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*The Regulations of Honour:  
An Attempt at a Weberian  
and Anthropological Enquiry through  
the Prism of a Spanish Trading Group* \*

*Introduction: the Link between Honour and Trade and the Study  
of a Social Order Regulated by Honour*

THIS ARTICLE SEEKS to understand the ordering and regulating functions of honour in a group devoted to a peculiar form of trade between the late Middle Ages and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After Weber's celebrated if controversial essay on the Protestant Ethic, this connection between honour and trade throughout the modern epoch might seem to be extraordinary. One may wonder what honour has to do with an activity which up until the Reformation incurred the opprobrium reserved for money-making pursuits; which was, in Weber's circumspect expression, "barely morally tolerable", and this only "in the most favourable case" (2002, p. 34). Weber's study of the genealogy of *rational, methodical life conduct* (*Lebensführung*) as the decisive aspect involved in the rise of the spirit of modern capitalism and culture has partly been complemented by Hirschman's remarkable account of the auspicious diffusion of capitalist forms. Hirschman's point of departure purports to be the same as Weber's, only differently phrased: "How did commercial, banking, and similar money-making pursuits become honourable at some point in the modern age after having stood condemned or despised as greed, love of lucre, and avarice for centuries past?" (1981, p. 9).

But did in truth such activities become *honourable*? Or was it rather that honour had lost its grip upon a society increasingly oriented towards

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cussed and, at times, challenged my work with dedication and with all his usual passion and learning.

commerce? For only in a very lax sense of the term “honour”, one that precisely implies its downfall as a dominant regulating principle, can it be said that money-making pursuits became honourable. If Hirschman, following in this the common view, could link profit-seeking to honour it is surely because honour has become so remote from us that we have come to believe that giving pre-eminence to relationships with things, not to mention devoting our lives to their accumulation, can be honourable. It is much more appropriate to formulate this manifold problem about modern capitalism as a shift “from the passions to the interests” (Hirschman) or from something “barely morally tolerable” to “a calling” (Weber). Now trading activities might have existed which were based on *personalized* services and obligations, and therefore on *trust*, and which in addition involved *risk and danger to one’s life*. Such was precisely the case with our group of traders. The problem we shall pose is not therefore about a shift of valuation, whether toward “honour” or a calling; rather it is a problem involving an essential continuity. We shall be dealing with a configuration arranged around two dominant values, honour and salvation, and involving a form of organization almost exclusively based on kinship ties and a mode of life conduct essentially oriented toward honour – a configuration which was able to incorporate certain commercial practices from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards and still maintain its basic relationships until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is our view that the understanding of modern capitalism, and with it the singularity of the West, will benefit from the comparative analysis of configurations of order in which honour plays a crucial role in both defining the diverse realms of life, their multiple relationships and their varying alignments, and regulating conduct. Such a study may likewise help clarify the seemingly endlessly reborn debate on trust and by implication on the nature of the social bonding underlying contemporary capitalist forms and the extent to which such bonding allows an ethics of exchanges. Yet the issue of honour has not figured very prominently on the sociological agenda, and this despite Weber’s manifest concern with and explicit attention to it throughout his life and in various parts of his work, not only in his analysis of status groups. Another question which has perhaps not received the attention it deserves is the relationships between Catholicism and capitalism. It is known that Weber intended to treat Counter Reformation and post-Reformation Catholicism, including the Jesuits, but that, as with various other parts of his research programme, he did not manage to do so (Schluchter 1996, pp. 138 and 235-6).

Our purpose here, it goes without saying, is more modest. We shall be dealing with a small group of Spanish traders who were fervent Catholics and claimed and were reputed to be men of honour. Whilst seeking to provide as comprehensive an account of this group as possible by focusing on its values, organization and conduct, the major aim of the analysis is to study a social order regulated by honour. In so doing we will, for comparative purposes, have in the background some key developments in the Western world, including the Medieval burgher groups with their characteristic form of association, the secular corporation, Weber's analyses of the Protestant ethic and sects, and all in all the specifically modern and contemporary developments as seen from the angle of the successive separation and re-alignment of the life spheres until the economy comes to "encompass" everything else (1), but also in terms of form of organization and mode of life conduct.

Honour is usually understood from the angle of the *carriers* of honour, and therefore primarily seen as incarnated in groups and individual persons. Although most illuminating in Weber's hands, such an approach is nevertheless insufficient since, from a more general standpoint, honour is embedded in the social order itself, its maintenance and reproduction. We consider that honour has to be addressed from both standpoints, but that the angle of the carriers should be encompassed in the angle of honour as a value ordering and regulating social life as a whole. From this more overarching angle honour appears incarnated in external domains. As we shall see, honour for our group of traders was incarnated in two major domains: one honour domain embraced the trading routes and the highly valuable items conducted, and had the exclusive and quasi-sacred character naturally enjoyed by the other honour domain, that of the family house and lineage, with its land and women. It is the former domain, closely linked to honour as *excellence*, which our group pledged to defend against robbers and holdup men. It is the successful defence of the pledged word's domain which made these traders famous as courageous and trustworthy men to the eyes of their contemporaries. If they laid a successful claim to honour and managed to outplay rival trading groups it was primarily because they were able to transform such excellence and fame into *status-honour*,

(1) The idea of a value (i.e. a value-idea) encompassing or being encompassed by another value, that is, the encompassment of the contrary, or, put more simply, the relation between ensemble and element, has been developed by L. Dumont as the fundamental expression of hierarchy. It is a concept of

paramount importance, above all from a comparative stand, the use of which outside a strictly Dumontian approach may easily become misuse (see DUMONT 1985. index, s.v. "hiérarchie, exemples d'englobement du contraire", and 1986. pp. 224f and 252f).

which had its main expression in the domain of the family house and lineage. How this was possible is a question which this article seeks to answer.

The task we have set out to do may be thought to be all too ambitious. However, we have come to the view that any attempt to understand a single aspect of a group's life would tend to err more than the approach we advocate. Admittedly the operation is of necessity selective; nevertheless we hope our theoretical and methodological approach will allow us to avoid arbitrariness and do justice to our group (2). The article will advance through different levels of analysis, each contributing to a picture which will be built in stages. After an initial, mainly descriptive introduction which will seek to position our trading group in the midst of its society and to characterise the specific nature of its trade, the article will be concerned with the constitution and workings of the two major honour domains and their interrelations: firstly, the domain of the family house and lineage and its reproduction; secondly, the political and socio-economic orders and the relations between the household domain and trade; finally, the workings of the honour domain constituted around trade, paying particular attention to the function of trust. The chief focus of the paper is on the diverse facets and functions of honour as a value and regulating system.

## I

*The Arrieros (Muleteers) and the Nature of Their Trade*

*Arrieros* or muleteers were originally all those devoted to the transportation of other people's goods through mule trains (3). The *arrieros* we are to study here came from a region of León, in Northwest Spain, known as *La Maragatería* – hence the term *arrieros maragatos* (4). The

(2) This study is also limited by the information available, which is clearly insufficient for a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of our group, as most of it refers to the modern period and is concentrated in the middle and upper ranks. Nonetheless, the existence of many bond bills and other legal documents is highly valuable; above all there are a number of wills which are precious for our purposes, as they provide evidence of both this group's activities and their ethos. Many of these documents were actually written by notaries

and other professionals and follow rather standard patterns; they therefore reflect as much about the period as about our group of traders.

(3) The most important studies about our group of traders are by far those done by MARTÍN GALINDO, J. L. (1956 and 1965), pioneer in doing serious research about this group, and RUBIO, L. M. (1995), who has done the most comprehensive survey so far.

(4) *La Maragatería* is a small (600 sq. km) transition area towards the mountain with a

peculiarity of the *arrieros* of this area vis-à-vis other *arrieros* lies essentially in that they monopolized the transportation of some highly valuable items such as the royal moneys in Northwest Spain and, most significantly, in that such a monopoly was based on the possession of land. To begin to understand the identity of our *arrieros* and the kind of men they were let us, firstly, try and situate them in the midst of their society; we shall, secondly, specify the nature of their trade; finally, it seems necessary, and indeed revealing, to explicitly compare them with the burghers and with the privileged groups.

The *arrieros*' identity came to be closely attached to their territorial belonging and to their trading occupation, which differentiated them from other trading groups and from the peasants of their own region respectively. But there were other features of the *arrieros*' identity which strongly marked their social condition as men of honour, above all their condition as *landowners* and *free* men; also significant is the plausible fact that they occasionally engaged in war and military expeditions in search of plunder (5). All these characteristics are closely interrelated and go back to the conditions imposed in Christian Spain by the permanent war against the Muslims, the so called *reconquista*, and the repopulation of new territories, which in our area occurred in the late ninth century (6).

Amongst the various characteristics of the *arriería* or muleteery as practised by the *arrieros*, the following must be highlighted: its character as an external and transport-based trade; its almost continuous associa-

poor quality soil. It was inhabited by about 8,000 people in the early modern age and 14,000 in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century spread out in about 40 very small villages or "pueblos". At the height of their activity in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the *arrieros* constituted about 400 families, approximately 20 percent of the families of the area.

(5) That the *arrieros*, or at least a majority of them, were landowners is evidenced in the documents available from the 13<sup>th</sup> century; that they were free men is strongly suggested by the very nature of their trade as a *long-distance* activity and its close link with land ownership. In this respect, the evidence shows that the *arrieros* were neither professional merchants, as for example Jews, or what PIRENNE names "improvised merchants" (1936, pp. 9-11); nor were they what WEBER (1981, pp. 196-197) calls "negotiators", i.e. agents attached as a sort of officials to seigniorial, ecclesiastical or secular lords who sought to market the surplus products of their estates. Anecdotally, let us say that it is an error to

maintain, as Braudel does, that the *arrieros maragatos* were pedlars and carters (1985, p. 79). Braudel's way of dealing with our group of traders is rather uncomprehensible, for the source he uses (namely, MARTÍN GALINDO 1965) contains very different observations to the conclusions derived by him and his team.

(6) We must stress that the lack of information about the *arrieros* before the 12<sup>th</sup> century prevents us from establishing any certain conclusions. Nevertheless, what is important to highlight here is the direct link between the emergence of the *arrieros* and the 11<sup>th</sup> century revival of the pilgrims' road to Santiago of Compostela and the commercial, urban and monastic renaissance brought about by the pilgrimage (VÁZQUEZ DE PARGA *et alii* 1948-1949), for the *arrieros*' route between their own region and Galicia coincided with the pilgrims' road, and documents from the 13<sup>th</sup> century show our group supplying the monasteries located in the pilgrims' road and its surroundings (RUBIO 1995, p. 253).

tion with war; its risky, perilous character; and its close interrelation with land ownership. The nature of this trade as an activity *external* to the in-group seems to have been characteristic of the beginnings of commerce (Weber 1981, p. 195). Furthermore, it was a trade neither purely or predominantly commercial nor local, but rather *long-distance* and *export-based*, a characteristic which again seems to have been typical of the emergence of commerce, and which applied to the commercial revolution of the Middle Ages (Pirenne 1936, p. 140). This means that the *arrieros*, as other trading groups, did not trade among their own people; but, unlike the typical merchants, they did not as a rule engage in buying and selling merchandise – of course they probably indulged in some commerce, but the point is that even when they began to practise wholesale and retail commerce on a more regular basis, as they actually did from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, transport-based trade remained by far the predominant activity and the cardinal foundation of their fame. Thus, being predominantly free from commercial undertakings until the dawn of the modern epoch, the *arrieros*' trade was not likely to be the object of the contemptuous attitude of the nobility and the parallel Church's teachings against commerce: "There is something disgraceful about trade, something sordid and shameful", wrote St Thomas (*Summa II*, 2, quaest. LXXVII, art. 4).

Nor is the association between trade and war peculiar to the trade practised by our group. Diverse prominent scholars such as Pirenne (1936, p. 21; 1969, pp. 106-7), Weber (1981, p. 202) and Polanyi (1957, p. 59) coincide in considering this relationship between trade and war as a pattern characteristic of the emergence of trade and commerce. We may surmise that as the so called *reconquista* advanced and the Arabs were contained far down south, Christian society gained a certain peace and stability and this trade gradually replaced the succession of military expeditions in search of plunder which were so frequent before. Be that as it may, documents from the 14<sup>th</sup> century unequivocally prove the engagement of the *arrieros* in the civil wars of Castilla, not in combat as cavalymen but in the supply of the troops with their mule trains. As a result of these war services they were granted privileges by the monarchy in the form of both titles of *hidalguía* or lesser nobility to some *arrieros*, which implied an automatic exemption from the taxes levied by the crown, and collective exemptions from the territorial dues and tolls imposed on the circulation of merchandise (Rubio 1995, pp. 210 and 253-4; Rodríguez 1981, pp. 222-3). Since then and until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the *arrieros* participated, always on the side of the royal troops, in the most important wars; in reciprocity, the monarchy granted them not

only exemptions but also monopolies such as the transportation of royal taxes, tobaccos, and other royal items which would allow them to outplay rival trading groups in the north-west of Spain. Furthermore, this relationship with the monarchy would decisively contribute to increase the *arrieros*' fame as trustworthy and honourable men. The point to bear in mind here is that, in a society which had become used to the winning of wealth by the waging of war, first against the Muslims and immediately afterwards in the New World, and had therefore reserved its respect for the man who had won riches by force of arms rather than by the sweat of diligent pursuits, this link between trade and war seems crucial for understanding the *arrieros*' honour and the social esteem of this kind of trade.

A third characteristic is the risky and perilous nature of this trade, which exposed the *arrieros* to the violent assaults of robbers in route and compelled them to carry arms and travel in group for their protection. Furthermore, the transport of large amounts of money and other valuable items required a considerable organization, partly protective and thus of a certain military character (brigades). It is well known that the *arrieros* carried swords and later on shotguns and other weapons to protect their merchandise from robbers and highway men, which gave their travels the character of military expeditions. Hence the exhibition of certain qualities such as courage, cunning and endurance which, being typical of the warriors, were also recognised as characteristic of the *arrieros*, as their fame testifies. On the other hand, the risk involved made the *arrieros*' trade perfectly acceptable to the church, as it was one of the conditions which according to St. Thomas might justify commercial gain. In addition, the fact that the *arrieros* did not engage in lending money also made their trade acceptable to the church, for their gains might be considered as a reward of effort rather than a mortgage on time (7). Contrary to the so called *cambios secos* or "dry exchanges", i.e. those involving usurious dealings with money which caused so much concern among theologians and moralists in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the *arrieros*' trade was based on "real" merchandise. It was therefore free from the almost secure damnation which awaited those involved in "dry" exchanges, as was proclaimed in the multiple treaties on commerce and usury and in the casuistic manuals which proliferated in the early modern epoch and which – let us note in passing – anxious merchants and businessmen not less than insecure confessors frequently consulted.

(7) On the acceptable conditions of trade for St. Thomas, see SCHUMPETER (1994, p. 91).

But the most important characteristic of the *arrieros'* trade was unquestionably its close association with land ownership. Land appears by any reckoning as the true wealth for the *arrieros*. There is nothing peculiar in that; after all owning land was by far the most desirable asset for all social groups, and the passion for its possession was already present since at least the early Middle Ages. But an asset, however valuable, is not a sacred possession. We recognise here a fundamental change in the relationship between land and man whereby the traditional link between rights in the land and power over men was weakened, so that both elements, land and man, began very timidly to follow a process of re-alignment which will culminate in their relative separation in the early modern epoch (8). It is within this new configuration that the *arrieros* came to be related to the land in a rather peculiar fashion. On the one hand, land was essential for the *arrieros'* identity; above all, it was the guarantee of status-honour and its reproduction. But on the other hand, land was also the very foundation of the *arrieros'* trade, since carrying goods, and particularly the monopolistic transportation of highly valuable items, required land as the most important guarantee of endorsement (9). In this way, land was both an end and a means; land was put at risk in order to endorse trading operations, whereas trade was a means to the more overarching end of accumulating land. The relationship between land ownership and trade was therefore not simply one of interdependency, but of encompassing in which trade appears subordinated to land, and both to status-honour. This is very well reflected by the fact that, following the patterns set by the nobility, the *arrieros* entailed part of their land and subjected it to a series of constraints, including primogeniture, aimed at avoiding not only its sale, and hence its use to endorse trading operations, but also the parcelisation resulting from a system of inheritance which included all siblings.

This fundamental orientation of the *arrieros* toward status-honour distinguished them from the urban *burghers* who arose with the commercial and urban revolution of the late 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries and with

(8) On the traditional link between rights in land and power over men see DUMONT (1980, appendix C; 1985, p. 44; and 1986, p. 106).

(9) The relation between well-to-do agricultural units and wealthy *arrieros* since the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the concentration of land in the hands of the *arrieros* throughout the modern epoch has been shown by RUBIO (1995, pp. 53, 203-4), who estimates that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the *arrieros* owned more than two-thirds of the arable land of

their region. This process of concentration of land reached its zenith in the third decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when they bought most of the secularized land of their region and many monastic properties located in the trading routes. But then land had become a commodity, definitely separated from power over men, and could not be the foundation of status-honour any longer. It was this period which saw their downfall.



whom the *arrieros* would soon establish trading links. For the *arrieros* as a social group had practically nothing in common, or at least nothing which was essential, with this new “bourgeoisie” (10), as they were bound to their society as this society was. In contradistinction to the burghers’ incompatibility with the fundamental principles of the traditional organization of society, the *arrieros*’ life orientation, aspirations and mode of conduct were integrated in their society and comprised nothing revolutionary (11). Thus, whereas what first united the variety of people and groups known as burghers was their condition as landless men, the *arrieros* were closely attached to the land and land owners themselves (12). The burghers were *homines novi* whose interests and aspirations led them to engage, as Weber says, in status-conscious policies the result of which was the dissolution of the bonds of seigniorial domination and their substitution by the secular concept of corporation. This was, in Weber’s view, “the great – in fact, the *revolutionary* – innovation which differentiated the medieval Occidental cities from all others” (1978, p. 1239, original emphasis) (13).

None of these developments have a parallel in the case of the *arrieros*. To begin with, the *arrieros* never constituted a sworn confraternity that was politically oriented; they were members, at least formally, of their pueblos’ *concejos* (assemblies of household heads), institutions which did possess the character of corporations, but not in the context of an oath-bound political association – rather the *concejos* were the customary local polities. Likewise, membership of both the *concejos* and other associations with a certain corporate character such as the pueblos’

(10) We use the term “bourgeoisie” to refer to the new groups of burghers and in the sense that Weber did, that is, as a rather heterogeneous urban stratum either directly participating in commerce and industry or interested in them (1978, p. 1347).

(11) The term “incompatible” has been taken from PIRENNE (1936, p. 49). Actual incompatibility only existed in relation to the traditional organization of society, and not to the society as a whole; on the other hand, incompatibility, as Weber has underscored, did exist between the knightly and bourgeois values and modes of conduct, when brought to their logical conclusions (see WEBER 1978, pp. 1104-09). In saying that there was nothing revolutionary in the *arrieros* we do not mean that changes did not occur in their villages or pueblos as a direct consequence of the *arrieros*’ orientation and practices. But in order to fulfill their aspirations, the *arrieros* need not chal-

lenge the basic principles of their society, since such aspirations were themselves part of their society, and their fulfillment could be – and was actually – attained with the traditional means at hand.

(12) See PIRENNE (1936, pp. 44-5). On the Spanish burghers, called “Franks”, see GARCÍA DE VALDEAVELLANO (1980, ch. XV; 1983, pp. 193f).

(13) If the uprisings and the revolutionary usurpations of power are essential for understanding the motivations and life conduct of the burghers, what truly represents a breakthrough of historical consequence was, according to SCHLUCHTER (1996, pp. 220 and 223), the structural principle on which autonomy and autocephaly were based, a principle which breaks with the prebendally or feudally appropriated manorial, ecclesiastical, and urban powers.

*cofradías* or fraternities was determined by being a household head and neighbour of the pueblos rather than by occupation or other characteristics. In actual fact such fraternal associations provided for life as a whole, that is, they had a religious and social character, and were not based on occupation. Finally, there is no evidence showing that the *arrieros* organized themselves through a guild. In this respect, the short-lived association which they formed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (López García 1994, p. 42; Rubio 1995, p. 210) was neither constituted by members of a corporate body nor in charge of regulating access to the trading occupation; rather it had a very specific purpose, namely, to protect their trading privileges, and its form seems to have been subordinated to the *arrieros*' dominant form of organization based on patronage.

A comparison between the *arrieros* of our area and the *arrieros* from the city of Soria is most revealing, as the latter were not only urban but also *resident* traders, and were able to regulate the prices of some of the products of their trade within the city, particularly wine, something which would have been inconceivable in the pueblos of our *arrieros*, where, as the customary law gathered in the pueblos' ordinances shows, the *concejos* treated the sale of essential foodstuffs such as oil, meat and wine as offices rather than occupations, and imposed an iron regulatory policy concerning their entrance, consumption, price and general conditions of service (14).

The *arrieros* were thus driven by a traditional ethos strongly oriented towards status-honour and hence to the accumulation and preservation of land. Their social situation may be considered as unusually fortunate in that they gradually came to be positioned in close, but non-threatening contact with the privileged status groups, the monarchy, the church, the aristocracy and the urban merchants, for whom they provided special services. Thus, as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century the *arrieros* were heavily involved in the transport of taxes in money and kind mainly for the monarchy, but also rents for the nobility and the church; bills of exchange and cash generated in the Castillian fairs and markets; fabrics and cloths for the Castilian merchants; and many other services including, as we have seen, the supply of the royal troops and the monopolistic transportation of special items such as tobacco. Although less important, the leasing of lands of the great *rentier* groups and their subsequent subleasing to the peasants (Rubio 1995, pp. 213-23 and

(14) On the resident trader see WEBER (1981, pp. 215-20). On the *arrieros* of Soria, see GARCÍA DE VALDEAVELLANO (1982, p. 286). The customary law of the *arrieros*' localities and the regulations of their *concejos* have been analyzed

elsewhere on the basis of existing local ordinances, including a few recuperated from the dusty, often dispersed archives of some pueblos (FRADE 1998, chapter 4).

184-89) also contributed to strengthening their intermediate position between those groups and the peasant population. Such a position, which will continue up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was unusually privileged, for not only did it provide the *arrieros* with inestimable socio-political and economic opportunities for appropriating monopolistic advantages, giving them access to invaluable relations and sources of information; it also allowed them to partake in the honour of those privileged groups, and to successfully compete with rival traders. It is worth emphasising that it was this engagement in diverse networks and relationships with the privileged groups what gradually seems to have constituted the *arrieros* as the kind of trading group which they became.

## II

*The Arrieros as Men of Honour*

Progressively engaged in regular relationships with the privileged groups and the chief institutions of Spanish society, our *arrieros* soon became a status group, although an heterogeneous one, as is frequently the case with status groups. As such the *arrieros* became internally ranked and enjoyed a common system of values and a common culture, and aspired to a similar style of life. As we have seen, some *arrieros* did belong to the lesser nobility, i.e. they were *hidalgos*, while others sought to obtain the title of *hidalguía* as soon as they could afford to claim it to the crown in compensation for trade services or to pay for it – something not infrequently met with success given the “inflation of honours” which characterised the early modern epoch in Spain just as in England and other Western European countries (Stone 1967; Maravall 1989), although it arguably had an earlier origin in Spain, where access to the *hidalguía* had been comparatively more open since the early Middle Ages. In fact, in a society in which the honour and privileges of the nobility were largely the preserve of warriors, the involvement of large numbers of men in war brought about, in connivance with the monarchy, a shaking-up of the principle and regulation of honour simultaneously involving a degree of upward social mobility and a reinforcement of the closure mechanisms.

The title of *hidalguía* exempted the *arrieros* from royal taxes and gave them a number of privileges before the law; above all it fulfilled their social aspirations to status-honour, for in a world in which the *hidalguía* was, in Elliott’s expression, “an object of universal desire”

(1963, p. 115), all the *arrieros*' worldly aspirations seemed to culminate in acquiring status-honour. Following the patterns set by the privileged groups, the *arrieros* began to display a series of mechanisms the aim of which was, to express it in the words of their own last wills, *to perpetuate the family lineage*; chief amongst such mechanisms were a strong endogamy and carefully cultivated matrimonial alliances; the constitution of *mayorazgos* or primogenitures with entailed estates, sometimes with religious foundations attached to them; the placement of offsprings in local church offices; and the exhibition of signs of distinction in weddings and funerals. None of these features taken in isolation are peculiar of the *arrieros*; after all the bourgeois craving for honours and the turn of some bourgeois groups to *rentiers* – the famous “betrayal” – is a well known phenomenon in the whole of Western Europe. But taken together they constitute the foundations of a system of reproduction presided by honour which the *arrieros* developed throughout the modern epoch until it completely fell apart in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But before dealing with the system of reproduction we have to consider another crucial aspect of the *arrieros*' form of honour, one concerning its very nature as a cumulative system and therefore the relationships between status-honour and honour as excellence.

The *arrieros*' claim to honour was not confined to status-honour; as any such claim, it also involved an essential component of honour as *excellence*. Above all the *arrieros* claimed and were reputed to be “men of their word” and hence trustworthy; thus honour as excellence took on the form of *faithfulness to the pledged word* as the dominant characteristic. The *arrieros*' pledged word fashioned a domain embracing the trading routes, the mule trains and the items conducted which soon acquired the nearly exclusive character also enjoyed by their family lineages and households. If in the latter the *arrieros* exercised the authority due to their position, it was the domain defined by the pledged word which enabled the *arrieros* to exercise the power for which they became famous and to relate them to the wider society and its main institutions and groups. Needless to say the claim to status-honour was essentially based not on birth or a noble ancestry which most *arrieros* did not actually have, but precisely on honour as excellence, that is, on the successful defence of the pledged word's domain against robbers and holdup men, which made the *arrieros* trustworthy men to the eyes of their contemporaries. But how, we must ask, did the pledged word come to have such a prominence in the *arrieros*' specific form of honour?

It would be in accord with a considerable literature to answer this question by arguing that the *arrieros*' honour was simply the form of

honour which best matched their interests, were it not because, as Weber saw it (1970, p. 280), the interests in themselves are blind unless guided by worldviews. Nor can our problem be solved by contrasting a declining aristocracy and its exhausted chivalric ethos with a rising bourgeoisie and its new mentality, if only because neither did the medieval chivalric honour disappear with the Middle Ages nor, as we have seen, did our group of traders seem to be carriers of a modern bourgeois mentality. It is in the context of the continuity of the medieval chivalric ethos not only with the aristocratic ideal of the Renaissance – a continuity that is well established by scholarly studies (15) – but with other forms of honour of the early modern age that we shall locate our problem. After all, faithfulness to the pledged word not less than other elements of the *arrieros*' honour such as courage were anything but new to any form of honour. Continuity, however, does not imply lack of change; if many elements were already available, the configuration was not. It seems plausible to think that the *arrieros*' form of honour arose out of the interplay between the dominant Christian values as these were constituted after the so called "papal revolution" of the early Middle Ages and the chivalric form of honour, itself imbued with Christian values, in specific social circumstances. It comprised the idea of salvation as the supreme otherworldly value and other values such as the peculiar Christian regard for work, more penitential and protective than redemptive (Le Goff 1980). How this process took place is always difficult to say. Our purpose here is simply to point to what in our view is perhaps its essential development, i.e. the separation of honour as excellence from status-honour and their subsequent re-alignment, a complex process which cannot be divorced from the new alignment between man and land already referred to and which owes much to the Church's call to fight the infidel in the crusades.

Of course men and groups of honour see their honour as being one and indivisible. Nevertheless, from another perspective it seems clear that excellence-honour became differentiated from status-honour at some point in the early Middle Ages, when those men whose wealth allowed them to maintain horse and armour, and hence to wage war, were granted some noble privileges, thus becoming "villains" or "commoner knights", apparently a group with no parallel in Europe (Sánchez

(15) The continuity of the values of fame and glory in the Middle Ages is documented in LIDA DE MALKIEL (1983). P. Bénichou stresses the same idea with regard to the Renaissance: "Il y a là un courant de pensée ininterrompu, que la Renaissance avait modifié et en un cer-

tain sens renforcé plutôt qu'elle ne l'avait contrarié. Le prestige de la chevalerie héroïque s'était rajeuni au contact retrouvé des héros antiques" (BÉNICHOU 1948, pp. 19-20); and also HUIZINGA (1955, pp. 67-9), who contends with Burckhardt on this point.

Albornoz 1973, pp. 50ff; García de Valdeavellano 1980, chapter 4 and 1982, pp. 322-45, 613-17; García de Cortázar 1988, pp. 32 and 141), and eventually *hidalgos*. What is important to emphasise here is that, in a society oriented to and organised for frontier warfare, the value bestowed upon warlike virtues was such that it made possible entry into the ranks of the nobility not only by virtue of birth or lineage, but thanks to military courage as well. In this process, wealth in itself did not qualify for status; it was a necessary but by no means sufficient prerequisite. As shown elsewhere (Frade 1998), nothing better reveals this new alignment between status-honour and excellence-honour than the epic poem on the figure of the *Cid* and the 13<sup>th</sup> century legal code known as *Siete Partidas*. In the new society thus born status-honour could be acquired through honour as excellence within a configuration in which the latter was subordinated to the former. Historically this initiated a quest for status-honour among lesser noblemen and non-noblemen alike which would reach its zenith in the early modern epoch, when, as Elliott observes, “the ranks of the *hidalgos* were constantly being refreshed by an infusion of new blood” (1963, pp. 115-16). Perhaps the most representative figures of this longing for glory and honour were the *conquistadores*, many of whom, including Cortés himself, were *hidalgos*. The *arrieros* also came from poor families and a poor land, but while the *conquistadores* continued in the New World the enterprise undertaken with the so called *reconquista*, the *arrieros*, as many other trading groups, remained in the Peninsula, at last freed from the infidel. For the *arrieros* trust and the word would thus somehow become the equivalent in a world relatively pacified but still violent of courage and the sword in a world in war, although neither of the latter were obviously alien to the *arrieros*’ world. As we have pointed out before, the *arrieros*’ word came to have the status of an almost exclusive honour domain embracing the trading routes; it was their *word of honour*, and as such it had to be maintained and defended against the several challenges which threatened it in the trading routes.

By putting the *arrieros* alongside the *conquistadores* no attempt is made whatever to equate both groups. After all the *conquistadores* represent the continuation of the heroic ideal, whereas the *arrieros* are associated with the downfall of the hero. And yet both groups partake in a similar configuration of values, dominant in their society at the time, with God at the top and honour in the foreground (16). The chief and

(16) The trinity “gold, glory and gospel” has often been used and, as LEONARD recalls (1959, pp. 17-28), misused to explain the

impulse of the *conquistadores*. More appropriate from our standpoint is the view of Cortés’s companion and chronicler DÍAZ DEL CAS-

by far most important difference, one from which all the others derive, between the *arrieros* and the *conquistadores* lies in the means used to acquire honour: trade versus conquest. There is nothing heroic in trade; however much risk and trouble were involved in the *arrieros*' trade, it was but little compared with the hardship, the sacrifice and the dangers faced by the *conquistadores*. Although both groups sought to acquire land, and both groups entailed it, the path taken by the *arrieros* involved no glory at all. The point to emphasize here is that in Spanish society of the time honour took on a cumulative form which led, as a compensating response of the whole system, to a tightening up of the mechanisms of social closure – we need not reiterate here the statute of *limpieza de sangre* or purity of blood – and a reinforcement of the outward marks of honour.

Let us complete this section on the workings of honour by referring to the otherworldly value. There is no question about the place of salvation in the *arrieros*' world as the supreme otherworldly value. For not only is the eternal salvation of their souls the first issue systematically addressed in the *arrieros*' last wills; the wills themselves are conceived of as the result of the concern with both salvation and honour. As was typical of the privileged groups, the *arrieros*' wills follow a rather standard pattern whereby, after stating their unyielding faith and calling upon the whole heavenly court of angels, virgins and saints as intercessors of their salvation, they declare their wish "to put our souls in the path to salvation", a wish the fulfilment of which seems to require, as a final act of Catholic life as is the preparation for a Catholic death, to leave worldly matters well arranged, i.e. to secure the perpetuation of the family lineage and avoid conflict between the descendants, which was not always easy (17). Most interesting in these wills is the issue of how salvation is attached to social condition, or, in other words, how the highest otherworldly value is related to status-honour. The idea seems to have existed since the Middle Ages that one has to seek salvation according to one's social position (18). In this view salvation is accessible to all good Christians regardless of their worldly honour; the way to salvation, however, is dependent upon honour, and the *arrieros*' wills simply reflect this view.

TILLO, who, with the candid ease which characterises his account of the conquest, wrote: "We came here to serve God and the king, and also to get rich" (1955, p. 78).

(17) We have consulted wills dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, kept in the Archivo Histórico Provincial de León. Most of them belong to the upper ranks among the

*arrieros*. A few of these wills have been collected by RUBIO (1995, pp. 366-99).

(18) Prince D. Juan Manuel, the first lay author who reached a prominent position in Castilian learning, advised about the need to understand how one can best save the soul keeping one's estate and *honna*; see LIDA DE MALKIEL (1983, pp. 209-10).

Of particular significance for us is the relationship between status-honour and the church. For if the way to salvation depends on both the church as mediating agency and status-honour, there follows that there must be a special relationship between the two. In particular, the church provides for salvation in accordance with status-honour by, for example, giving access to exclusive and distinctive places for burial, and hence showing that it enjoys an honour of its own – something not unrelated to Weber's office charisma. This means that status-honour is also associated with the church as an honour giving and legitimising institution. If this is so it is only natural that the *arrieros* sought in the church not only the signs but also the recognition of status-honour. We shall see later other aspects of this complex relationship between the church and status-honour. For the moment it suffices to observe that such a relationship involved a constant flux of resources towards the church, whose exclusive access to burial, masses and other ceremonies had of course very concrete economic expressions.

III

*Honour and Social Reproduction*

As the authority and power attached to the legitimate social position within the social structure and to personal excellence, honour involves relationships of *authority and power* embracing the household and also diverse networks of patronage. Honour here finds its main expression in the authority and power exercised by the *arrieros* over their wives, offspring, servants and other dependants. But status-honour also involves a specific style of life expressed and maintained through several limits to social intercourse between groups in regard to commensality, connubium and monopolistic enjoyment of privileges. These mechanisms of social closure predicated upon status-honour and providing the basis for social reproduction were of the utmost importance for the *arrieros*. In the modern period the *arrieros'* world as a whole was presided over by the idea of continuity and perpetuation of the family house and lineage. It was a world oriented to, firstly, securing the continuity of the family house, and also enabling its social advancement.

Since the high Middle Ages reproduction was conditioned by the right to inheritance of all siblings, and the reproduction mechanisms and strategies that the *arrieros* gradually developed were to a significant extent attempts at compensating for the dispersing effects of such an



inheritance system. There is evidence that such reproduction strategies were tightened up in periods of socio-economic crisis. However, since the information available does not allow us to discern in detail the extent to which that reproduction system, and for that matter the whole configuration, might have evolved throughout the modern epoch once it was fully constituted in the early modern period, we will refer here only to the most important of such mechanisms, starting with the marked occupational and family endogamy resulting from a carefully cultivated policy of matrimonial alliances.

Marriage was not simply a family business, but a political affair, and to marry according to family status was the chief objective of an iron matrimonial policy which had one of its main instruments in the matrimonial alliances controlled by family lineages. As practised by the *pueblos*' peasants, endogamy was a question of neighbourhood, kinship and above all marrying within the *pueblos*. As practised by the *arrieros* endogamy was rather different, for not only did the *arrieros* resort to endogamic practices much more extensively and intensively than the peasant families; they also introduced an occupational and status group endogamy which cut across the boundaries of the *pueblos*, thus breaching what was the most important boundary to endogamy in the *pueblos*. Here too the *arrieros* turned away from the *pueblos* and their *concejos*, which had specific regulations aimed at preventing or discouraging marriages between *pueblos*. Nevertheless, the *arrieros* fundamental orientation toward status-honour was realised, with the exception of a few irrelevant cases of marriages with the *rentier* groups and the commercial bourgeoisie, not by opening themselves up to other groups, but rather by closing up upon themselves. Endogamic practices seem to have been extensively resorted to by all the *arriero* families; yet, as with other characteristics of this group, the higher in rank the family, the stronger the endogamy. Given the astonishing level of endogamy it comes as no surprise to know that papal dispensations were required almost as a matter of course, as the parochial archives of the *pueblos* show (19).

Matrimonial alliances between families were part of a system of patronage whereby family lineages led by prominent families established

(19) Some data about the extremely high levels of endogamy may be revealing: 99.9% of marriages within the same occupational group; within the group as a whole, more than 50% of the marriages required papal dispensation – a figure that rose to 88% in the case of the upper rank (RUBIO 1995, pp. 98, 280 and 290-91).

The case of a wealthy *arriero* in decline marrying his niece in 1866 is most suggestive. To a downfall announced for some time but which now seemed unstoppable the *arrieros*' seemed unable to find a response other than reinforcing family endogamy and other closure mechanisms.

marriage relations according to the status of the families involved. Most marriages were thus the result of specific marriage compromises or agreements, a sort of pre-matrimonial compact whereby the two families directly involved agreed to the terms of the marriage. Given the characteristics of this matrimonial policy, one would expect parallel and cross cousin marriages, and particularly the latter, since this represents the best formula for perpetuating one's lineage and keeping patrimony undivided (20). Actually cross cousin marriage was frequently practised by the upper ranks, particularly by those families with instituted primogenitures. As a fundamental expression of alliance, marriage involved the endowment of both spouses with important dowries. There were thus both male and female dowries; the former typically composed of real estate and mules, whereas the latter mainly included domestic items and oxen, thus making clear the connection of the male with trade and the female with agriculture. It is in this context of matrimonial alliances and compacts that the *arriero* wedding (*boda maragata*), which has attracted so much attention among travellers and folklorists alike, becomes a ceremony of the highest significance, for it is one of the most important occasions for the display of honour and its marks of distinction by having large numbers of guests and providing them with copious meals during the two or more days that the wedding will typically last.

The placement of sons in local church offices and daughters in monasteries was another means of avoiding the dispersion of the family's patrimony, although this was neither the only nor perhaps the most important objective of such a strategy. The considerable number of sons, particularly from the upper ranks, which from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards turned toward ecclesiastical offices in the parishes of the area and also in the domestic chaplaincies established by their own parents indicates that the *arrieros* were also oriented toward the status and power attached to these posts. As the *arrieros'* wills reflect, the dowries with which these sons and daughters had to be endowed to enter the ecclesiastical and monastic careers and also to compensate for their renunciation of their legitimate inheritance, were more than offset by the influence and prestige enjoyed by church offices and monastic life with the resulting contribution to the status-honour of the families.

The constitution of *mayorazgos* or primogenitures with entailed estates were above all the way to secure, as the legal documents consti-

(20) It goes without saying that in the case of the *arrieros* it is different alliances pursued according to ideal and material interests, rather than one and the same alliance relationship

observed by tradition; for the latter see DUMONT (1983, pp. 14f). In other words, in the *arrieros'* world affinity was subordinated to other values.

tuting the primogenitures declare, the “permanence” of the land and family house by removing them from trading endorsements, and to “perpetuate the memory of the family house and lineage” – an aim very much in accord with an institution whose holder was actually a trustee of a patrimony which in truth belonged to the family lineage. As instituted by the upper rank, the primogenitures fulfilled the function of keeping together the family patrimony but respecting all siblings’ right to inheritance; thus they only entailed part of the patrimony, although usually the most valuable real estate, without fully exploiting all the mechanisms allowed by the law. But the *mayorazgos* were also status-seeking signs. In this respect the evident connection of the religious foundations attached to the *mayorazgos* with salvation was notably overshadowed by their meaning as signs of distinction and status. This is clearly reflected in the private hermitages, some of which were rather sumptuous for the standards of the area, with which a few elite families endowed the religious foundations of their *mayorazgos*. Here again status-honour and the exhibition of this worldly splendour were at the foreground in the way to salvation.

All these reproduction mechanisms define the lines along which accumulation of honour can take place. Increasing honour was practically tantamount to enlarging the household and expanding the networks of patronage. This included the accumulation of land, mules and cattle, which for the *arrieros* was inseparable from increasing the number of servants and family members. In this respect, the saying “*muchos hijos, muchos mulos*” (many children, many mules) was an ideal constantly pursued and frequently realized, as the large number of children per family shows. For the *arrieros* their social standing was closely associated to being seen and recognizing themselves as the “patriarchs” of large households and patronage networks and the “masters” of the trading routes – in other words, as having authority and power over a large group of people.

Relationships here were based on subordination and involved fidelity and trust. Trust was therefore not exclusive to the relationships between the *arrieros* and the wider society. What is peculiar to the relationships engaged in the context of the household and related networks of patronage is that trust was encompassed in bonds of subordination and dependency, which were dominant. Fidelity and obedience marked the relationships of the *arrieros* with their wives, daughters and sons. The relationship between the *arrieros* and the servants, some of whom were members of the households, was paternalistic, based on subordination and trust, rather than on a contractual exchange of labour power for wages. The *arriero* was a sort of “patron” or “political autocrat” (Weber

1989, p. 161), *personally* related to his servants, rather than an impersonal manager or businessman; as such he accepted responsibilities in relation to the welfare of the servants, while the latter were expected to be loyal. But the whole system of reproduction was very much dependent upon maintaining the sons in paternal fidelity. In order to understand this paternal-filial relationship it seems necessary to consider, however briefly, the issue of honour and the *singular individual* (for an extensive treatment see Frade 1998, chapter 1).

Honour, as we have emphasized, cannot be reduced to individual or group honour; and yet societies in which honour is the supreme worldly value function to a major extent thanks to a continuous struggle for honour among men. In this context individual persons are positively valued as incarnations of honour; what is more, striving for honour gives rise to a very peculiar form of *individualism*, one in which the individual human being is accorded a very prominent position as bearer of the group's values (21). Such an individual is eminently social; he exhibits his individuality precisely in pursuing the group's ideals, for it is only within the framework provided by those values that his worth is recognized. In general excellence in pursuing the group's ideals implies that the individual will be singled out by the group as a model of such ideals; such a model may become everlasting, and hence the object of permanent glory and even worship for future generations, or more short-lived and thus the object of praise and emulation for the contemporaries (22). The singular individual, a figure rather neglected and misunderstood in the literature, is eminently this worldly rather than simply what Dumont calls an individual-in-the-world, but subordinated to his society's values and therefore entirely different from the modern individual, characterised by Dumont as an independent being, separated out from the all-embracing bonds of the community, only and absolute bearer and incarnation of humankind (1980, pp. 4-13; 1986, p. 25). Let us illustrate a particular aspect of this form of individualism in the case of the

(21) We need not reiterate here the equivocal and controversial nature of the term "individualism", which led Weber to warn against its imprecise use in a now famous footnote of the *Protestant Ethic* while emphasizing the importance of a thorough historically oriented analysis of this and derived concepts would have for the social sciences (2002, p. 193, n29). Apart from the outstanding treatment of the issue by Dumont, who in his own way took on Weber's challenge, important distinctions and considerations can be found in VERNANT (1991) and FOUCAULT (1990, pp. 42-3).

(22) The Homeric heroes, no less than the heroes of other civilizations' great epics stemming from the oral tradition, are exemplars par excellence of the value bestowed upon *singular* individuals who, having taken the group's ideals beyond ordinary limits by their refusal to make shameful compromises, are appropriated by the group and become representatives of a glorious past and objects of permanent worship for the future generations (FRADE 1998, pp. 37-49).

*arrieros*, the emancipation of the young male *arriero* from paternal tutelage.

Although the *arrieros* did not explicitly articulate an elaborate ideal of men of honour, this does not however mean that such an ideal did not exist. Ideally, a man of honour as we have already seen is a courageous man, fearless of the hardships and dangers of the trading routes, cunning and brave in facing such dangers, tenacious in his efforts and unshakable in his word. The young male *arriero* was encouraged to pursue these virtues, and he might become a model for his contemporaries should he excel in pursuing them. Now this could only occur at the time of his marriage, when he became emancipated from his father. For the young *arriero*, marriage was the longed for occasion, since it meant above all emancipation, the only status in which he could be a true man, i.e. free from paternal tutelage and thus his own lord and master of his own household – women, in contrast to men, never acquired the status of emancipated beings, as they passed directly from paternal authority to the authority of the husband.

This status as *emancipated* man was emphatically marked in the formal act of *apartamento* (literally “separation”) of the son from paternal tutelage which signaled the social and legal acknowledgement of the son’s emancipation. Sealed by a special document among the middle and upper ranks, this act implied the acceptance by the son, in a last manifestation of obedience, of the marriage arranged for him by his family and the transfer of part of the patrimony. The symbolic act whereby the father, “taking his son’s hand, put the son aside from himself” – this is the expression typically used in such documents (Rubio 1995, p. 99) – perfectly reflects the meaning of emancipation and captures fundamental aspects of the bonds involved and the system of reproduction. Above all the act of separation represents the son’s entrance into a new status free from paternal tutelage, and brings together the reciprocity involved in the paternal-filial bond. On the one hand, taking the son’s hand symbolizes the bond of subordination between father and son and shows the father’s gratitude for the faithful devotion of his son toward him during the past years. The importance of this relation of faithful and obedient subordination is well reflected by the fact, not infrequent as the records testify, that the eldest son might be excluded from the primogeniture, had he failed in his relation to his father. On the other hand, putting the son aside symbolizes the break of the bond of subordination and the new status of the son as a true man, an emancipated being legitimated by his father’s acknowledgement and declaration. The dowry with which the father endows his son is the material expression of

the reciprocity involved in the paternal-filial bond. Without this material base, which usually constituted sufficient endowment as to establish a new household according to the family status – typically, some mules and real estate – the son could not acquire his status as an emancipated man.

Being a true man was only possible by having the material means which allows one not to be subject to other men. But this economic independence was itself the result of a relationship of reciprocity in which the fidelity and devotion of the son toward his family was compensated for by the provision of the means to establish his own family, the arrangement of the marriage itself, and the teaching of and introduction to the occupation – actually access to the trade was linked to the possession of costly means of production, mules, and above all to a long period of apprenticeship and experience which demanded mastery of the physical environment, the trading routes, and the commercial networks in the towns and production centres. In this way, the son's emancipation is made possible by his relationship with the family. The latter recompenses the son by acknowledging him as a man and giving him the means necessary to prove it; in so doing, the family defines along which track the son can affirm and express his individuality as bearer of the group values.

This new, longed for status would immediately be put to the test. From the moment of emancipation onwards, the son was obliged to hold and increase his own and his family's honour. He had to prove not only that he could provide for his new family, but also that he was able to increase the initial patrimony constituted by the dowry and frequently by an advance of the inheritance, so that when he finally inherited from his parent's family he has already built a reputation and acquired a status of his own, hence showing that he is able to perpetuate the family lineage. The future of the new family was thus very dependent upon the tenacity and effort of the new couple, and the ability of the son to put into practice the teachings of his father. The dowries and advanced inheritances secured a level of departure for the new couple in accordance with the family's position, but the maintenance of such a position was very much on the new spouses' shoulders. Excellence in responding to these challenges will bring reputation to the young *arriero*; he might even gain fame and be held up as a model to his brothers and fellow *arrieros*. Nevertheless, in showing such excellence, the individual *arriero* remains fully encompassed in the idea of perpetuating the family lineage.

## IV

*Honour, Power and the Socio-Economic Order*

It hardly needs saying that the “economic aspects” of the *arrieros*’ world are not separated, in contradistinction to the modern world, from the political; indeed they are embedded, as Polanyi (1957) would say, in the whole social fabric. There was no trading or business organization which was separate from the household or disembedded from the networks of patronage which underpinned the *arrieros*’ whole political and socio-economic organization. The separate analytical treatment of such aspects, i.e. of the socio-economic sphere, which might in principle be considered unwarranted, can nevertheless be theoretically justified, as Dumont has shown (1986, p. 106), provided that such a sphere is considered in relation to the whole. Here we shall briefly look at two main kinds of relationships involved in that system of patronage, namely, inter-household relations with a trading character and the relations of the *arrieros* with their native localities or pueblos.

The first observation to be made is that at the level of the *arrieros*’ socio-economic organization there was no separation between the household and the business principles (Weber 1981; Schutchter 1996, pp. 89-90). The household was the dominant principle, as is clearly shown by the fact that there was no socio-economic unit apart from the household which was not subject to the vicissitudes of inheritance; trading activities were themselves subject to the dynamics of the household, and thus to inheritance. Company organization was absent until well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century; instead, the *arrieros*’ socio-economic organization was based on kinship and patronage ties. Small *arrieros* and part-time peasant-*arrieros* who were systematically involved in trading services dominated by wealthier *arriero* families, were relatives, or otherwise neighbours and dependants. The so called “family companies” (Rubio 1995, pp. 227-8) were associations rather than companies, of a *temporary* character, between two or more household heads *related by kinship*, typically between widowed parent and son. As associations between households rather than separate business units, their accountability was kept separate and the inheritance mechanisms worked in the normal way; furthermore, there was no joint responsibility, and the associations were usually dissolved as soon as the widowed parent died – they thus lacked even the basic principle of business *continuity* which Weber (2003) found among some medieval forms of partnerships. Since

the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the absolutist state was becoming more centralist and bureaucratically minded, there were also associations established between the most prominent *arriero* families in order to provide the credit worthy guarantees and mortgage endorsements demanded by the crown. But again such associations, which not infrequently involved the direct or indirect participation of urban merchants as goods providers, were constituted by family groups or “clans”, and were temporary and confined to specific services. More significantly, they were encompassed in the networks of patronage, and the wealthy *arrieros* involved in them continued with their trading activities following the typical system based on the household and patronage which they practised.

All in all it seems clear from a Weberian perspective that the *arrieros*' mode of property accumulation was politically rather than economically oriented (Weber 1978, pp. 164f). Trading relationships, far from having a separate existence of their own, were embedded in a system of patronage which linked men through bonds of subordination, dependency, and alliance – thus we can say, paraphrasing Dumont's paraphrase of Marx, that relationships between men, and thus power, were above relationships between men and things. It is worth recalling that this configuration corresponds approximately to the period known as mercantilism, although its hold in Spain was arguably stronger and longer than in the rest of Western Europe. The subordination of the *arrieros* to the crown, which not infrequently obliged them to provide specific services against their immediate interests, was a most characteristic expression of such a configuration.

The networks of patronage underpinning the entire *arrieros* organization were also essential in linking the pueblos to the territorial seigneurs, the monarchy and to the whole state apparatus. However, patronage was utterly at odds with the communal ethos of the pueblos, and the pueblos' political institutions, that is, the *concejos*, found themselves in almost constant collision with the *arrieros*' aspirations. The tensions between the *arrieros* and the *concejos* were to a great extent a conflict between two forms of honour stemming from the different position of the pueblos and the *arrieros* within the social structure and evidently implying conflicting forms of political power. In truth the opposition between the pueblos and the *arrieros*, as we have shown elsewhere (Frade 1998), bears on the whole social organization of the pueblos as *communities* and the *arrieros* as a *status group*. As we cannot dwell here on all the complex issues involved in this antagonism, we shall content ourselves with pointing to the major structural aspects accounting for the conflict.



The extent of this antagonism is revealed by the fact that the very condition of political vicinity or membership of the *concejo*, as defined in the pueblos' customary law collected in the form of written ordinances since the 16th century, ideally excluded and in practice penalized positively privileged groups, that is, those exempt from royal taxation, precisely the lesser noblemen or *hidalgos*. From the pueblo's point of view the tax-exempt *arrieros* were members of the *concejo de facto* (as an expression of the link of the pueblos with the state), but not *de jure*, since according to the ordinances political membership implied, among other conditions, being a taxpayer. Since royal taxes were levied on the pueblos collectively rather than individually, the existence of tax-exempt neighbours meant increased contributions by the taxpaying neighbours. Hence the *concejos* did not as a rule acknowledge the title of *hidalguía* claimed by many enriched *arrieros*, whereas the latter sought to impose it by conducting lawsuits against the *concejos*. Many other issues were a constant cause of dispute, but above all the use rights over both communal and private lands, including enclosures, to say nothing of the continuous accumulation of land in the hands of the *arrieros*.

If the *concejos* were relatively able to stand up against the aspirations of individual *arrieros*, a rather different outcome arose from the system of patronage, which linked individual peasant families to *arriero* families through bonds of dependency and subordination. The wealthier *arrieros* had the capacity to obtain the services of peasants and small *arrieros* for both their estates and trade, and to sublease the lands of the ecclesiastic and lay nobility which they had previously leased. Furthermore, thanks to the networks of patronage the *arrieros* seem to have been able to control the local justices, many of whose offices were directly in their hands. These offices, in contrast to the *concejo* offices, were held for very long periods, sometimes for life; they were ultimately accountable to the superior territorial tribunals and dealt with both criminal and civil causes and had authority to make inventories of deceased people, decide on the tutelage of orphans, make partitions of property and inheritance, and distribute the lots. Hence in some pueblos the *arrieros* exerted juridical power over crucial areas of the household domain which were outside the customary law's, and therefore the *concejo's* jurisdiction. This monopoly over the power resources of the region independent of the *concejos*, which as we pointed out before included local church offices, allowed the *arrieros* to compete with the *concejos* for the allegiance of their pueblos' peasants, while it considerably undermined, it goes without saying, the power of the *concejos*.

We are here in view of two conflicting forms of political power. The pueblos, negatively privileged in relation to society at large, were communities whose holistic and egalitarian values found expression respectively in territoriality (vicinity, *jus soli*) as the dominant principle of social organization and the *concejo*, a corporate body and the realm of equality, as the major political institution. The *arrieros*, positively privileged, were a status group oriented by holistic and hierarchical values and organised according to lineage (*jus sanguinis*; in reality kinship and matrimonial alliances) as the dominant principle of social organization in relation to the pueblos, and according to a system of patronage as the main institutional expression of political power. Thus, if for the pueblos political power was founded upon the joint action of equals, for the *arrieros*, by contrast, power was mainly founded on relationships of dependency, subordination and alliance.

All in all, the *arrieros*' orientation toward status-honour, their quest for land and local offices, their endogamic practices and closure as a status group were felt as a frontal attack on the solidarity of the pueblos. It may therefore come as no surprise to learn that the *arrieros* enjoying or aspiring to the title of *hidalgía* were excluded, so the *concejos*' ordinances suggest, from the rituals of commensality which marked the acquisition of political membership by newly married men in the pueblos. Nor can it be unexpected to find that the *concejos* were not called to the *arrieros*' pompous funerals.

## v

*Honour, Trust and Trade*

Trust was an essential component of the relationships of the *arrieros* with their society; but so was mistrust. Trust was part of the "tissue" of the networks of patronage which connected the *arrieros* to the Spanish privileged groups and institutions: the crown and the church, the nobility and the urban merchants and producers. Distrust and enmity pervaded the relations of the *arrieros* with the dangerous world of the trading routes and the urban centres. This dialectic of trust and distrust was centred on the *arrieros*' *word of honour*, a genuine honour challenge able to fashion an almost exclusive honour domain embracing the trading routes; by pledging their word as men of honour, the *arrieros* pledged to protect and defend such a domain from robbers and hold-up men – a dialectics that was well reflected in a *mode of relation* charac-

terized, as their reputation and fame testifies, by faithfulness and courage, but also by cunning and stealthiness.

Trust as a problem, indeed as a central and most enduring issue, can only emerge in modern societies, that is, in societies where the individual as an independent being is the supreme value and where, consequently, there is a major concern with grounding the social order in some quality or attribute which individuals may bring to their social encounters. Hence trust is often conceived of in substantialist terms, reduced to psychological states and posited as a way of keeping at bay the uncertainty, risk and vulnerability occasioned, as Seligman (1998) argues, by the fundamental opaqueness and imperviousness of one to the will of another – indeed by the fundamental otherness of the other. This and similar approaches to trust are highly revealing of the modern condition; hardly any of them posit that trust as a mode of relation, whether in modern or traditional societies, is of necessity embedded in more encompassing relationships, which to a large extent determine its nature and importance. Some form of trust is obviously necessary for the functioning of any enduring social order – even of modern capitalism, where trust is utterly subordinated to the pursuing of economic interests. In a market, work-based society economic interests rule sovereign, and trust, as some studies – perhaps contradicting their apologetic intention – argue, becomes a mere expectation that one's exchange partner will not act opportunistically, that is, a fear-alleviating feeling of hope (23).

In the *arrieros'* world trust was embedded in diverse kinds of relationships, from subordination (the examples *par excellence* of this being the relationship between father and son and between the *arrieros* and the monarchy), to subordination and dependency (e.g. the relationship of peasants and small *arrieros* to prominent *arrieros* providing patronage), association (e.g. between prominent *arrieros* and urban merchants) and alliance (e.g. between *arriero* families). Trading or exchange relations were part of a complex and multifaceted system of patronage and clientelage where subordination and dependency were dominant vis-à-

(23) BRADACH and ECCLES (1991, p. 282). This and similar analyses prove, if anything, that some form of minimal trust is necessary for the rule of purely economic interests – features such as friendliness and even loyalty which are said to appear in the course of recurrent market transactions are mainly conceived of as very effective “lubricants” of the exchanges, as they may save not only the costs of potential litigation, but also the draf-

ting and use of complex private safeguards to prevent violation (see e.g. LORENZ 1991). For a review of the issue of trust and a more doubtful attempt at integrating views from political philosophy, political economy and sociology from a liberal perspective, see MISZTAL (1996). An explicit Lockean approach to the role of trust in political action is provided by DUNN (1990, pp. 26-44 and 1996, pp. 91-99).

vis alliance and association. Trust was therefore encompassed in relationships of subordination and dependency, and secondarily in alliance and association. It was the trust of men who professed to be honourable men, and hence in the main *subject to prior relationships between men*, rather than trust in the modern sense, that is, that redoubt of hope required for the pursuing of economic interests.

All too frequently exchanges are thought of either as means to advance individual, mainly selfish, interests or as emerging from some “pure” motive such as altruism, for example. This “black and white” or economicistic and moralistic view, denounced by Mauss in his seminal essay on the gift (see Hénaff 2002 for a recent criticism of those views), derives of course from the prevailing individualist conception of human beings, who on the whole are supposed to be related to one another as “anonymous” others in the frame of “neutral” relationships, be these commercial in nature (that is, involving calculated returns) or in the form of gift (since the latter tends to be understood as an exchange free of ulterior motive). Within this individualist perspective it is practically impossible to conceive of mutuality in social bonds. It is easy to see how befitting and suitable the *arrieros*’ fame as trustworthy men was for a society increasingly centralized and oriented towards commerce. It is easy to conclude that trust was in the *arrieros*’ interest. And it certainly was, for just as there are no free gifts (other than *grace*), that is, acts of giving which – to paraphrase M. Douglas (1990) – by refusing requital are put outside any mutual ties and do nothing to enhance solidarity, there are no reasons to think that trust should be disembedded from the social reality and thus “free” of ideal and material interests – unless, that is, one falls in the modern “fallacy of altruism” (24).

(24) P. Bourdieu has provided what seems to us one of the most sophisticated instantiations of such a fallacy. BOURDIEU (1977) considers not only that gift exchange and any form of symbolic exchange has, if it is to work, “to be experienced as irreversible” (p. 6), i.e. free of ulterior motives and particularly of any thought of counter-gift, but that in order for this “*sincere fiction of a disinterested exchange*” (p. 171; emphasis added) to occur, a huge labour of concealment is needed, a very hard and refined process indeed in which the time and intervals left unregulated by the “*institutionally organised and guaranteed misrecognition* which is the basis of gift exchange and, perhaps, of all symbolic labour” (p. 171; original emphasis) are appropriated and cunningly used by the agents for playing their skilful

strategies. One wonders why there should be such a compulsive need for concealing reciprocity, unless, that is, one entertains a modern individualistic view of the human condition and the peculiar idea of solidarity which goes with it. This conception leads one to see traditional societies and their institutions as archaic Leviathans striving to soften and orchestrate, for want of more rationally engineered operations, their agents’ self-interested improvisations – a delicate operation which does not however completely succeed in concealing from the sociologist “the truth of their [the agents’] practice” (p. 6). See further pp. 4–8 and 171–183. These same views are expressed in a later work (1990, pp. 98–121 and 126).

In order to abandon this individualist perspective we need to look at the exchanges in which the *arrieros* were engaged from the point of view of their position within the *arrieros*' world and Spanish society, and thus in terms of the value placed upon them. For if the *arrieros*' trade was held in high regard it was because of the characteristic position it occupied in the Spanish society up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We have already seen the importance in terms of social acceptance of the fact that this form of trade was not usurious; to this we must now add that, among the growing credit-based commercial dealings, seen as corrupt and debased, the *arrieros*' trade embodied the traditional tenors of trade and hence the sort of "mercantile perfection" advocated in the aforementioned treaties on commerce as that consisting in "dealing and traveling from place to place, carrying merchandises from where they are in abundance to where they are needed" (25), and, by so doing, fulfilling the true function of trade, which according to the dominant views of the time was to provide for the republic and to maintain one's own house. In the words of one of the best known Spanish theologians and jurists, T. de Mercado, to serve "the public and universal utility" (1975 [1571], p. 143).

As a *service* the *arrieros*' trade involved both *personalized* relations and a complex organization based on brigades. Trust was related to both these aspects, or, to express it in terms of N. Luhmann's (1979 and 1989) fundamental distinction between trust and confidence, trust was embedded in personalized relations, whereas confidence arose from the *arrieros*' organization. Their fame as trustworthy men thus implied both faithfulness and reliability. The relationships in which they engaged were predominantly based on personalized services, individual contracts and private dealings (Rubio 1995, pp. 230, 243 and *passim*). Such personalized contacts must have given rise to trust and a tangible respect for the other's concerns and welfare, as these can only exist to the extent that relationships are personalized. It was a mode of relation not confined to the specialty of the exchange; the impersonal or "neutral" relation, which by definition knows nothing of honour, was in principle out of the question in an activity which was a rather dangerous and often violent business and therefore demanded knowledge of the other through both personalized relationships and reputation. In a characteristic reminiscent of traditional societies, lack of relation or knowledge implied distrust and enmity. To the extent that it is possible to talk about an "ethic of exchanges", the *arrieros*' trading ethic was far removed from the

(25) Bartolomé de Albornoz, *Arte de los contractos*, Valencia, 1573, p. 127, cited in CAVILLAC (1994, p. 269).

universalistic ethic of the modern businessman, as it strongly valued kinship and territorial attachments and showed a profound distrust of outsiders.

Furthermore, in order to provide those services in a society in which the state did not have as comprehensive a monopoly over the means of violence as it would later have the *arrieros* had to risk their lives for the sake of protecting and defending the items which they transported, and thus their honour. This implied a considerable level of organization, planning, and mastery of the trading routes, eventually including a resort to violence. Hence the organization of the trade trips took the form of military-like brigades where authority was structured not along military lines of command but rather according to household and patronage organization. It was this system, together with the guaranties offered by the *arrieros* in the form of endorsements (see below), which made the *arrieros*' trade reliable and gave rise to confidence in its proper workings. Needless to say confidence, contrary to trust, is also absolutely essential for capitalism. The difference between the *arrieros*' world and capitalism at this level must be sought in the relationship between trust and confidence within the overall configuration. In the *arrieros*' world trust rested on bonds between people, which provide grounds for confidence. Trust in modern capitalism is in the main brought in to the exchanges; it thus appears as a secondary and even residual element, and, except for the trust involved in very particular realms of life such as the professions when not subjected, as is the case nowadays, to managerialism, trust is encompassed in confidence.

The peculiarity of the *arrieros*' world is that both trust and interests, including economic interests, are encompassed in honour. We find it difficult to reconcile trust and interest because we tend to confine the terms "interest" and "interests" according to the material aspects of their meaning, i.e. to economic advantage, as the expressions "class interests" and "interest groups" prove. An archetypal example of this view, which is characteristic of many 19<sup>th</sup> century travelers to Spain, is given by G. Borrow, who after a long paragraph devoted to explaining why our group of traders were considered to be the most faithful *arrieros* of Spain, states: "But they are far from being disinterested" (cited in Casado and Carrerira 1985, p. 200), thus showing how anomalous a marriage between faithfulness and interest was for him. But this is only so in a modern view of human bonding. The economic meaning of the term "interest", as Hirschman (1981, pp. 32f) has shown, became dominant rather late in the history of the term; before that it comprised the totality of human concerns and aspirations. For the *arrieros* there

was nothing in principle dishonourable in attempting to obtain the most from the exchanges and using their intelligence (i.e. that element of reflection and calculation commonly considered as part of the interests) to that end. What was dishonourable was rather to make a fool of oneself by not taking the opportunities at hand. In absence of a national self-regulating market, pricing was also dependent on non-economic dimensions. More in general, it seems that whenever the market principle is not dominant, the value of things is itself partly subject to the relationships between the persons involved in the exchange (26). In the case of the *arrieros*, their fame as trustworthy and reliable men allowed them to charge double than the *arrieros* from other areas for their services – a practice that, far from being dishonourable, increased their reputation.

Since the beginning of the modern epoch confidence in this form of trade was also related to a type of legal agreement or contract known as a bond bill whereby the *arrieros* endorsed with their own “real estate and movable wealth” (and, not inconsequentially, with “their own persons”, as the formal expression used in these legal documents state) the items they had agreed to carry (27). It seems clear that if there is a device which can undermine honour and at the same time signal its decline, such is the legal contract and the written word sealing it. There can be no better proof that honour is not enough than the resort to a legal contract. In effect, the bond bills above all engendered rights over things which were secured by a legal order which was itself evolving to match a society increasingly oriented towards commerce and profit. At this level we may say that the legal contracts belonged to relationships between men and things. Now we know that honour, at least to the extent that it is still a dominant regulating principle, concerns relationships between men in the first place. Bearing these premises in mind we can address the question of the position of the *arrieros*’ real estate and movable wealth within the configuration, that is, on the one hand land and house, and commercial wealth on the other. Both are equated in the contracts (such is precisely one of the major outcomes of the development toward the modern epoch), although since we know that such an equating took place in a context in which the overarching end for the *arrieros* was to accumulate land and secure it through entailment, and thereby to

(26) It is not a lesser matter that this same relationship was observed by Pitt-Rivers in his anthropological study of a Spanish village community in the 1950s (see PITT-RIVERS 1971, p. 63).

(27) Some of these agreements or contracts had a low legal definition and predictability. As

insurance devices, for example, a number of them excluded bad weather as a contingency to be covered by the agreements; in these cases the parties were content with the *arrieros*’ presenting witnesses to such effect (see RUBIO 1995, pp. 217-18).

acquire status-honour, we may conclude that honour for our group was clearly above the legal contracts. It was however an honour in retreat, clearly losing the battle against the new gods, incarnated in the impersonal, mechanical forces of modern capitalism and modern culture in general.

And yet it seems appropriate to emphasize that the *arrieros*' word of honour was not the "casual word" of the code of duel under which men felt impelled to risk their lives to avenge their personal honour. For in pledging their word as men of honour, the *arrieros* threw an *honour challenge* at their society in the expectation that the latter would reciprocate in the only way befitting relationships between men, namely, by *recognizing* the *arrieros*' claim to honour. This is the core of the regulation of honour and the foundation of the *arrieros*' entire world. In effect, as a series of remarkable studies in the Maussian and Dumontian tradition show (28), honour challenges are forms of exchange which are best understood according to the formula: "One gives so that the other will give", rather than according to the individualistic, prevalent idea that "one gives in order to receive". In the former conception the standpoint and the emphasis is on the relation of the subjects of the exchange with one another and with the social order as a whole, whereas in the latter everything starts and ends with the individual. In the former honour challenges are about *giving* and challenging the other to give; men here are social beings. In the latter exchanges are about *taking* or giving in order to receive; men here are possessive individuals. If it is true that the recognition expected by the *arrieros* brought with it material advantages, it is not less true that in giving their word of honour they engaged not just a part of themselves, their persons, or their wealth, but all these aspects together, that is, their honour. This is but a powerful manifestation of a more general principle of exchange in traditional societies according to which in exchanging things, men exchange, in Dumont's interpretation of Mauss's essay, "inextricably and fluctuatingly mixed up with those 'things', something of themselves" (1986, p. 257) (29). If this is so, no *separate* ethics of trade needs be brought, as is the case of modern capitalism, to an impersonal, mechanical system which by definition knows nothing of ethics, for such an ethics was embedded in honour itself.

(28) See e.g. JAMOUS' study of the Iqar'iyyen of the Moroccan Rif (1993) and the collective work by BARRAUD *et al.* (1984). The formula "one does not give in order to receive, one does so that the other will give" is the forceful and accurate idea with which LEFORT (1978, p. 42)

has aptly summed up by the Maussian notion of "exchange".

(29) The variation of prices depending on the relationships between persons is but another manifestation of this same principle.



The pledged word is the voice of honour which condenses a mode of conduct and relations between men. As any challenge of honour, the pledged word involved its own sanctions in the form of loss of reputation and above all shame, should the *arrieros* fail to honour their word; and rewards, since they would increase their honour and fame by honouring their word. The legal contracts guaranteed the link between men and things; the pledged word, in contrast, guaranteed bonds between men in the first place. By pledging their word, the *arrieros* pledged to deliver their services according to the conditions and schedules agreed and to defend the goods and items they transported even with their lives, as their fame had it (30). In case of robbery, the contracts were enforced, as a few examples gathered in the records testify; but this enforcement need not be a motive of dishonour, had the *arrieros*' defended the pledged word's domain by risking their lives as men of honour.

*By way of conclusion*

The *arrieros*' world crumbled after the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when they found themselves powerless to compete against the conditions dictated by the rapidly emerging national market and the huge administrative and legal centralization process which accompanied it. There seemed to be no way in which that world, which had for more than a century been showing unequivocal signs of stagnation, could accommodate the vast changes which were completely transforming the structure of their society. Despite the temporary success of attempts made by the most prominent *arriero* families to adapt by creating carriage companies for people, they failed, as they were bound to, in their competition with the rapid expansion of the railways. Massive emigration to the urban centers and overseas was therefore unavoidable. In this concluding section we would like to underline the major features of the configuration in which the *arrieros*' social order was embedded and, by so doing, to answer some of the questions raised in the previous pages.

We have seen that the trade practised by the *arrieros* involved a specific form of honour defined by the pledged word and incarnated in a

(30) "Their faithfulness is such – wrote G. Borrow, who obviously overstated the point – that all those who had used their services would not hesitate in entrusting them the transportation of a treasury from the Cantabric sea to Madrid, in the total certainty that it would not be their [the *arrieros*'] fault should

the treasury not arrive intact at its destination. Fearless must be the robbers who attempt to stole the merchandises, for the [*arrieros*] *maragatos*, everywhere feared, stick to them while they can remain upright and defend them by shooting or with their bodies" (cited in CASADO and CARREIRA, *ibid.*).

domain embracing the trading services as a whole, that is, the trading routes, the mule trains and brigades and of course the items conducted. This domain, which the *arrieros* had pledged to defend, linked them to the main Spanish groups and institutions through different bonds of subordination, dependency and association which involved trust. But the pledged word's domain, and therefore that of trade, was subordinated to the honour incarnated in the *arrieros*' family houses and lineages, with their land and large households. It was the latter which, through a complex system of networks of patronage, regulated not only access to the trade but also trade organization itself. Thus there were neither business units separated from the households nor any form of corporate organization with regulative powers. Nor did the *arrieros*' trade involve forms of capitalist organization, as the associations established for trading purposes were temporary and entirely based on household and patronage organization. In brief, trade never constituted a separate "economic sphere" of its own. Far from that, trade was an honour domain which had to be defended even by resorting to violence, as honour demands. Nevertheless, the successful defense of the pledged word's domain would have never in itself constituted a successful claim to honour either in the Middle Ages or the modern period were it not because such honour was encompassed in the honour attached to the *arrieros*' family houses and lineages. In this way, the foundations of the *arrieros*' openness to Spanish society were grounded on an honour domain which was subordinated to another honour domain constituting their closure as a status group. Closure thus found a double expression: at the level of the *arrieros*' region closure was expressed in the form of lineage attachment and matrimonial alliances which cut across the territorial limits of the pueblos and distinguished them from the peasants, whereas at the level of Spanish society closure was based on territorial belonging to their region, which distinguished them from the many trading groups of other regions. Territoriality was therefore the dominant principle of social organization in the overall configuration. It was this principle which enabled the *arrieros* to give an identity to their region, while it prevented them, contrary to their aspirations, from access to the upper nobility.

Overall the *arrieros*' configuration comprised the idea of salvation as the supreme value, whereas at the level of social practices it was honour which was in the foreground. It might thus be said that honour regulated closely the social practices and mode of conduct, whereas the regulation of salvation was more remote. This alignment between the supreme otherworldly and this worldly values, by no means exclusive to the

*arrieros*' world, whereby each holds its own domains of rule, is in the sharpest contrast both with the all-embracing and most intensive regulation and control of life which Weber called "inner-worldly asceticism" and Dumont "ascetic in-worldliness", and with the same mode of regulation but – to paraphrase Weber's forceful prose at the end of the *Protestant Ethic* – stripped of religious beliefs, which had fled from the "steel cage", for victorious capitalism, since it came to rest on mechanical foundations, needed them no longer.

Needless to say the puritan creed leaves no room whatever for honour, that is, for the *esteem and recognition of the others* as the highest this worldly value. Puritanism regarded honour and glory as sinful human vanity, since the world here had been completely permeated by the other worldly value, which ruled absolutely over it. Among the Protestant sects regulation and control, as Weber showed, are not only internally produced by the believer's obsessive and methodical attempt to prove to himself through economic conduct that he is among the elect, but are also external and driven by shame, or rather by a peculiar form of shame. The believer had to continuously and methodically prove to his fellow sectarians that he possessed the qualities required for membership, and hence for election into the true church of the religiously qualified. It is worth bearing in mind that the force of this mode of control "could be so strong that the organization was able to replace the doctrine of predestination, that is, an important element of the internal relation in Calvinism" (Schluchter 1996, p. 136). It is a mode of regulation and control not only "buttressed by the Puritan devaluation of all personal ties" (Bendix 1977, p. 70) but methodically directed against the enjoyment of the esteem of the others as a life orientation. Likewise, Puritan shame could not be more different than the shame typical of honour, for it is overshadowed by fear and overpowered by guilt, and always on the brink of exposing the sectarian, who is fearful of failing to measure up to the extraordinarily strict standards of upright conduct imposed through the continuous surveillance involved in personal acquaintance and methodical investigation.

Nothing in the *arrieros*' world is reminiscent of such an artificialism, and still less of the mechanical artificialism characteristic of modern capitalism. Regulation here is part of a much more ductile process, one through which social practices and life conduct are *oriented* by the values, rather than completely subjected to them, thus allowing space for a level of human self-determination. In this as in other respects the *arrieros*' world belongs entirely to traditional societies, and fell with them.

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