar yapabiliriz. İlk olarak, benzerlikler: (1) Hem korsan hareketi hem de çağdaş müşterekler hareketleri, ister önceki on yılın Occupy hareketi isterse alter-küreselleşme hareketi olsun, çitlemelere karşıydı. Korsan hareketi tıpkı kendilerinden önceki Levellers ve Diggers gibi ilksel birikime karşıydı, çağdaş müşterekler hareketleri ise özelleştirme, fikri

mülkiyet hakları ve kamusal mal ve hizmetlerin metalaştırılması gibi ekonomi dışı yollarla birikime karşıdır. (2) Hem korsan hareketi hem de çağdaş müşterekler hareketleri, çitlemelerin gerçekleşmesini önlemek ve aynı zamanda halihazırda işleyen müşterekleri genişletmek için verilen mücadelelerdir. (3) Her ikisi de eşitlikçi, hiyerarşik olmayan ve doğrudan demokratik bir şekilde örgütlenmektedir. (4) Her iki hareket de taleplerin alıcısı ya da aracısı olarak devleti merkeze alan ve politik olanı devlete bağlayan toplumsal hareket kavramsallaştırmalarına uymamaktadır. Dolayısıyla, her iki hareket de her türlü hak talebinde bulunmayı ve devlet iktidarını ele geçirme ya da devletten talepte bulunma anlamında devletle ilişki kurmayı reddeder. Bunun yerine, her iki hareket de iddia ettikleri şeyi kendi başlarına oluşturmaya çalışır.

Öte yandan, (1) korsan hareketinin olasılığı ve en azından on yıl boyunca görece sürdürülebilirliği şiddetin rolüne bağlanabilir. Ne de olsa korsanlar dönemin en gelişmiş makinesini müşterekleştirmiş ve bunu meşru şiddet kullanma tekelini ele geçirmeye başlayan devlete karşı kullanmışlardır. Dahası, (2) gemilerin sağladığı hareketlilik korsan hareketini devletin baskısına karşı daha donanımlı hale getirmiştir. Bu anlamda hareketlilik bir avantajdı, ancak Midnight Notes Collective'in de belirttiği gibi, sermayeye karşı bir alan yaratamamak korsanları yerinden edilmeye, tükenmeye ve yok olmaya mahkum etmiştir. (3) Korsan hareketinin kendilerini sermayeden ve piyasadan ayırma çabalarına rağmen, yağmaladıkları malları satmak zorunda kalmış olmaları bir gerçektir. Her ne kadar korsanların altın ve gümüş hazineleri hikayeleri doğru olmasa da diğer gemilerden ele geçirilen malların çoğu korsan gemisinin bakımı veya mürettebatın beslenmesi için gerekli mallar olsa da ve çoğu zaman yağmalanan malların satılmasıyla elde edilen para M-C-M döngüsü anlamında birikimsel amaçlara hizmet etmeyip C-M-C döngüsü anlamında geçim için kullanılsa da, korsanların satmak için pazarlara ihtiyaçları vardı. Bu da sermayeye bağımlılığa işaret etmektedir. Dolayısıyla müştereken yağma ve talan yeterli olmayabilir; müştereken üretim de gereklidir. Dolayısıyla, "İşgal Et, Diren, Yağmala" yerine "İşgal Et, Diren, Üret".

Özetle bu çalışma, üreticilerin geçim araçlarından ayrılması olarak ilksel birikim ve çitlemenin, kapitalizmin sadece ön koşulu olan tek seferlik bir süreç olmadığını, sermaye kavramına içkin olduğunu, çünkü gerçek birikimin bu ayrımın ekonomik araçlarla genişletilmiş yeniden üretimi olduğunu, ancak söz konusu yeniden

üretim, ayrıma karşı meydan okumalarla karşılaştığında, "katılıkların", ilkel birikimin, çitlemenin, ekonomi dışı araçlarla birikim olarak devreye girdiğini savunmaktadır. Dolayısıyla ne ilksel birikim ve çitleme ne de çitlemeye karşı müşterekler için mücadele biçimindeki mücadele tarihin bir kalıntısıdır. Bu anlamda çalışma, Federici'yi izleyerek, müştereklerin sınıf mücadelesi tarihini günümüze bağlayan iplik olduğunu ve aslında müşterekler için mücadelenin her yerde olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, altın çağın korsan hareketi bir müştereklestirme hareketi olarak, tarihi bugüne bağlayan bu ipliğin bir anı olarak tartışılmıştır. Ayrıca bu müştereklestirme hareketini, amaçlarını araçlarıyla yansıtan ve şimdiki zamanda ideal ve alternatif vizyonu inşa eden prefigüratif bir hareket olarak değerlendirmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, bu analizin önemi, bir yandan çağdaş mücadele ve hareketlere ilham kaynağı olan korsan hareketinin, kapitalizmin yüzeyinde zaman içinde kapanmış ancak hala hatırlanan bir hafıza üreten bir çatlak olmasıydı. Öte yandan korsan hareketinin örgütlenmesi, hem 20. yüzyılın başlarındaki sovyetler, konseyler gibi örgütlenme yöntemlerinin hem de forumlar ve meclisler gibi çağdaş hareket örgütlenmelerinin habercisiydi. Dahası, hareketin korsan gemisinde giriştiği ve sınırlı bir süre için de olsa başarıyla sürdürdüğü ücretli emeğin ortadan kaldırılması; iş gününün uzunluğu üzerine mücadeleler, boykotlar, grevler, işçilerin hareketliliği ve biyolojik yeniden üretimin basitçe reddi gibi doğrusal ve döngüsel zaman içindeki mücadelelere odaklanan çağdaş hareketler ve sınıf mücadelesi için bir ders olabilir. Bu şekilde, emeğin soyutlanmasının sınırları içinde kalan mücadeleler yerine, "kapitalizmin ön koşullarının oluşmasını engelleme ve oluştuktan sonra da bu koşulları aşma mücadelesi" olarak soyutlamaya karşı eylemenin isyanı daha yerinde bir yaklaşım olabilir.

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