

Article

Creating New “Enclosures”: Violently Mimicking the Primitive Accumulation through Degradation of Women, Lockdowns, Looting Finance, War, Plunder

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Abstract: Starting from the analysis of Marx’s Chapter 26 of the first volume of *Capital*, this article describes Marxian emphasis on the extremely violent aspects—a list of the main cases is also provided—of the so-called “enclosures” as fundamental procedures that favored the “primitive accumulation”, that is, the first social and economical step that led to capitalism. The “enclosures” that characterized the primitive accumulation process, violently expropriating peasants, razing their cottages and dwellings, are illustrated in detail. At the same time, we will describe what we call the “moral bubble”, created by the narratives—morally edifying—about enclosures, only devoted to the emphasis on the positive economical and social outcomes: the moral bubble acts as a powerful conceptual device capable of concealing the violence that accompanies enclosures. The second part of the article stresses the fact that the mechanism of enclosures can be traced back not only to violently expropriating common lands in which the peasants flourished but also to the violent processes against women to have them basically reduced to machines for the production of new workers, in the framework of the new “patriarchy of the wage”. The importance of the so-called “new enclosures” is further delineated after having shown how enclosures express the historical and general tendency of capitalistic accumulation and not only of the primitive one. The violent aspects of primitive accumulation, and so of primitive enclosures, are described as the main characters of every phase of the recent capitalist globalization, marked by continuous and unprecedented assault (as smart social, political, and economical mechanisms for producing enclosures) on the commons, perpetrated by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, coronavirus lockdown and, currently, also by the paradoxical economical effects of the interplay between the green era and Ukraine war—global food and energy crisis. Finally, the last section provides insight on what we called the “terminal enclosure” related to the aggression of the ultimate common good: water.

Keywords: enclosures; capitalism; morality; violence; moral bubbles; degradation of women; looting finance; globalization; war; green era; coronavirus; plunder; water



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1. Morality and Violence in the Role of Enclosures in Capitalistic Primitive Accumulation

In the first volume of *Capital*, entitled “The Process of Production of Capital”, in the eighth part “So-Called Primitive Accumulation”, at the beginning of Chapter 26 “The Secret of Primitive Accumulation”, Marx introduces parallelism between primitive accumulation in political economy and the original sin in theology:

This primitive accumulation plays approximately the same role in political economy as original sin does in theology. Adam bit the apple, and thereupon sin fell on the human race. Its origin is supposed to be explained when it is told as an anecdote about the past. Long, long ago there were two sorts of people; one,

the diligent, intelligent, and above all frugal elite; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. The legend of theological original sin tells us certainly how man came to be condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow; but the history of economic original sin reveals to us that there are people to whom this is by no means essential. Never mind! Thus it came to pass that the former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort finally had nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority who, despite all their labour, have up to now nothing to sell but themselves, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly, although they have long ceased to work. Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defence of property [1] (pp. 873–874).

It is clear that Marx is referring to a narrative about the birth of capitalism that takes advantage of a distinction between good and bad human beings, a fabulous narrative that he evidently aims at criticizing.¹ Given the fact that “the so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as ‘primitive’ because it forms the pre-history of capital, and of the mode of production corresponding to capital” [1] (pp. 874–875). Marx is interested in the historical process that transforms producers into wage-laborers as mere sellers of themselves after being deprived of all their own means of production and all the guarantees of survival provided by the old feudal systems. This process is immediately classified as extremely violent: “And this history, the history of their expropriation, is written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire. [...] The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil is the basis of the whole process” [1] (p. 875).

To illustrate the mechanism that makes possible this expropriation, the classical case of its adoption in England is described in detail. In the fifteenth century the majority of the population consisted of free peasant proprietors “provided with arable land to the extent of four or more acres, together with their cottages. Moreover, like the other peasants, they enjoyed the right to exploit the common land, which gave pasture to their cattle, and furnished them with timber, fire-wood, turf, etc.” [1] (pp. 878–879). The violent facts that are at the origin of capitalism are occurring in the last third of the fifteenth century and the first few decades of the sixteenth.

The great feudal lords, in their defiant opposition to the king and Parliament, created an incomparably larger proletariat by forcibly driving the peasantry from the land, to which the latter had the same feudal title as the lords themselves, and by usurpation of the common lands. [...] The old nobility had been devoured by the great feudal wars. The new nobility was the child of its time, for which money was the power of all powers. Transformation of arable land into sheep-walks was therefore its slogan. Harrison, in his *Description of England, prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicles*, describes how the expropriation of small peasants is ruining the country. ‘What care our great incroachers?’ The dwellings of the peasants and the cottages of the labourers were razed to the ground or doomed to decay [1] (p. 877).

2. “Enclosures” and the Related “Moral Bubble” Based on Edifying Economic Narratives

The terms “enclosure” and “inclosure” are used interchangeably and regard the appropriation of “waste” or “common (state) land” segregating and consequently dispossessing commoners of their rights of access and entitlement. The process, which dates back to the twelfth century, was made in favor of the landowners of the gentry and of the merchant bourgeoisie that took place in England between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Enclosures destroyed people’s common rights to farmland but also to parish commons and involved the imposition of small swaths of land into big new areas delimited by hedges, walls, or fences, with the aim of exclusively granting to single proprietors or their renters’ usage and exploitation of the newly generated enclosed areas.²

Agreements to enclose land could be done thanks to the formation of “closes” selected from common lands by legal acts of a parliament. The peasants were damaged in favor of the big landowners, indeed the small landowners were not in the condition to afford private and legal expenses for implementing enclosures. At the end of the eighteenth century, the system of enclosures built by aristocracy and bourgeoisie created a huge quantity of unemployed workers, available to be exploited for cheap in the new capitalistic industrial era.

Of course, it can be said that the enclosures were rendered necessary because of the augmented demand for agricultural goods and sheep’s wool related to textile manufacture: the peasants were not in a condition to improve the efficiency of their work on the land, and instead the new big landowners were able to rent the lands to aggressive and more productive farmers capable of paying high rents and increasing the agricultural output in England. In addition, the economic value of the areas enclosed considerably grew. De facto common lands (common wastes) and undivided land (open fields) were enclosed. It is important to note that these economical justifications do not have to conceal the violent acts perpetrated against the peasants during those processes, as was testified by some protests and riots (from the third decade of the sixteenth century to the middle of the following one) against the extirpation of rights from common people. As explained below, in this case we are in presence of what can be called a “moral bubble” based on edifying economic narratives, which are characterized by the rational force of the “objectivity”, which delineates a situation that can be described by the stereotypical motto “this is what happened and no alternative behaviors were possible”.

2.1. “Moral Bubbles” Based on Edifying Economic Narratives

In 1999, Justin Kruger and David Dunning published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* the important article “Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing One’s Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments” [2], which illustrated the so-called Dunning–Kruger effect. In the perspective of the naturalization of morality, Magnani [3] stressed the attention to something analogous to that effect, called *moral bubble effect*, related to the deficient (or very precarious) awareness of humans regarding their violent behaviors: often human beings perform violent acts but do not detect their effects so that they ignore the imposed harm. It is important to observe that this cognitive peculiarity of humans is central to securing the stability of moral frameworks. The act of turning violence invisible and accepting it is based on a common psychological phenomenon known as “embublement”. Human behavior is enslaved by what has been called *moral bubbles* [3], which regularly conceal violence; this is also related to the fact it is common knowledge that in our society many violent behaviors are in general treated as if they were something different.

As we have indicated above, we face this kind of moral bubble in the case of the capitalistic primitive accumulation: edifying economic narratives, that are endowed with the strongness and ineluctability of the objectivity of the events are the best tool for nurturing moral bubbles and concealing actual of potential violent consequences. Such a widespread concealed violence, when highlighted, for example the one—in the case of enclosures—against the peasants (that Marx so eloquently describes), is implicitly excused or justified: this leads to the heart of our conviction that it is instead important to stress the power of adopted moral frameworks to conceal and at the same time (potentially) provoke various kinds of violence. It is in this way that we can more easily see that violence is not so exceptional, beyond the common repetitive stereotypes, such as for example in the case of its facile and simplistic psychiatrization. After all, when Marx reports the analogy between the narratives in political economy and in theology, which we quoted at the beginning of Section 1, we are still dealing with an amazing moral bubble, as a means of “giving away” the violence perpetrated and happened in certain circumstances.

Woods introduced the notion of *epistemic bubble*: a “cognitive agent is in an epistemic bubble with respect to proposition *a* if he is in a *k*-state with respect to *a* and the distinction

between his knowing that *a* and his experiencing himself as knowing it is phenomenally inapparent to him in the there and now" [4] (p. 162). To summarize, we know less than we believe to know, and we are unlikely to discriminate between a real correction and an apparent one, from the first-person perspective. We need a third-person point of view to recognize the error.

Analogously, the moral embublement process is likewise self-sustaining because, as demonstrated by some studies in logic, informal logic, and rhetoric, fallacies (which are typical of human language at work), especially in everyday situations, are prone to errors of various types, even concealed, and possess what René Thom called "military intelligence" [5], in the framework of the catastrophe theory. The *softness* and *gentleness* that often accompany fallacies render them particularly efficient in intelligent strategies to protect groups, affirm moral frameworks, and so generate possible more or less invisible violent effects. Moral bubbles represent a relevant part of these processes of dissimulation because being unaware of our mistakes and/or violence in a fundamental and spontaneous way is often entwined with our own "overconfidence" that the arguments we are pushing and related actions are absolutely not carriers of possible violent outcomes.

We argue that the fallacies incorporated in human discussions, dialogues, and deliberations strongly potentiate the establishment and stability of *moral bubbles* that have to be considered completely homomorphic with the epistemic bubbles: they regard moral/violent aspects and not mere cognitive/epistemological ones. In conclusion:

- ignorance of our errors is frequently linked to a lack of awareness of the deceptive/aggressive nature of our speech (and behavior).

Moral bubbles, from this perspective, are a great psychological mechanism that allows humans to legitimate and dissimulate violence at the same time. A derived result is a protection of our moral convictions at the individual level and of the moral frameworks that are acting in our collectives.

In sum, thanks to moral bubbles, we can value that within them, even if we can be easily be aware of probable real violent outcomes, this possibility is not activated and disappears from awareness. The actions that descend from serious moral convictions and rules are always endowed with a strong cognitive value because they are firmly tied to us and we adhere to them without hesitation: possible generated violence disappears because its cognitive value is terribly secondary and/or it is completely justified and so it can be disregarded and the subsequent unawareness legitimated. The economics narratives are extremely characterized by the exploitation of common moral bubbles individuals usually build to conceal the possible related violence, as Marx clearly indicates in Chapter 26 "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation" of the first volume of *Capital*, we have quoted above. The whole chapter is completely devoted to disintegrating moral bubbles to the aim of clearly exhibiting the violence perpetrated (and concealed).

It is interesting to note that the standard narrative describing enclosures and the premises of their creation reported by Wikipedia rarely refers to their violent side. This narrative first of all notes that the establishment of the feudal system resulted in a rise in the country's economic growth and urbanization. In the thirteenth century, wealthy Lords prospered monetarily, but peasants who faced ever-increasing expenditures did not, and their landholdings declined. However, during outbreaks of the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century, population and grain harvests plummeted. With the population drop, remaining farm laborers were in high demand. Landowners were forced to choose between boosting pay in order to compete for labor or letting their farms rot. Wages for laborers increased, causing inflation across the economy. The enclosure of agricultural land dates back to the twelfth century. In England, however, the history of enclosure varies from place to place. The pre-Roman Celtic field method of farming in tiny enclosed fields was preserved in parts of south-east England (particularly in Essex and Kent). Fields were either never open or were enclosed early in parts of west and north-west England. The "open field system" was the primary field management system in the lowland

areas of England, spanning a broad band from Yorkshire and Lincolnshire diagonally across England to the south, including parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, large areas of the Midlands, and most of south-central England.³

2.2. *The Amazing List of Violent Effects Provoked by Enclosures*

Beyond the moral bubble created by the edifying narratives regarding the positive effects of the primitive accumulation, so anticipating the actual good outcomes of the incoming capitalism, that unfortunately conceal—both from the psychological and historical perspective—the related violence perpetrated, it is certainly worth directly noting many eloquent and seriously informed passages provided by Marx himself that fill this gap. The reader will either “enjoy” the reading of all the passages or “select” to read the most impressive.

1. *Razing cottages and dwelling of the peasants.* “Harrison, in his *Description of England, prefixed to Holinshed’s Chronicles*, describes how the expropriation of small peasants is ruining the country. ‘What care our great incroachers?’ The dwellings of the peasants and the cottages of the labourers were razed to the ground or doomed to decay” [1] (p. 879).
2. *Decay of people, towns, churches, tithes, and the like.* “In his history of Henry VII Bacon says this: ‘Inclosures at that time’ (1489) ‘began to be more frequent, whereby arable land, which could not be manured without people and families, was turned into pasture, which was easily rid by a few herdsmen; and tenancies for years, lives, and at will, whereupon much of the yeomanry lived, were turned into demesnes. This bred a decay of people, and, by consequence, a decay of towns, churches, tithes, and the like’ ” [1] (p. 879).
3. *Marvellous numbers of people have been deprived of the means wherewith to maintain themselves and their families.* “Many farms and large flocks of cattle, especially of sheep, are concentrated in the hands of a few men, whereby the rent of land has much risen, and tillage has fallen off, churches and houses have been pulled down, and marvellous numbers of people have been deprived of the means wherewith to maintain themselves and their families” [Henri VIII, Act, 25, c13] [1] (p. 880).
4. *“Pauper ubique jacet” cried Queen Elizabeth.* “‘Pauper ubique jacet’ cried Queen Elizabeth, after a journey through England. In the forty-third year of her reign it finally proved necessary to recognize pauperism officially by the introduction of the poor-rate” [1] (p. 882).
5. *“Setting free” the agricultural population as a proletariat for the needs of industry.* “While the place of the independent yeoman was taken by tenants at will, small farmers on yearly leases, a servile rabble dependent on the arbitrary will of the landlords, the systematic theft of communal property was of great assistance, alongside the theft of the state domains, in swelling those large farms which were called in the eighteenth century capital farms, or merchant farms, and in ‘setting free’ the agricultural population as a proletariat for the needs of industry” [1] (p. 886).
6. *Raising the prices of provisions, and produce depopulation.* “‘It is no uncommon thing for four or five wealthy graziers to engross a large enclosed lordship which was before in the hands of twenty or thirty farmers, and as many smaller tenants and proprietors. All these are hereby thrown out of their livings with their families and many other families who were chiefly employed and supported by them’ [by rev. Addington, *Inquiry into the Reason for or against Inclosing Open Fields*, London, 1772, pp. 37–43 passim]. It was not only land that lay waste, but often also land that was still under cultivation, being cultivated either in common or held under a definite rent paid to the community, that was annexed by the neighbouring landowners under pretext of enclosure. ‘I have here in view enclosures of open fields and lands already improved.

It is acknowledged by even the writers in defence of enclosures that these diminished villages increase the monopolies of farms, raise the prices of provisions, and produce depopulation [...] and even the enclosure of waste lands (as now carried on) bears hard on the poor, by depriving them of a part of their subsistence, and only goes towards increasing farms already too large' " [dr. R. Price, *Observation on Reversionary Payments*, W. Morgan, London, 1803] [1] (p. 887).

7. *Wages began to fall below the minimum between 1765 and 1780.* "He [Dr. Price] sums up the effect of the enclosures in this way: 'Upon the whole, the circumstances of the lower ranks of men are altered in almost every respect for the worse. From little occupiers of land, they are reduced to the state of day-labourers and hirelings; and, at the same time, their subsistence in that state has become more difficult'. In fact, the usurpation of the common lands and the accompanying revolution in agriculture had such an acute effect on the agricultural labourers that, even according to Eden, their wages began to fall below the minimum between 1765 and 1780, and to be supplemented by official Poor Law relief. Their wages, he says, 'were not more than enough for the absolute necessities of life' " [1] (pp. 887–888).
8. *"Clearing of estates", i.e., the sweeping of human beings off them.* "The last great process of expropriation of the agricultural population from the soil is, finally, the so-called 'clearing of estates', i.e., the sweeping of human beings off them. All the English methods hitherto considered culminated in 'clearing'. As we saw in the description of modern conditions given in a previous chapter, when there are no more independent peasants to get rid of, the 'clearing' of cottages begins; so that the agricultural labourers no longer find on the soil they cultivate even the necessary space for their own housing" [1] (pp. 889–890).
9. *"Clearing of estates", i.e., the sweeping of human beings off them. The example of Duchess of Sutherland* "As an example of the method used in the nineteenth century, the 'clearings' made by the Duchess of Sutherland will suffice here. This person, who had been well instructed in economics, resolved, when she succeeded to the headship of the clan, to undertake a radical economic cure, and to turn the whole county of Sutherland, the population of which had already been reduced to 15,000 by similar processes, into a sheep-walk. Between 1814 and 1820 these 15,000 inhabitants, about 3000 families, were systematically hunted and rooted out. All their villages were destroyed and burnt, all their fields turned into pasturage. British soldiers enforced this mass of evictions, and came to blows with the inhabitants. One old woman was burnt to death in the flames of the hut she refused to leave. It was in this manner that this fine lady appropriated 794,000 acres of land which had belonged to the clan from time immemorial" [1] (p. 891).
10. *The spoliation of the Church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the state domains, the theft of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property.* "The spoliation of the Church's property, the fraudulent alienation of the state domains, the theft of the common lands, the usurpation of feudal and clan property and its transformation into modern private property under circumstances of ruthless terrorism, all these things were just so many idyllic methods of primitive accumulation. They conquered the field for capitalist agriculture, incorporated the soil into capital, and created for the urban industries the necessary supplies of free and rightless proletarians" [1] (p. 895).
11. *Peasants were turned in massive quantities into beggars, robbers and vagabonds.* "These men [peasants], suddenly dragged from their accustomed mode of life, could not immediately adapt themselves to the discipline of their new condition. They were turned in massive quantities into beggars, robbers and vagabonds, partly from inclination, in most cases under the force of circumstances. Hence at the end of the fifteenth and during the whole of the sixteenth centuries, a bloody legislation against vagabondage was enforced throughout Western Europe. The fathers of the present

working class were chastised for their enforced transformation into vagabonds and paupers. Legislation treated them as ‘voluntary’ criminals, and assumed that it was entirely within their powers to go on working under the old conditions which in fact no longer existed” [1] (p. 896).

12. *Agricultural folk expropriated and tortured.* “Thus were the agricultural folk first forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded and tortured by grotesquely terroristic laws into accepting the discipline necessary for the system of wage-labour” [1] (p. 899).
13. *Creating a new industrial marked based on the destruction of the previous raw materials and means of subsistence.* “In fact, the events that transformed the small peasants into wagemourers, and their means of subsistence and of labour into material [*sachliche*] elements of capital, created, at the same time, a home market for capital. Formerly, the peasant family produced means of subsistence and raw materials, which they themselves for the most part consumed. These raw materials and means of subsistence have now become commodities; the large-scale farmer sells them, he finds his market in the manufactures. Yam, linen, coarse woollen stuffs—things whose raw materials had been within the reach of every peasant family, had been spun and woven by the family for its own use—are now transformed into articles of manufacture, the markets for which are found precisely in the country districts. Previously a mass of small producers, working on their own account, had found their natural counterpart in a large number of scattered customers; but now these customers are concentrated into one great market provided for by industrial capital” [1] (pp. 910—911).

Two more examples of violence are not directly related to the enclosures but surely describe other triggers of the primitive accumulation:

1. *For a male scalp of 12 years and upwards, £100 in new currency, for a male prisoner £105, for women and children prisoners £50, for the scalps of women and children £50.* “The treatment of the indigenous population was, of course, at its most frightful in plantation-colonies set up exclusively for the export trade, such as the West Indies, and in rich and well-populated countries, such as Mexico and India, that were given over to plunder. But even in the colonies properly so called, the Christian character of primitive accumulation was not belied. In 1703 those sober exponents of Protestantism, the Puritans of New England, by decrees of their assembly set a premium of £40 on every Indian scalp and every captured redskin; in 1720, a premium of £100 was set on every scalp; in 1744, after Massachusetts Bay had proclaimed a certain tribe as rebels, the following prices were laid down: for a male scalp of 12 years and upwards, £100 in new currency, for a male prisoner £105, for women and children prisoners £50, for the scalps of women and children £50. Some decades later, the colonial system took its revenge on the descendants of the pious pilgrim fathers, who had grown seditious in the meantime. At English instigation, and for English money, they were tomahawked by the redskins. The British Parliament proclaimed bloodhounds and scalping as ‘means that God and Nature had given into its hand’” [[1] (pp. 917–918), Chapter 31, *The Genesis of the Industrial Capitalist*].
2. *Liverpool grew fat on the basis of the slave trade. This was its method of primitive accumulation.* “With the development of capitalist production during the period of manufacture, the public opinion of Europe lost its last remnant of shame and conscience. The nations bragged cynically of every infamy that served them as a means to the accumulation of capital. Read, for example, the naive commercial annals of the worthy A. Anderson. Here it is trumpeted forth as a triumph of English statesmanship that, at the Peace of Utrecht, England extorted from the Spaniards, by the Asiento Treaty, the privilege of being allowed to ply the slave trade, not only between Africa and the English West Indies, which it had done until then, but also between Africa and Spanish America. England thereby acquired the right to supply Spanish America until 1743 with 4800

Negroes a year. At the same time this threw an official cloak over British smuggling. Liverpool grew fat on the basis of the slave trade. This was its method of primitive accumulation. And even to the present day, the Liverpool 'quality' have remained the Pindars of the slave trade, which—as noted in the work by Dr Aikin we have just quoted—'has coincided with that spirit of bold adventure which has characterized the trade of Liverpool and rapidly carried it to its present state of prosperity; has occasioned vast employment for shipping and sailors, and greatly augmented the demand for the manufactures of the country'. In 1730 Liverpool employed 15 ships in the slave trade; in 1751, 53; in 1760, 74; in 1770, 96; and in 1792, 132. While the cotton industry introduced child-slavery into England, in the United States it gave the impulse for the transformation of the earlier, more or less patriarchal slavery into a system of commercial exploitation. In fact the veiled slavery of the wage labourers in Europe needed the unqualified slavery of the New World as its pedestal" [[1] (pp. 924–925), Chapter 31, *The Genesis of the Industrial Capitalist*].

2.3. *The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation*

Exploitation and violence do not stop. Marx himself in chapter 32, entitled *The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation*, clearly adumbrates the eternal struggle that goes beyond the conflict between peasants and landlords arriving at the one between capitalists themselves, as we can patently see today before our eyes, and in any mainstream newspapers. The interplay between the "new enclosures" and their concealed violence continues, Here is a list in which we highlight the main themes quoted in the Marx's passage below, still relevant today:

- "one capitalist always strikes down many others",
- "other developments take place on an ever-increasing scale",
- "the growth of the co-operative form of the labour process",
- "the conscious technical application of science, the planned exploitation of the soil, the transformation of the means of labour into forms in which they can only be used in common, the economizing of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialized labour",
- "the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market",
- "the growth of the international character of the capitalist regime",
- "the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation and exploitation grows".

What is now to be expropriated is not the self-employed worker, but the capitalist who exploits a large number of workers. This expropriation is accomplished through the action of the immanent laws of capitalist production itself, through the centralization of capitals. One capitalist always strikes down many others. Hand in hand with this centralization, or this expropriation of many capitalists by a few, other developments take place on an ever-increasing scale, such as the growth of the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious technical application of science, the planned exploitation of the soil, the transformation of the means of labour into forms in which they can only be used in common, the economizing of all means of production by their use as the means of production of combined, socialized labour, the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and, with this, the growth of the international character of the capitalist regime. Along with the constant decrease in the number of capitalist magnates, who usurp and monopolize all the advantages of this process of transformation, the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation and exploitation grows [1] (pp. 928–929).

3. Violence as the Most Productive Force: Women Reduced to Reproducers

3.1. *Women's Exploitation and Capitalistic Primitive Accumulation: Women Become Machines for the Production of New Workers and the Recent "New" Enclosures*

In this article it is also central to highlight the violent effect of the exploitation of women in the process of capitalistic accumulation, given the fact women obviously are producers and reproducers of a central capitalistic commodity: the labor-power [6]. The issue is related to the struggle against the land privatization illustrated in the previous sections, in which the "enclosure" not only affected the expropriation of communal lands but also of social relations. It is Federici [6] who usefully extends Marx's analysis of primitive accumulation based on the perspective of the waged male proletariat and the development of commodity production to the problem of the changes introduced in the social placement of women and the production of labor-power. Basically, we are facing the following factors:

1. the formation of a new sexual division of labor generating the subjection of women's labor and women's reproductive power to the reproduction of the work-force;
2. the building of a new patriarchal order, related to the systematic exclusion of women from waged work and their subjection to men;
3. "[...] a kind of mechanization of the proletarian body and its transformation, in the case of women, into a machine for the production of new workers" [6] (p. 12).

3.2. *The Violent Destruction of the Control That Women Exercised over the Reproductive Function*

When we planned the title and subtitle of the present article, related to the current violent imitation of the primitive accumulation, we found an immediate confirmation in the studies by Federici [6], who correctly sees the violent aspects of primitive accumulation as the main characters of every phase of the recent capitalist globalization. We face new transformed forms of capitalism that structurally reproduce the ancient expulsion of the farmers from the land (that will be analyzed below), but also the economical role of the various recent wars (for example, to export "democracy"), of plunder on a world scale, and of the degradation of women. All these aspects seem to be ineluctable conditions for the flourishing of the neoliberal forms of capitalism. Even in the countries in which men have reached good levels of formal freedom, women are still treated as socially inferior beings and sometimes they are exploited in ways similar to slavery. This is occurring even though in western richer countries this subjection is regularly dissimulated, for example, by mainstream media, thanks to the spectacle of the presumed success of the process of the so-called "emancipation of women", together with the instrumental exhibition of the few women who hold prestigious positions in politics, industry, and research, often de facto characterized by the traditional male-oriented mentality and/or of bad intellectual quality.

Federici stresses the relevance of the famous witch-hunts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the promotion of capitalism: also the violent persecution of the witches, both in Europe and in the New World, together with the slave trade, played a role no less than that played by the colonization and the expropriation of the European peasantry typical of the enclosures. The violent process was finalized to the destruction of the control that women had earlier exercised over their reproductive function also to the aim of favoring the patriarchal domination, a process related to the fustigation of the virtually "demonic", because non-productive and non-procreative, forms of female sexuality.

A process that is intertwined with the creation of primitive accumulation and of the birth of capitalism:

The body has been for women in capitalist society what the factory has been for male waged workers: the primary ground of their exploitation and resistance, as the female body has been appropriated by the state and men and forced to function as a means for the reproduction and accumulation of labor [...] We can also see that the promotion of population growth by the state can go hand in hand with a massive destruction of life; for in many historical circumstances—witness

the history of the slave trade—one is a condition for the other. Indeed, in a system where life is subordinated to the production of profit, the accumulation of labor-power can only be achieved with the maximum of violence so that, in Maria Mies' words, violence itself becomes the most productive force [6] (p. 12).

In turn, the globalization of exploitation of labor generated what Federici calls the “feminization of poverty” [6] (p. 17) in that interplay that sees capitalism always engaged in promising freedom vs. the reality of widespread coercion, that sees the promise of prosperity vs. the reality of widespread penury, and finally, that sees the contradiction between accumulation and destruction of labor-power, of course first of all damaging women, and their bodies and lives.

3.3. *Women Thrown Out of the Commons*

Female serfs were less dependent on their male kin, less differentiated from them physically, socially, and psychologically, and were less subservient to men's needs than ‘free’ women were to be later in capitalist society [...]. The authority of male serfs over their female relatives was further limited by the fact that the land was generally given to the family unit, and women not only worked on it but could dispose of the products of their labor, and did not have to depend on their husbands for support. [...] Furthermore, since work on the servile farm was organized on a subsistence basis, the sexual division of labor in it was less pronounced and less discriminating than in a capitalist farm. In the feudal village no social separation existed between the production of goods and the reproduction of the work-force; all work contributed to the family's sustenance. Women worked in the fields, in addition to raising children, cooking, washing, spinning, and keeping an herb garden; their domestic activities were not devalued and did not involve different social relations from those of men, as they would later, in a money-economy, when housework would cease to be viewed as real work [6] (p. 25).

A sudden change in the situation is related to the first effects of the primitive accumulation and the progressive establishment of the new capitalistic regime: women's control over reproduction seems to create a threat to the new economic and social organization, also given the demographic disaster generated by the “Black Death”, the devastating plague that, between 1347 and 1352, killed more than one third of the population of Europe, followed by a period in which: “The differential between female and male earnings was drastically reduced [...]. What this meant for the European proletariat was not only the achievement of a standard of living that remained unparalleled until the nineteenth century, but the demise of serfdom” [6] (p. 47).

Furthermore, primitive accumulation is intertwined with the increase of differentiation and divisions among the workers, depending on gender, race, and age whereby hierarchies are built upon gender, as well as “race”, and age, with the aim of creating conflicts and hostilities, so facilitating the concealment of exploitation.

The specificity of the violence that the process generated against women is also related to the fact that new proletarian women were dispossessed as men but, unlike their husbands and relatives, in a collective more and more based on money, had almost no access to wages, so were compelled to live in a situation characterized by being forced into a condition of constitutive and ineluctable poverty, economic dependence, and “invisibility as workers” [6] (p. 75). It is amazing to note, that still now, in television reports derived from true cases concerning the so-called “Deadly Women”, many of them kill husbands and other relatives or males in order to take possession of greater economic resources.

3.4. *When Common Lands Are Destroyed by the Enclosures Women Become the New Communal Good: the New “Patriarchy of the Wage”*

When lands are privatized and so commons are restricted or nullified, women become mothers, wives, daughters, widows, and their “working” functions fall by the wayside:

consequently men can have at their disposal women's bodies, labor, and also the bodies and labor of their children: a "natural" resource, below and beyond any kind of "marketed" activities. As clearly noted by Federici, "According to this new social-sexual contract, proletarian women became for male workers the substitute for the land lost to the enclosures, their most basic means of reproduction, and a communal good. *Every woman (other than those privatized by bourgeois men) became a communal good*, for once women's activities were defined as non-work, women's labor began to appear as a natural resource, available to all, no less than the air we breathe or the water we drink" [6] (p. 97). So to speak, husbands receive women's "wage", because they collaborate and work but women are not paid, so creating the so-called "unpaid part of the working day", not only, this fact can also be dissimulated using the stratagem of the famous "natural inferiority of women":

It is in this sense that I speak of the *patriarchy of the wage*. [...] If it is true that male workers became only formally free under the new wage-labor regime, the group of workers who, in the transition to capitalism, most approached the condition of slaves were working-class women [...]. The power difference between women and men and the concealment of women's unpaid-labor under the cover of natural inferiority, have enabled capitalism to immensely expand the "unpaid part of the working day" and use the (male) wage to accumulate women's labor; in many cases, it also served to deflect class antagonism into an antagonism between men and women [6] (p. 98 and p. 115).

In light of the previous considerations, we have to say that the exploitation of wage-labor of men is solidly linked to the "super-exploitation" of nonwage-labor (for example, as a housewife) that, by the way, does not appear anymore as work or labor. It is in this sense that women/housewives⁴ constitute the optimal labor force for the capitalist, in so far as they are not considered workers: the so-called "housewifization"—related to the universalization of the model of the nuclear family [8] (p. 110)—is indeed a kind of externalization of costs that consequently do not have to be paid by the capitalists. Furthermore, the increasing privatization of social services, previously furnished by the welfare state, has ended up determining a further increase of work for housewives: the ideological command regarding the famous "flexibilization of labor" has managed to promote further unpaid female work.

In summary, it is the process that leads to the feminization of poverty, which we already quoted above, that is intertwined with men's appropriation of women's labor in the framework of a new kind of patriarchal organization, not more moderated as it was in the pre-capitalist territories in which women were able to access commons and other sharable resources. We must have classically consider as triggers of capitalism not only the violent expropriation of European workers from their means of survival, and the enslavement of Native Americans and Africans to the mines and plantations of the "New World", but also the destruction of the control that women exercised over the reproductive function as another important means by which a world proletarian workers was shaped and realized.

4. The Violent Aspects of Primitive Accumulation as the Main Characters of Every Phase of the Recent Capitalist Globalization

We are facing an unprecedented aggressive assault on the commons that are perpetrated in current western capitalist countries but also in the low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). The present section will address some of the more important aspects of this process.

4.1. The "New Enclosures" Candidly Operated by the Officers of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Coronavirus Lockdowns

Mimicking primitive accumulation seems to be a universal process that informs various strategies that are typical of capitalist development and capitalistic crises with the aim of reducing the cost of labor and at the same time concealing the exploitation of women and of non-western countries. We can now clearly see that today the new conquistadors

are the officers of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Thanks to various favorable circumstances (see, for example, the case illustrated in the following subsection devoted to the consequences of coronavirus lockdowns), financial agencies can promote “new enclosures”, for example, violently causing the impoverishment of large groups of owners of micro, small, and medium sized businesses, so allowing big financial or industrial groups and corporations to buy them for a few euros or dollars or, even better, to force the respective owners to take on further debt to fatten various already huge finance capitals.⁵ In this case, obviously, we are not facing the classical/historical enclosures of common land typical of the primitive accumulation described by Marx, but new transformed forms of them that mimic the original ones, producing a similar effect of dispossession in favor of accumulation of capital: enclosures created by financial debt-based violence are working as ways of killing or depressing economical activities “closing” the flourishing of their marketing in order to turn them into succulent economical preys to be bought or subjected to what it is not exaggerated to call “loan-sharking”.

Other new kinds of enclosures will be promoted by the new European law called “Bolkestein”, which will take away the beach resorts from their current owners (actually they are renters that pay rent to the state) at the end of their contract, causing the destruction of this traditional and successful system of tourism, taking advantage of the following true excuse: the current renters pay ridiculous rentals to the states and make a lot of money selling umbrella and sunbeds; this is not good, they say to convince all the citizens that the “Bolkestein” law is good. What is not said is that this classical beach tourism will be replaced by the highest globalized bidders (multinationals, foreign investors, etc.) that will “enclose” the common beaches, and may be paying more rentals to the states, but are taking away from them the present middle class renters and increasing their own huge profits. Furthermore, it is also worth noting that the European Union prospected—under the urgency of the green era—an amazingly absurd law related to rendering mandatory the energy upgrading of all real estate, also expelling from the rental and buying and selling market buildings lacking the minimum requirements of the directive. Imagine that you can no longer be part of the real estate market: the fallout will also be of a social nature with a significant reduction in the number of properties placed on the rental market and, in addition, rents will grow exponentially to the cost incurred by owners to adapt the properties themselves. We think the dominant consequence of these “new enclosures” will be a devaluation for all properties already lacking the minimum requirements that will be candidly offered to the exciting economical aggression of the globalized rich bidders already quoted above, that will increase their already huge capital.

Furthermore, it is at least since the nineties that, paradoxically and pathetically, the lexicon of the commons has been exploited by the World Bank and the United Nations to promote every kind of privatization. Various populations who had been settled for centuries in their “niches”, for example, rainforests, have been moved by the World Bank instrumentally saying that bio-diversity has to be protected as a common ecological heritage of humanity, granting instead access to rich eco-tourists. Also: “For their part, the United Nations has revised international laws governing access to the oceans, so as to ensure that governments can concentrate the use of seawater in a few hands, in the name of preserving humanity’s common heritage of humanity” [10] (pp. 65–66).⁶

4.2. Coronavirus Lockdowns Favor the “New Enclosures”

Coronavirus lockdowns also recently favored the “new enclosures”, following the same process we have just delineated regarding expropriation, impoverishment, and increase of the global debt of the entire population of western countries. The rise of global vaccinations sold by US-based Big Pharma, erected as central (and centralized in governments) under the indisputable scientific biomedical knowledge has produced a double effect, still characterized by the efficacious role of moral bubbles. On one side the vaccinations and other protective tools and policies positively protected population health; on the other, they favored the destruction of wide areas of economical activities. In both

cases, moral bubbles are perfectly working: (1) the struggle against deaths due to COVID conceals the violent effect of lockdowns and their consequences in terms of expropriation and impoverishment of large categories of people; (2) the victims, terrified because of the imminent possibility of dying, and overwhelmed by a distant scientific/technical knowledge endowed with an aura of inaccessibility and of impossibility to be understood, put in the background the horrible outcomes regarding loss of freedom and impoverishment. In this last case we see new examples of what we can call “extended enclosures”: they are no more related to land (and properties of small and medium-size) but also to bodies and social relationships.

Finally, it is mandatory to remember the effect of another typical kind of “enclosure” capable of favoring the accumulation of capital. There is also an effect of depredation of the wealth of the people of various countries through the use of public money for the purchase of vaccinations—of course very expensive—due to the “migration” of huge amounts of wealth from people (through the use of money from the public treasury) to greedy multinational drug companies. A process, we all know, is already at work, triggered by the last decades of neoliberal policies and their repetitive violent financial crises, when states had and have to generally protect various kinds of private farms and enterprises because of strategic public interest or because of the threat generated by excessive unemployment.

4.3. *The Paradox of the Interplay between Green Era and Ukraine War—Global Food and Energy Crisis*

In the eighties and especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), the financial aggressivity of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut to subsidized staple foods and implemented the recommendation to put a price on land [11]: the effect is the privatization of large parts of the commons (for example, in Africa) rendering the already difficult self-sustenance agriculture almost impossible. It is worth quoting the following passage by Dalla Costa, which provides a counterpoint to the recent rhetoric of the green urgency propagated by the mainstream media and by the more enthusiastic globalists, which can be seen as a further trigger of horrible and violent enclosures:

[...] this measure (made even more dramatic in those years in the context of other typical IMF adjustments) is the major cause of world hunger and of the creation of overpopulation to the extent that the population is increasingly made landless, as also happened five centuries ago. *The more severe the implementation of the adjustment programs of the 1980s became, the more reproduction regressed at a global level.* This project of undermining reproduction was the preparatory phase for neoliberalism. Specifically, by creating poorer living conditions, fewer life expectations, and a level of poverty without precedent, *it provided the prerequisites for the launch of the new globalized economy and for the deployment of neoliberalism worldwide.* This preparatory phase required workers to sacrifice so that corporations can better compete on the global market, the endorsement of new models of productivity with smaller salaries and deregulated working conditions, and the stabilization of an international hierarchy of workers with an ever larger and more dramatic gap, both in the fields of production and reproduction. A wave of suicides among farmers in India started in the 1980s, reaching twenty thousand cases in the last three years. None of them could pay back the debt they had been forced to take on to buy seeds and pesticides. This constitutes nothing less than a genocide! Mass suicides give us a measure of the amount of hunger and death brought upon people by the Green Revolution and by IMF policies” [11] (pp. 242–243).

Finally, mainstream mass media repeatedly say that Ukraine war is leading to a global food and energy crisis. In various countries, such as Germany and Italy, the effect could be terribly devastating: the virtual embargo against Russian gas already produces in these countries a slowdown in production activities (and could be extremely more violent from the economical point of view if transformed into a real embargo in the near future). Again

the general crisis generated by the war is the occasion for producing new enclosures of economical activities, salaries, and small, medium size, but also big, in this case, private activities and private wealth. Still now we are facing, for example, in Italy, a further “migration”—as already described above in the case of Big Pharma—of huge amounts of wealth from people (through the use of money from the public treasury) to the world distributors of energy, due to an incredible increase in prices, which, by the way, was already active even before the war in Ukraine. No more comments are needed: good luck to all of us, not only from the economical point of view but also from the point of view of our chances of survival.

Finally, we should not forget that sanctions (extremely increased since the nineties, when they only affected Southern Rhodesia and South Africa) toward dictatorships and countries that have committed bad things, sanctions so beloved by the EU and US (the West, so to speak), have the effect of impoverishing entire populations (often not accomplices of the elites who rule them) at the same time fostering the predatory attitude of multinational corporations and other aggressive financial agencies that can buy for cheap industries, huge land holdings, real estate markets, including residential and commercial real estate, as well as mortgage markets, that lost value. In addition, more or less justified penalties (to banks and other financial institutions, for example) for sanctions violations are a source of capital. It is interesting to quote the following text written by the Former Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew and former US State Department official Richard Nephew, which criticizes the so-called “extraterritorial sanctions”: “Today, the country largely gets its way because there is no alternative to the dollar and no export market as attractive as the United States. But if Washington continues to force other nations to go along with policies that they consider both illegal and unwise, over the next 20 to 30 years, they are likely to shift away from the United States’ economy and financial system”. Extraterritorial (or secondary) sanctions are designed to restrict the economic activity of governments, businesses, and nationals of third countries. It is interesting to note what happened in the case of frustrations generated in the allies by the United States withdrawal from the 2015 joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the promise to reinstate extraterritorial sanctions on European firms that did business with Iran; as a result, various non-US governments consider these sanctions a violation of their sovereignty and of international law (cf. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-are-economic-sanctions#chapter-title-0-7>, date of access 23 of May 2022).

4.4. The Moral Bubbles Generated by the “New Enclosures”: Both Offenders and Offended Dissimulate Violence

The process we have illustrated in the previous subsections is also characterized by the presence of a double moral bubble. The first one regards the creators of the “new enclosures”. Exactly as in the case of Marx’s description of the primitive accumulation, the narrative that organizes, triggers, and justifies the enclosures of private activities is related to superior reasons, for example, further economical growth as dictated by the general situation of the market and consumers or, as we have seen, dictated by the urgent need of a green revolution.

In the case of the new enclosures generated by financial aggressivity and the coronavirus pandemic, we faced (and still are facing) a general effect of impoverishment due to their capacity to jeopardize economical activities and/or to rake in a huge quantity of public funds coming from the taxation of the population. These aspects testify to a strong structural similarity with the classical enclosures: the only difference is related to the fact that it is not common land that is expropriated but instead small, medium, or even big “private” activities. They are expropriated in the sense that they are bought for little money or reduced to a minimal level of survival because of an excess of debts and because of that increasing taxation that functions as a kind of what we can call “clipping” of the population wealth.⁷ Real estate is not saved in these expropriation processes: the recent news shows how billionaires and oligarchs of western and eastern capitalism own—for example, in Italy, the notoriously most beautiful country in the world—magnificent hotels and sumptuous

villas, and how new international real estate agencies are raking in the properties of impoverished small and medium-sized owners. After all, these new processes of accumulation of capital are still based in more or less indirect and invisible ways on that “expropriation of subsistence producers from their means of production”, which characterized the original “enclosures”.

The second moral bubble process regards the victims of the processes just described: they are not at all conscious of what is happening and do not exhibit any kind of reaction. The processes of impoverishment and expropriation are thought of as the ineluctable and legitimate fruit of a kind of “invisible moral/economical hand” (to make fun of Adam Smith’s expression) or are seen as caused by the green need of protecting nature or human survival (e.g., in the latter case, through extremely expensive vaccinations) and thus are classified as “objectives”—that is, never directed or planned by human beings—and therefore not at all recognized as having intended violent effects.

5. The “Terminal Enclosure”: Aggressing the Ultimate Common Good

5.1. *Water as a Commodity: Violence against Poor People?*

What about the ultimate common good? As predicted by the World Bank, by 2025, two-thirds of the world population will have serious problems in finding fresh water, and it seems that various private companies—many of them powerful corporations—are paying a lot of attention to the chance of transforming miserableness of water-starved regions into profits for their executives and stockholders.⁸ Various conditions for acquiring loans in the case of poor and politically weak countries—to avoid potential defaults—are characterized by the inclusion of water privatization. It seems that many governments are promoting privatization, moving the control from public to private sectors together with agreements made with water companies, including distribution rights for 25 to 30 years,⁹ which is in a kind of monopolistic system. New enclosures regarding water are the future of this important common good.

A basic problem related to the transformation of water into a marketable commodity is that poor people are often denied access (or have access to unsafe water); considering that they are already without food, education, and medical assistance, it is easy to predict that it will be practically impossible for the poor people of the countries in which water is privatized to have access to clean water. The obvious consequence is the reduction of the possibility of local controls (for instance, through remunicipalization) and of public rights, given the centralization of management related to profit and not to protect consumers, and, of course, a lot of job will be lost, as always happens in every privatization process of the last unfortunate neoliberal decades. The last sad note regards the fact that we could astonishingly see the “migration” of bulk water from water-rich countries to water-poor countries with ecological bad consequences and disasters (what about the depletion of water sources and the wildlife that depend on them?).¹⁰

Another consequence of the aggressive attack¹¹ of private water companies concerns the reinforcement of the trend towards the commercialization of public water services, favoring budget cuts and the well-known neoliberal policies (such as small government, low corporate tax, and deregulation) to transform also those public water services to act like private companies, charging market prices even when households cannot afford to pay (policies that were relaxed during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, in Colombia, but not in Uruguay, where the pandemic promoted further privatization).

5.2. *The “Special” Violation to Women’s Access to Water*

In 2002, WEDO¹² identified women’s access to and control of water as a key issue, mainly contending that the demand for privatization often arrives from global institutions more than from governments and corporations.

When water is scarce, polluted, or unaffordable, the violence against women is greater and “special”. Given the fact women as caregivers and household managers are responsible for providing water to their families, they often walk or travel long distances to find water

and bring it to their families, subtracting time from other activities, such as education and involvement in decision-making processes regarding the collective:

Increasingly, water resources management in countries across the globe is being determined by policies of the international financial and trade institutions—the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Trade Organization (WTO). More than two decades ago, the World Bank and IMF began to prescribe a new policy package called structural adjustment programs (SAPs) to indebted countries in exchange for loan financing. SAPs required governments to, among other measures, reduce or eliminate public services, open local markets to foreign interests, and sell off previously state-owned operations to private investors, a process known as privatization. These policies have expanded through the years, and have become a major aspect of ‘trade-related’ policy at the WTO. As governments relinquish control of domestic water systems under pressure from international institutions and regional banks and trade agreements, transnational corporations (TNCs) are gaining unprecedented access to national and local water supplies. Thus, a few major water corporations such as Veolia, RME/Thames Water, and Suez are increasingly controlling water access in many parts of the world” (cf. <https://watsanmissionassistant.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/gender-rights-and-water-privatization-guide-wedo.pdf>, p. 2, date of access 18 of April 2022).

Privatization of water fortifies the gap between rich and poor people and gender inequality, most seriously violently impacting on poor women and girls because of higher prices, water cut-offs, bad water quality, and health and sanitation risks. It is patent the centrality of women in fighting against the sale of public water agencies to corporations; fortunately, many local women’s associations in recent years have promoted marches, pickets, and education campaigns against privatization all over the world. To conclude, the following passage, concerning the strict link between women and the new enclosures, which also characterized Section 3 of this article, is worth being fully quoted:

Women play a central role in social struggles because they are those most affected by dispossession and environmental degradation, suffering directly the effects of public policy in their everyday life. It is women who must deal with those who become sick because of petroleum contamination or because of the water they use to cook, wash, and clean is toxic, and who cannot feed their families because of the loss of land and the destruction of local agriculture. Thus, women today stand on the front lines against the transnational mining and agribusiness corporations that invade rural areas and devastate the environment. As the Ecuadorian scholar-activist Lisset Coba Meja has pointed out, it is women who in the Amazonian region lead the struggle in defense of water [. . .]. They see that the problems they face stem not solely from specific policies or companies but are rooted in the mercenary logic of capitalist accumulation, which even through the promotion of a “green economy” is turning the cleaning of the environment into a new source of speculation and profit [13] (pp. 142–144).

To conclude, with globalization and the privatization of water resources, the attempt to completely erode peoples’ rights and replace collective ownership with corporate control is reinforced [14] (p. 46). Until now, this attempt has had partial success, given the opposition of people and democracies. However, we can easily imagine a dystopian future in which extreme capitalism, ultimate corporations, and large investment management companies will have an overriding success in corrupting or “buying” the parliaments all over the world both in democratic countries (by now determined by elections hugely “polluted” by propaganda) and non-democratic countries. This “last enclosure” will have complete success: the enclosure of water, that is, of life.

6. Conclusions

This article illustrated Marx's description of the extremely violent aspects of the so-called "enclosures", as social and economic procedures that boosted the "primitive accumulation", that is, the first steps that led to capitalism. We have described how enclosures involved the brutal expropriation of peasants by razing their cottages and dwellings. We have also discussed the role played by the "moral bubble", which is created by morally edifying narratives about enclosures that are exclusively focused on the positive economic and social outcomes: the moral bubble acts as a powerful tool capable of making invisible the violence that is related to the enclosures. We have also said that the mechanism of enclosures can be traced back not only to violently dispossessing common lands where peasants thrived but also to violent processes against women in which they were essentially reduced to machines for the "production" of new workers, as part of the new "patriarchy of the wage". The importance of the so-called "new enclosures" is further explained after having examined how enclosures substantiate the historical and general characteristics of capitalistic accumulation, rather than just the original one. The violent features of primitive accumulation, and thus of the primitive enclosures, are described as the main aspects of every moment of recent capitalist globalization, marked by an uninterrupted social, political, and economical assault on the commons, on the part of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, coronavirus lockdowns, and, more recently, by the paradoxical economic effects of the interplay between the green era and Ukraine war—global food and energy crisis. The final piece sheds light on what we have called the "terminal enclosure", regarding the supreme common good: water.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ We have to note that Marx's referral to the story of original sin is obviously ironical: in our opinion, in this case, Marx is not making fun of religion (we know the deep religious proper meaning of the original seen in the Old Testament) but simply refers to a metaphor that can paradoxically indicate the "real" and "material" conditions of the birth of capitalism. Furthermore, the authors would like to stress that the article does not address the aspects of Marx's philosophy that concern historical materialism or the philosophical assumption that major social change is to be explained in terms of class struggle, the nature of the classes, and the details of the struggle being determined, in the last instance, by the economic base. Neither are we dealing with the canonical problem of access to a communist era. The article adopts the reference to the simple mechanism of enclosures as described by Marx as a way of interpreting current phenomena that also furnish the material counterpart of the recent increase of huge private

capitals and hyper-rich people. A mechanism that explains why, in the decade that began in 2010, hot off the heels of the Great Recession, economic growth boomed and stock markets worldwide registered years of significant upticks, and this helped fuel huge growth in large fortunes. The number of billionaires around the globe nearly tripled over the past decade, reaching 2095 on the 2020 Forbes World's Billionaires list.

2 A reviewer of the present article complained about the fact that we do not provide a sufficiently convincing method of proving "current mimicking" of primitive accumulation so are without strong intellectual proof of these processes. We think that the adoption of the word enclosure in Marxian terms with the aim of explaining recent cases that are not usually "seen" as forms of enclosures in the current literature (for example in economics, political science, mass media, and the mentality of ordinary people) is the adoption of a clear and passionate theoretical perspective that of course is offered to the intellectual community as totally open to (1) criticism and/or (2) possible further enrichments/enhancements and/or corrections and modifications. We have to say that we carefully analyzed various current internet sources and bibliographies but, unfortunately, we did not find criticisms or the presence of a controversy regarding the problem of what we call "new enclosures". It seems that other views simply "do not see" enclosures at work where we instead see them in action.

3 The description of enclosures of this paragraph is derived from Wikipedia entry "Enclosures" <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enclosure> (date of access 18 of April 2022).

4 On the affirmation of the dominant status of women as "mothers of family" in French Enlightenment cf. [7].

5 Furthermore, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on real estate markets different from the commercial ones has to be quoted, that also regard residential properties as well as the mortgage market: as [9] further note "In addition, future research should consider existing studies on COVID-19 and should dig deeper on possible links between real estate markets, the macroeconomy and financial markets".

6 Quotation translated from Italian by the authors of the present article.

7 The word "clipping" is here used in an amazing analogy to its original meaning as an "[...] act of shaving off a small portion of a precious metal coin for profit. Over time, the precious metal clippings could be saved up and melted into bullion or used to make new coins", a procedure typical of the last centuries. (Cf. Wikipedia entry "Coin clipping" https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Coin_clipping&redirect=no, date of access 18 of April 2022.)

8 Cf. <https://www.citizen.org/wp-content/uploads/top10-reasonstoopposewaterprivatization.pdf>, date of access 18 of April 2022.

9 It is also well known that privatization is difficult to reverse, given the various economical protections and legal advantages.

10 On the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic as a trigger to privatization of water (and of sanitation), for example, in Brazil, Jakarta, and Philadelphia, see <https://theconversation.com/covid-19-has-decimated-water-systems-globally-but-privatization-is-not-the-answer-155689> (date of access 18 of April 2022). McDonald and Spronk [12] (p. 4) report that The World Bank has promoted a "blended financing" plan that requires private sector participation before public water administrators can receive financial support and UN-Habitat and UNICEF are promoting public-private-partnerships to "engage and empower" small private water vendors (cf. <https://theconversation.com/covid-19-has-decimated-water-systems-globally-but-privatization-is-not-the-answer-155689>, date of access 18 of April 2022). All these processes of privatization are in open contradiction with the UN Special Reports that presented an op-ed outlining how "COVID-19 has exposed the catastrophic impact of privatizing vital services like water and sanitation, with private water companies putting profit ahead of basic needs and public health".

11 In 2017, the video in which "Nestlé Chairman and former CEO Peter Brabeck suggests that declaring water a right is 'extreme' and asserts that water is a foodstuff best valued and distributed by the free market" has achieved remarkable negative popularity. Saying that water should not be a public right is exactly the contrary to what has been written in all the ancient legislations. Cf. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/nestle-chairman-peter-brabeck-water_b_3150150, date of access 18 of April 2022.

12 WEDO is an international advocacy organization that seeks to increase the power of women worldwide as decision-makers at all levels to achieve economic and social justice, democratic governance, and sustainable development—cf. <https://wedo.org/>, date of access 18 of April 2022.

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