



# HISTORIOGRAPHICAL & SOCIOLOGICAL ESSAY

An approach to the consequences of contemporary capitalism through the study of access to toilets in the private sphere and in the work environment

Understanding the capitalist economy and globalisation by analysing people's access to bathrooms according to their social class & gender

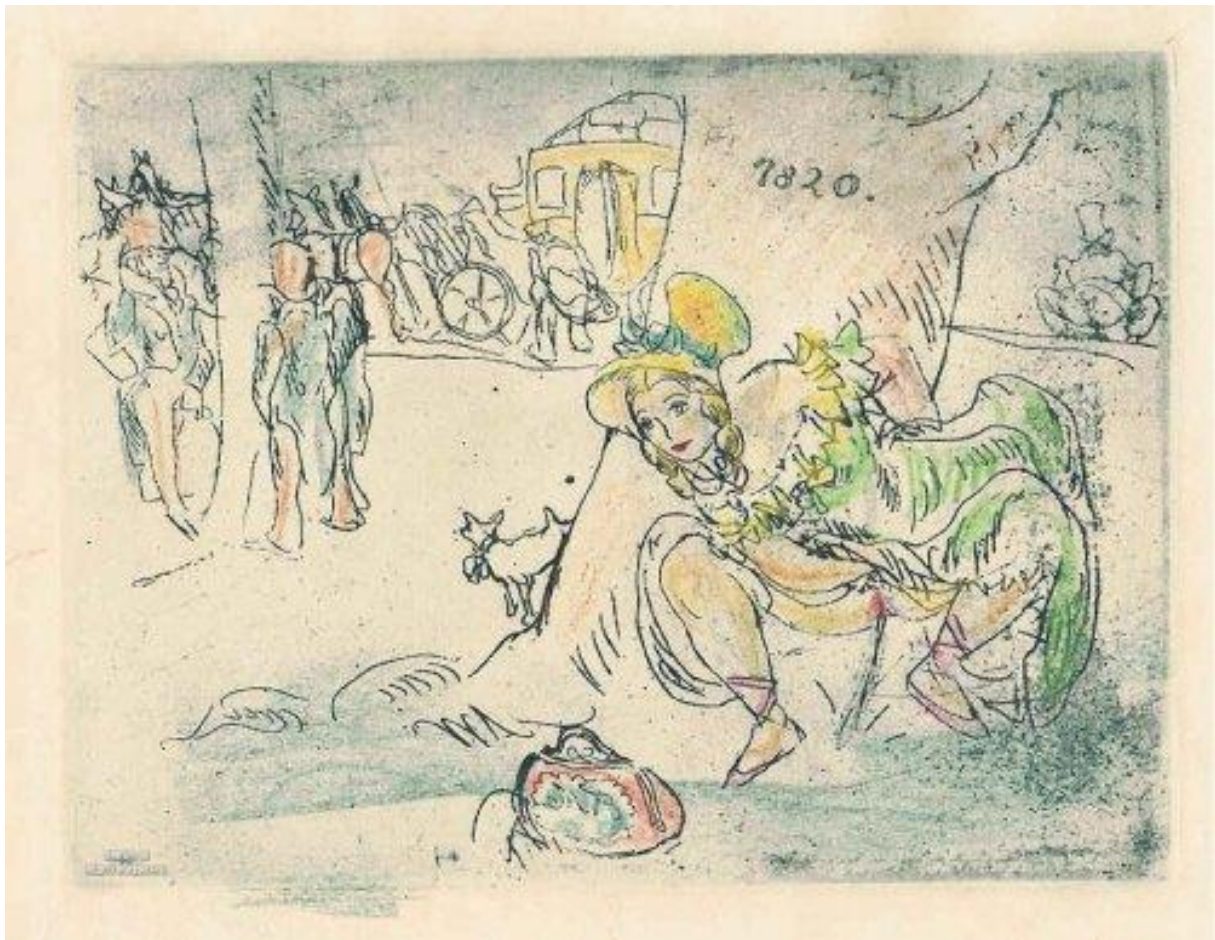
A STUDY CONCEPT PROPOSED BY CALIGULA

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**ABSTRACT.** The research project is based on a purely pragmatic observation: not all individuals have the same access, the same right to go to the sanitary facilities when they wish. This can be explained for practical reasons: concrete access to restrooms. And then for ideological reasons: access conditional on an authorisation or a right. But is it only a right? It is especially remarkable to note that it is precisely those countries that have taken the idea of individual freedom to its logical conclusion that have conditioned this right through an ideological framework (just like the western countries). Before getting to the heart of the issue and presenting the postulates and other argumentative research, it is important to immediately set the general conditions for this piece of work. It is by no means a study that is meant to be exhaustive; this is not its claim. The author of this heuristic research work has set himself the following objective: to approach from a different angle than those proposed by the classical school of theory the historiographical consequences, which are the subject of an abundant opening statement, and the sociological consequences, which are the core of the demonstration, the effects of the capitalist (or even neo-capitalist, called neo-liberal) school of economics on our contemporary society. The essay studies the period from the two oil shocks (the 1970s slump) to the present day. The perspective suggested is original, disruptive and quite innovative. Its problematic may seem straightforward in many ways, but it aspires to provide complex answers.

“Since every commodity disappears when it becomes money it is impossible to tell from the money itself how it got into the hands of its possessor, or what article has been changed into it. 'Non olet', from whatever source it may come.”

Karl MARX, *The Capital*, vol. 1, p. 205



Cartoon by Thomas Rowlandson showing a woman relieving her overflowing bladder during a horse-drawn carriage journey. Pastoral England, 1820s.

“Vice is no less necessary in a flourishing State than hunger is to compel us to eat. Private vices create social benefices.”

Bernard MANDEVILLE, *The Fable of Bees*, 1714

## INTRODUCTION.

Since men have been living in society, history has truly begun to be written. But the History of what? From the moment people came together as a community, they felt the need to express their feelings about living together. They did this in several ways: first of all, through the cave paintings in the caves. Then on monuments that they began to build as soon as they began to settle down, such as the Egyptian pyramids. Humanity began to codify its means of expression: language. Throughout history, art under all its shapes and forms (writing, painting, sculpture, drawing, music) has endeavoured to express the feelings of a generation of men and women. Life in society is complex, difficult, harsh. From the moment we live together, i.e., with each other, our way of life is transformed. Our habits are turned upside down and our freedom is given limits and boundaries. Adam suffered the consequences of Eve's gesture of picking the forbidden fruit from the Garden of Eden: since he was not living alone, but with others, with Eve. Humanity is imperfect, and its vices have helped to shape our contemporary societies. Injustice, selfishness and jealousy are evils from which humanity has almost always suffered. It is these such vices that have shaped the emergence of our contemporary global world: a capitalist, individualistic and productivist society. If we want to understand the evolution of human societies until the achievement of our globalised world, we need to look at something that has spanned centuries, eras, civilisations and history. Something that is sometimes marginalised from scientific studies but is however highly relevant. It's a phrase that has crossed the ages and occupied all minds: I need to pee... From the outset it seems a very simple, even quirky and ironic subject. Nonetheless, the subject has all its relevance. How was this subject discussed in Antiquity, among the peoples of America, in Confucian Asia? What does it mean to go pee and relieve one's painful bladder of litres of urine? What does this all-too-common action mean for our society? In this essay, we will not go back in time to Prehistory. That would be terribly tedious at first and it would not claim to be exhaustive. It is a question that has been of little concern to scientists and there is a paucity of literature on the subject. Western scientific studies have scarcely considered the relationship that individuals in other societies have with their need to urinate. Reliable studies of so-called "primitive" peoples (from the Western point of view, and in the "primitive" sense of the term) focus on sexuality and morals. One such example is Margaret Mead and her excellent publication *Coming of Age in Samoa* published in 1935. This is probably one of the scientific works that is most closely related to our theme. Getting interested in the sexuality of adolescent girls is in fine to be interested in the way they manage their primary needs (urinary). This essay has chosen to focus on our contemporary relationship to this pressing need. Moreover, in an era that highlights the claims of previously excluded minorities in society, such as women, this essay opted to focus exclusively on the feminine relationship. How do women go to the toilet in our contemporary globalised society? This essay will attempt to provide answers to the following question through a Marxist analysis, i.e., a materialist analysis of history:

How does access to toilets for girls, reflect their economic, political and social conditions?

This essay has three complementary parts. The first part focuses on scientific work and the state of the art, i.e., a systemic and rigorous analysis of the question of the place of toilets in our society. The second part is a literary argument, which aims to present the ethical and social relationships in a fictional way. Finally, the third part is uchronic, explicitly extending the work of the American Orson Well, the French Michel Houellebecq and the British George Orwell.

# PART ONE.

## THE STATE OF THE SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE: THE QUESTION APPROACHED FROM THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE.

The purpose of the first part is to draw a critical analysis from the scientific research previously conducted on the relations between human society and its ethical (i.e., moral) and social (i.e., cultural) relationships to its body. The aim is to understand where we are now by taking a historiographical retrospective to get a good grasp of where we were.

I.  
WHERE ARE WE TODAY?  
A BRIEF GEOPOLITICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF THE STATE OF THE WORLD  
AT THE BEGINNING OF THE XXI<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The study of globalization in its sociological, historical and political components requires first and foremost a definition of this complex term. For while researchers fail to agree on a precise and unique definition, the majority of them highlight the intensification of proximity ties (such as Holton, Gilder and Steger). Anthony G. McGrew, David Goldblatt and David Held take up this idea in their academic essay *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics* by looking at the impacts of this intensification of our way of life. This is the innovation of our time. Although the word "globe" has long been used in French and English, it was not until Early modern period (XVII<sup>th</sup>-XVIII<sup>th</sup> centuries) that the word "international" appeared, at the same time as the emergence of the concept of the nation state. In the inter-war period, the Western press frequently used the word "globe", illustrating the beginnings of a world that had become progressively but firmly global. Academics Paul James and Manfred Steger consider that the verb "to globalise" appeared in the 1940s, at a time when the European war was becoming global. The term was taken up by the African American community in the post-war period, at a time when this same community was seeking to define itself. Coming from Africa to the Americas, African Americans see themselves as the first to be "global" (see *A genealogy of Globalisation: the career of a concept*, 2014). The word "globalisation" was reused in the 1950s and 1960s to describe the state of the "Cold War" and the advent of a "bipolar" (i.e., global) world: all the countries of the world had to take sides with one side, American or Soviet. Moreover, decolonisation has undertaken to generalise and intensify a globalisation movement by considerably increasing the number of independent states, which have even come to form a global geopolitical entity (Non-Aligned Movement & Bandung Conference). The 1950s and 1960s were characterised by the global unionist aims in the Middle East (pan-Arabism, Nasserism) and the birth of supra-national organisations with a global vocation (European Union, Organisation of African Union, Comecon, Asean). In the 1990s, we began to speak of global interdependence, of market interdependence in a decade in which the process of economic integration was accelerating (passage from the GATT to the WTO in 1995, the European Community's project for a single currency). Similarly, the economic crises, albeit international in previous centuries, are having global repercussions much more rapidly than in the past, like the Asian crisis and the Argentinean crisis. With the attacks of 9/11 in the United States, geopolitical integration became intense with the unanimous condemnation of the attacks by the international community and the unison vote of a resolution at the United Nations. Few subjects had then aroused so much support on the international scene. This was an important step for global cooperation. The arrival of the Internet and new technologies in a world favouring free trade has for the first time brought the whole planet into the same unprecedented movement: the fourth industrial revolution.

At the same time, the social consequences of globalisation are becoming (unprecedented but logical) global. Everywhere, people are facing the same problems: liberal policies, austerity & fiscal austerity policies, weakening of the welfare state's wealth redistribution system inherited from the post-war reconstruction period. The world experienced a vast movement of economic dynamism from the 1950s onwards, which is innovative. It was the "Trente Glorieuses" in France, the economic miracles of Japan, Italy, Greece, Germany and Korea. Moreover, the movement of political mistrust and popular "frustration" has also taken on global importance in the last ten years. So, globalisation = liberalisation? The word globalisation is sometimes regarded as a convenient synonym for westernisation, Americanisation and even, to some extent, Europeanisation of the world. Globalisation is therefore interpreted as neo-colonialism, a thesis defended by the French researcher Didier Bigo. The social question has never disappeared despite the emergence of the welfare state in the post-war years. It has even become global with the emergence of capitalism on a planetary level. It is nowadays structured around a dogmatic or religious question (the semantic difference being of an ideological nature) which reminds us of André Malraux's words: "the XXI<sup>st</sup> century will be religious, or it will not be religious". All the social repercussions of contemporary globalisation point to one thing: the class struggle has effectively become international and global with our century (then Karl Marx was right). The phenomenon of the marginalisation resulting from globalisation (but which is only one of the appearances of societal marginalisation) has aroused a new enthusiasm in many countries of the world.

Researchers have taken an interest in writing a “Different History”, because “History is written by winners”. Howard Zinn was the author of *A Popular History of the United States*, meanwhile Gérard Noiriel wrote *A Popular History of France* and Chris Harman *A Popular History of Humanity*.

Are we moving towards a global culture? Above the new generations born with the 3rd millennium, a common culture that brings them together? Global culture + global social consequences in the face of an international capitalist economy = the world is a global village... One of the eulogists of Marxist economics, David Harvey, argues that economics has killed the historical and cultural barriers of time space compression. In the wake of Francis Fukuyama's “End of History”, some historians such as the American Antoinette Buton have worked on the phenomenon of global history that would gradually take precedence over national histories. Globalisation is part of a process of deterritorialization. This movement is far from being linear, which is clearly shown by History. But have we moved, since the transformation of the GATT into the WTO, into this precisely linear dynamic, with a globalisation that is constantly growing, day after day? For instance, the States' measures in response to the global Covid-19 pandemic are “more or less the same” and emphasise this movement of linearity. The process of globalization that has become increasingly strong over the past decade has reinforced the already wide gap between “countries of the South” and “countries of the North” (although these terms were polemical in geopolitics as they were far from inclusive). Today, the African continent contributes and benefits less from global free trade policies than it did in the 1960s and 1980s. African countries could count on relative global economic prosperity during those years. But oil shocks and the social consequences of a globalisation that exacerbates rather than alleviates inequalities have had a profound impact on this development. Today, Africa accounts for 3% of world imports and exports. It was raw materials that used to link Africa to globalisation in the 1960s. And it is clear that this is still the case in 2020: 80% of African exports are raw materials. Linked to the dogmatic question and the social question, the issues of feminism and the new issues of gender identity have taken on a completely new place and importance thanks to or because (depending on one's opinion) of globalisation. The ecological question has become more and more worrying for our society notwithstanding the early warnings of the scientific community (Rome Report of 1973, Rio Conference of 2002: “our house is burning, and we are looking elsewhere”). Thus, globalisation has given rise to a multiplicity of problems to which our century and our generation will have to be able to respond.

In 2020, talking about “the end of history” always makes the young people of my generation smile. We who were born in 1999 or 2000, are we outside History? Francis Fukuyama's expression is more than a hazardous prediction: its meaning is much deeper than we want to think. When we talk about the “end of history”, we must put the expression in context. Fukuyama uses it to describe the end of a cyclical era (cf. Modelski). It is undeniable that the year 1989 marks a turning point in world history. But does this mean that we have entered a new cycle? Not necessarily. There was no societal break between 1989 and 2020 but rather an affirmation of capitalist power. 1989 was not a victory either for the American bloc or capitalism. In truth, this year is more the culmination of several decades of historical work. 1989 is not the apogee of capitalism, but the apogee of a time when capitalism was considered as salvation. The United States' challenge on the international stage dates back to the Vietnam War and the consumer society of the 1970s with the Rome Report on Growth. The American decline dates not from 1989 (which would be both its peak and the beginning of its end), but from the 1970s. History preferred to use 1989 as a critical date rather than in 1968. However, it was in that year that capitalist society began to be seriously challenged for the first time: e.g., student movements in Europe, American stagnation in Vietnam. The 1970s marked the end of an era of ultra-capitalism and the beginning of its contestation. It is essential to understand that in the minds of Europeans, and especially the French, the United States no longer had undisputed leadership' as of the 1980s. Military coups instigated by the CIA and American support for dictatorial regimes considerably weakened the prestige of the New Continent. e.g., coup d'état against Salvador Allende in 1973 (never forgetting nor forgiveness), support for the Colonels' regime in Hellas between 1967 and 1974. In 1976, the gold standard system disappeared with the Jamaican agreements: the dollar was no longer convertible into gold. The Bretton Woods financial world that made the United States a superpower is collapsing. At the same time, the Soviet Union began its process of disintegration before 1989: the Brezhnev era marked the impossibility of reforming the Soviet system. e. g. Prague Spring in 1968. Francis Fukuyama is not wrong when he talks about “the end of history.” But he makes history stop in 1989, which doesn't make much sense



historically: we can't talk about a break in History in 1989. The 1970s are much more appropriate: American decline, Soviet decline, and the contestation of the over-consumption society. There was no historical break in 1989, but rather the beginning of an accelerated societal decline. e. g. the slowdown of the political construction of the European Union in 1992 and 2005; economic crises in Mexico in 1994, Japan in 1998, Argentina in 2000, Hellas in 2004. Today we are living through the historical rupture that Fukuyama was talking about.

One of the most popular geopolitical theories of the last thirty years (or even more, but the collapse of the Soviet Union is also relevant) is that of *realpolitik*. *Realpolitik* was not born with globalization: it is generally accepted that the fathers of *realpolitik* are Austrian Chancellor Metternich and Prussian Bismarck. *Realpolitik*, based on the balance of power, has experienced a new rise with globalization: the most illustrative example is Henry Kissinger's policy towards Mao Zedong's China (which, however, had already been anticipated by the Frenchman André Malraux). *Realpolitik* became an instrument of liberal global policies from that time on, in the early 1970s. And this date is certainly not a coincidence: as soon as the world was sinking into economic stagnation, it made sense from a historical point of view to pursue a "pragmatic" liberal economic policy (precisely by favouring the economy to the detriment of classical ideologies). Peace is thus conceived as a global balance. The stability of power (in the most literal sense of the term) and ultimately of powers and the pursuit of their stability is the leitmotif of *realpolitik*. In fact, power is an abstract concept (we can't touch power) but that can be possessed by a people or a state. Indeed, human society needs power to organize a collective life: power is controlled by the state to prevent the chaos – without this control of power, that is the chaos. For the Greek Aristo, the model of the "good governance" is incarnate by a central government as monarchy (the government of one for the people), aristocracy (the government of few people for the happiness of the city) where the government has for goal the prosperity of the common good. When the government let this goal down, when the personal interest become the interest of the government, the equilibria of power is broken. To define power, we can take a parallel with the Hegelianism (the thought of the German philosopher Hegel) of the master-slave dialectic: the slave gains by this work the knowledge and the technic to satisfy the fundamental desires of the human gender (technic against hunger, cold and illness); the master haven't these technics and he is totally dependent of his slave. The Hegelian dialectic try to show the dichotomy between the physical power of master, who impose by the force his law; and the slave, who work by the master and by his work, become more powerful than his master – work sets you free. We can see in the feudal model the accomplishment of the Hegel's dialectic, where the lord guarantees security and protection to people who work for the lord.

The whole world is currently experiencing a robust nationalist revival. e.g. Donald Trump in the United States ("America First"), Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil (a Christian and ethnically pure Brazil), Rodrigo Duterte the Philippines (elimination of political opposition), Xi Jinping in China (the "thought of President Xi" is now enshrined in the Constitution), Shinzo Abe in Japan (revisionist politics) and many others. Our economic model is being severely questioned and criticism of capitalism has never been stronger. The traditional political world, i.e., political parties and media elites are no longer convincing. Abstention rates in elections are Considerable all over the world: e.g., in the 2014 European elections, only 20% of Slovaks went to the polls! Liberal democracy is no longer convincing. During the decade 2010, new figures have also emerged: Donald Trump in the USA, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines. Europe, the Old Continent that was thought to be cured of nationalist fever, is also concerned. e.g., Viktor Orban in Hungary, Matteo Salvini in Italy, Andrzej Duda in Poland. Contemporary nationalism has the singularity of having only one global source, as opposed to "classical nationalism" as we have seen in the previous sections. It is not a country-specific event, but a set of global policies that cause the same phenomena all over the world. Previously, nationalism positioned itself against another country or population. e. g. German nationalism in the XIX<sup>th</sup> and XX<sup>th</sup> centuries was nourished by hatred of others (Slavs, English, French). Nowadays nationalism positions itself against globalisation and this global school of thought. Contemporary nationalism is fuelled by a deep economic and social crisis. Our way of life is now global: you can buy French wine in Korea, but also Italian pasta, Dutch cheese and coffee from South America. New technologies have revolutionised our communications. This global interdependence, promoted by UN policies since the post-war period, has helped to strengthen the bond between states. Cultural differences have indeed not disappeared (and will probably never disappear); but our way of life tends to make our



world a kind of “global village”. e.g., Koreans are more often dressed in jeans than in hanbok, the French frequently use English words, and Americans often eat Mexican or Asian food.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, globalization is “a situation in which available goods and services, or social and cultural influences, gradually become similar in all parts of the world.” So, we can consider globalization changing states but states still essential, nonetheless. Sometimes globalization is considered as responsible for all the economic, political & social problems. It is partially quite relevant, but we have to keep in mind that states created globalization. The French philosopher Étienne de la Boétie said: “Servitude is intentional: Man has no master but the one he gives himself.” Globalization has two faces: the first one is the “happy globalization”. You can find French wine, Dutch cheese and New Zealand butter in South Korea, and you can ride a Volkswagen or Renault car in Russia. It participates in spreading cultures and lifestyles. Travelling is less complicated with the international agreements (no visas in the Schengen area, facilities between the USA and Canada, multilateral deals in the African Union's countries). Besides, global standards have increased the lifestyle around the world: health standards (infants' disease have significantly decreased thanks to the WHO's policies). There is global cooperation between polices (Interpol, Europol) but also in the education sector as well (general educative requirements). Thanks to globalization, a global justice has emerged to protect every people through the planet (International Criminal Court and the emergence of fundamental human rights with the *jus cogens*). By the way, hereabouts is the text of an advertisement seen in the London Underground:

“Who do we think we are? We talk for England about the likelihood of an Indian summer over cups of Kenyan coffee. We drink Belgian beer for Dutch courage before cheering on Egyptian strikers. Where we remind folk that Rome wasn't built in a day as we struggle with Swedish flatpaks and inevitably have to pardon our French. We are not an island. We're a part of something far, far bigger.” (*literatim* an advertising from HSBC UK).

The world is still bipolar today: most prominent countries with a capitalist economy and generally ex-colonial countries in the UN Security Council, and the rest of countries usually middle power and colonized countries in the General UN Assembly). However, global policies are economic policies to support big companies in detriment of local businesses. It is not correct to say that our world is based on the free trade: there are four big companies (Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon) to rule the economy. Nowadays, companies are more powerful than states. For instance, Apple represents 260 billion USD: it is so much more than the GDP of Portugal (217, 6 billion USD according to the World Bank) and Romania (211, 8 billion USD according to the World Bank). The total amount of GAFA's economy is 500 billion USD (*literatim* the French economic newspaper Alternatives Économiques based on national statistics). We are now living in a world where companies are worth more than the work of an entire population. Globalization is a concept that makes it possible to abolish borders. But not only the frontiers of humanity (strengthening the link and dialogue between peoples and cultures), but also the boundaries of work. Working conditions vary considerably around the world. In France and in the European Union, workers cannot be paid less than a fixed salary and there are paid holidays to allow people to rest. In the United States, there are no labour regulations, just as there are in China or Thailand. Globalization does not mean a better life for everyone. We will focus about this point in the next part.

And last but certainly not least, it is impossible not to mention the issue of terrorism, which represents a new form of “war” and “conflict”. If terrorist attacks are a form of violent action used since antediluvian times, based precisely on the “terror of action” and the phenomenon of fear (the assassination of Julius Caesar, of Caligula in the time of ancient Rome), they have taken a completely different form today. Terrorism, historically linked to a political ideology: anarchist attacks in the 19th century, in France against President Perrier, in Italy against King Humbert I, in Russia against Czar Alexander III; the burning of the Reichstag in Germany in 1933 by the Nazis, the Red Brigades and the leaden years in the 1970s. Terrorism is thus “propaganda by the fact”. It became linked to religious fanaticism with the decolonisation movement that began in the inter-war period with an ideological awakening of the colonised peoples: for instance, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt as early as 1928 in Ismailia, which demanded not only independence, but also the establishment of an “Islamic” state (based on religious codes). This phenomenon is not

only peculiar to Egypt but has concerned all the countries of Muslim culture (Tunisia with Ennahda, Morocco with the Justice and Development Party, Algeria with the Islamic Salvation Front). War in the XXI<sup>th</sup> century is asymmetrical and has absolutely nothing to do with the classical conception of the Wesphalian and Napoleonic order. The time of pitched battles and wars of position (e.g., the First World War) has been eclipsed by the fourth industrial revolution: war now is hacking and theft of computer data. Islamic terrorism, which today represents one of the major forms of terrorism in the world, notwithstanding the rise of ultra-conservative Christian (the Proud Boys in the United States, Pegida in Germany, Jobbik in Hungary) and Hindu (BJP in India) groups. These groups rely on new technologies, which is their strength: traditional governments have difficulty containing this mass movement, a price to pay for democracy and freedom of expression. Traditional social networks face the same problem (Twitter, Facebook, Telegram). Without the new technologies, religious terrorism would never have progressed so far (*cf.* Ayse Ceyhan).

## 2.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CAPITALIST WORLD

The French Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon promised: the Industrial Revolution would be the era of “exploitation of Man by Man.” To be understood in its full expression, we must place his famous formula in its historical context. The early beginnings of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century made everyone understand that the end of the world was well and truly in sight. Admittedly, the French Revolution, the expansion of its ideas through Napoleonic idealism and that of the “Sister Republics” did not achieve its final goal: in 1815, France once again became a monarchy, and Europe lived in the hour of the Holy Alliance. No one could dispute this “restoration” of monarchical political power: indeed, not Revolutionary France, which crushed the Spanish insurgents in blood at the Battle of the Trocadero in 1821 to protect the absolute power of Madrid. Absolute, you say? Political power is certainly monarchical everywhere in Europe, but revolutionary ideals have not disappeared as much. The Restoration, then the July Monarchy, were the fruits of the philosophical thought of the Enlightenment: the creation of a Chamber of Peers, decided in 1814 by Louis XVIII, sought to achieve a synthesis between revolutionary heritage and monarchical power. A Chamber of Peers is a continuation of the National Assembly (a legacy of the French Revolution) and the philosophical thought of Montesquieu and Voltaire. These two philosophers pleaded for the government of the enlightened elites, i. e., the government of the “Greats”, with the aristocrats and certainly not a government of the ignorant and illiterate “rabble” and populace. Moreover, the Charter is part of this effort to synthesise Revolution and Absolutism.

It is the desire to return to the codes of the Ancien Régime (literally: “the old rule”) that will topple this Europe of synthesis. The Neohellenic Enlightenment and the French Revolution had a profound effect on the Hellenic consciences living under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. In 1797, France constituted the Ionian Islands as a “Republic of the Seven Islands” since the Treaty of Campo-Formio. France subsequently transformed these islands in French departments. The chancelleries of the Holy Alliance do not want to hear about an independent Greece, something inconceivable in the mind of Austrian Chancellor Karl von Metternich - father of the Holy Alliance of which he considers himself the guarantor. At the beginning of the 1820s, two ideologies clashed. The first one was the liberal conception from every point of view, as opposed to those that were absolutist. In the United Kingdom, the corn-laws were gradually challenged by the liberal elites; in France, the ultra-powerful Charles X gave rise to vehement opposition, calling for an end to censorship and the constitution of a liberal parliament. The situation is comparable in the United Provinces, where cohabitation between French- and Dutch-speakers has been problematic since the return of present-day Belgium to the Netherlands; in Poland, there are dreams of reconstituting the Republic of Two Nations, and Tsarist Russia is a terrible oppressor. The vision of Nations is on the march, and nothing can stop it; the denial of liberal ideas by the absolutist chancelleries will lead to confrontation, which is inevitable.

It is necessary to define the term “liberal”. Nowadays, right-wing parties have a monopoly of it, and it is used only to talk about economics. Therefore, someone who was a liberal in 1830 is far from its current meaning in 2020. Liberal ideas include all the values opposed to the absolutism of political power. Liberalism revolves around all forms of freedom: political freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of enterprise. The word has been gradually emptied of its primary substance with

a shift to the left of the first two, transformed into democracy and freedom of belief, which have now become political and social evidence in XXI<sup>st</sup> century Europe. In 1830, “the exploitation of Man by Man” was the conclusion of liberal thought: the term exploitation does not have a pejorative meaning in this sentence since it is much broader. One conceived exploitation through the vote of the electorate which led to the famous tyranny of Benjamin Constant's majority. The establishment of a liberal government which by its very nature oppresses the individual (La Boétie's voluntary servitude: the individual accepts to lose a certain number of his natural liberties to the benefit of material guarantees (security in particular) provided by the state. The exploitation of Man by Man is moreover a break with the absolutist order. The exploitation of Man by Man, which can be translated concretely by the exploitation of Man by the monarch. Or in extenso the exploitation of Man by religious dogma (in Europe, the Church). We owe this monumental mistake to the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, the consequences of which are still being felt today: if a country wants to develop and thus tend towards progress, it must undertake efforts to liberalise its economy, the effects of which are catastrophic, even disastrous, for these developing countries. Liberalism, especially economic liberalism, having been built against absolutist power, it seemed only natural to assimilate economic liberalism to the natural progress of Mankind. But the policies of the closing XX<sup>th</sup> century and the XXI<sup>th</sup> century could have drawn the consequences of their so-called “economic development”. Suppose we may call the Pereire brothers visionaries for their railway adventure, precursors of our formidable national railway network. In that case, we shall not neglect all the negative aspects and their disastrous societal results. Far from giving back to all Men an equal place, it was there again an opportunity to recall that the night of August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1789 in France (“Men are born and remain free and equal in rights”), the US Declaration of Independence in 1776 (“All men are created equal”) had been only a dream. The example of the railway shows us that inequalities persisted, not only among travellers divided into classes but also by the working conditions of rail workers.

Regarding History, most of the world's economies are based on the welfare state: Chile, France, Russia, South Korea, etc. Some sectors of the economy are reserved for state action: transport, energy, education, health. It is interesting to note that the countries that intervene little have a high poverty rate (United States, United Kingdom) and those that intervene the most have a lower rate (Scandinavian countries). State intervention in economic affairs is the opposite of capitalist theories. The capitalist is historically hostile to state intervention. Since the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, French merchants have sought to avoid state control. When Secretary Colbert asked merchant Legendre what he could do to help trade, Legendre replied, “Nous laisser faire!” The British economist John Menard Keynes argued unsuccessfully for a dirigiste economy. In 1926, he wrote:

“Economists, like other scientists, have chosen the hypothesis from which they set out, and which they offer to beginners because it is the simplest, and not because it is the nearest to the facts. The beauty and the simplicity of such a theory are so great that it is easy to forget that it follows not from the actual facts, but an incomplete hypothesis introduced for the sake of simplicity.” (*literatim* in *The end of laissez-faire*).

The strongest Welfares States are essentially European States: Spain and Portugal due to the legacy of the respective regimes of Franco and Salazar based on corporatism, General de Gaulle's France, Italy with Alcide de Gasperi's Christian democracy, Greece with Eleftherios Venizelos, Ioannis Metaxas and Konstantinos Karamanlis, Germany with Bismarck and Adenauer. We have to keep in mind that active state intervention in economic affairs is far from being a European specificity. It was the most prominent economic model in the 1960s and 1970s in Asia (South Korea, Japan), Africa (Félix Houphouët-Boigny's Côte d'Ivoire) and South America (Salvador Allende's Chile, Jucelino Kubitschek's Brazil). However, the welfare state seems to be gradually disappearing in favour of the Market. Throughout the 1980s, the social doctrines of the welfare state and Keynesianism were marginalised. The ultraliberal doctrines (inspired by the “Chicago boys” like Milton Friedman) became the very base of the modern economy. The social ideas, like economic planification, were even teased. Socialist ideas were associated with Sovietism and Stalinist politics: pursuing a socialist policy became synonymous with being Stalinist and therefore a bloodthirsty dictator. e.g., Margaret Thatcher was a constant critic of socialism during her ten years at Downing Street:

“All levels of income are better off than they were in 1979. But what the honourable member is saying is that he would rather the poor were poorer provided the rich were less rich. That way, you will never create the wealth for better social services as we have. And what a policy. Yes. He would rather have the poor poorer provided the rich were less rich.” (*verbatim* the former Prime Minister during a debate in the House of Commons, 11/22/1990).

3.

### CONTEMPORARY CAPITALIST ECONOMY RAISES THE QUESTION OF EQUALITY, AND ESPECIALLY EQUAL ACCESS TO TOILETS FOR ALL

Capitalism is based on the idea of a natural inequality between people: the rich are meant to be very rich, and the poor very poor. Moreover, capitalist society has evolved human society into a society based on consumption and profit. Today, everything could be sold.

The state, in its contemporary form, is all-powerful, in the way it was conceived as such by the philosophers of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, horrified by the terror of the religious wars of the previous century that many had experienced. e. g. John Locke and Thomas Hobbes (*cf. The Leviathan*) following the thought of Machiavelli (*cf. The Prince*). The emergence of the nation-state in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century was to be built around this very idea. From the first oil shock and especially from the 1980s onwards, the state became the sword arm of liberalism. The state is essentially the only supranational actor capable of imposing something on a large scale. Capitalism will then use this omnipotence to impose its liberal reforms. One of the most relevant examples is Germany in the 2000s. During the 2000s, Germany experienced a contrasting economic and social situation. German reunification was based on capitalist economic reunification, ipso facto abolishing all social legislation in the German Democratic Republic. In addition, the country, which had completed its reconstruction and economic boom since the 1970s, was confronted with the social consequences of the market economy. Rising unemployment, inflation, increasing public debt. The global geopolitical context also accentuates the difficulties of the German economy. Eastern European countries have a cheaper labour force for companies which do not hesitate to relocate there and thus close factories in the country. In addition to experiencing a low growth rate between 1995 and 2005, the German economy saw its unemployment rate rise from 8.3% to 11.3%, an increase of 3 points. Between 2003 and 2005, German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder passed legislation to considerably relax labour legislation. This legislation was introduced by Peter Hartz, Volkswagen's personnel director. The main measures of these explicitly liberal reforms are: simplifying dismissal procedures, encouraging “€1 per hour jobs” and reducing unemployment benefits. Since the Hartz reforms, an unemployed person is obliged to accept a job offered to him or her and can be denied benefits after three consecutive rejections. The immediate consequences of these reforms are to considerably reduce the unemployment rate from 12% in 2005 to 7% in 2010, 5% in 2015 and around 3% in 2019. Meanwhile, the poverty rate increased between 2000 and 2005, from 12.5% to 14.7% and 16.1% in 2011. Therefore, the Hartz reforms transformed the German state from a relatively interventionist state (Rhine capitalism) to an economically passive state. This transformation of the role of the State is very interesting and is in line with that experienced by other countries in the world. e. g. the United Kingdom with Tony Blair and John Major, Argentina with Carlos Menem, Spain with Mariano Rajoy, etc. From the moment the state becomes the simple relay of capitalism, i.e., by imposing liberal legislation, the world of workers is forced to adapt to the new logic: to produce more, always more. You have to work more to earn less. Working conditions are not the priority of capitalism and even less so of the state, which has opted to let capitalism reign. The end justifies the means: produce more, whatever the conditions.

With its withdrawal from economic affairs, the state removes its social legislation in benefit of the rules of capitalism. Henceforth, it is the companies themselves that set the working hours of workers and their wages, taking advantage of the very weak national regulations. This is the case in most of the world's major economies: United States, United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, India. Collective labour agreements set the terms and conditions of work and are negotiated between employers and workers, thus creating a balance of power in favour of employers. Minimum wages are set by the states and vary considerably from country to country. In France the monthly minimum wage is 1,539.42 euros before tax, compared with 42 euros before tax in India. But a minimum wage does not guarantee a decent standard of living or a fair livelihood. The US minimum

wage (US\$7.25 in the USA per hour) is 27% of the average monthly wage. In addition, there is no minimum wage in many countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Vietnam).

Break time, which includes the worker's right to use the toilet, is also very flexible and varies considerably from country to country. In the United States, the minimum working time for lunch, which is the main break time, legislation varies among states but averages half an hour. However, the legislation remains very unclear on the minimum breaks for workers to use the toilet. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the U.S. agency responsible for occupational health and safety, establishes the following statement:

“Employees should not have to wait any extended period of time to use a toilet. OSHA does not regulate any issues pertaining to an employee remaining “on” or “off” the clock while using the restroom. OSHA does not define “timely” as this can vary according to the type of work the individual does, the urgency of the work he is engaged in, and the distance the restroom is from the place of work. The timeliness and amount an individual use the restroom can vary per employer. Certain medical conditions must be taken into consideration when an employer determines the frequency that an individual may use the restroom such as; prostate issues, pregnancy, and bladder control issues. At construction job sites, one toilet must be provided per 20 employees in a workplace. In a workplace with between 21 and 199 employees, a toilet seat and one urinal must be provided for every 40 employees. For 200 or more workers, OSHA regulations call for a toilet seat and a urinal per 50 workers. The toilet must be located within a 1/4-mile walk of the employees, or if that is not feasible, the toilet must be at the closest point for vehicular access. The toilet must be 'nearby', which means it must be sufficiently close that workers can use it when they need to, in less than 10 minutes. This is important for mobile crews, workers who continually move from job site to job site on either an hourly or daily basis.” (*literatim* “OSHA Requirements for a Bathroom”, 2018).

In concrete terms, this means that there are no fixed regulations stipulating a minimum break time for going to the toilet. OSHA leaves it to companies to decide “reasonably” what bathroom breaks to grant. Lavatories are required to be less than ten minutes away from the employer's workplace, which in practice does not constitute concrete legislation. Can an employee therefore work in a building without a bathroom and have to travel at least nine minutes to the toilet? This lack of concrete regulation is reflected in many legislations around the world. In France and the UK, there is no law explicitly specifying a right for workers to go to the toilet. French and English legislation imposes a rest period of at least 20 minutes after 6 consecutive hours of work, and delegates to employers the responsibility for granting (or not) these pee breaks. New Zealand legislation indicates that:

“Restroom entitlements cannot be contracted out of unless reasonably compensated for. However, the law does not state how the employer is to calculate the cost of compensation.” (*literatim* Employment Relations Act 2001, New Zealand)

Many other countries have little or no legislation on working conditions. This is primarily the case in the so-called “developing” countries, where the workforce is in high demand by companies for this simple reason. According to UNICEF, 11.8% of children work in India (2002-2012 figures). They can spend between 12 and 20 hours a day in unhealthy and dangerous places. In textile factories, children are sometimes chained to their sewing machines and forced to sleep there. Basic hygiene is rarely respected, and health care is non-existent. Workers in the Democratic Republic of Congo are also affected by weak national labour legislation. The report by Pierre Claver Mangwaya Bukuku, President of the trade union Confédération Démocratique du Travail, deplores the precariousness and lack of respect for basic hygiene rules in his 2014 report. However, it is in “developed” countries where the access to toilets is under greatest pressure from employers. Here are three excerpts from different reports on the lack of access to toilets for workers:

“The vast majority of the 250,000 workers in the U.S. poultry sector say they do not get adequate bathroom breaks. The conditions present difficulties, especially for menstruating or pregnant women. Workers could also face medical problems, including urinary tract infections, and managers have told some workers to eat and drink less to avoid going to the bathroom.



Workers regularly see their requests for a break from work ignored by their superiors, who respond with mockery or threats of sanctions or even firing. They are struggling to adjust to this denial of a basic human need. They urinate and defecate standing in front of the assembly line, wear diapers at work, reduce their intake of fluids and liquids to unsafe levels, and risk serious health problems. They must then wait for more than an hour or rush for ten-minute breaks. This is a difficult time to hold when they have to cross vast factory floors where floors can be slippery, covered with blood or animal residues, and knowing that they have to remove and then put-on protective clothing. Line managers deny workers these breaks because they are under pressure to maintain production speed.” (*literatim* an excerpt from OXFAM report, 2016).

“We never timed employees and we never said they couldn't use the bathroom,” recalled [Kevin] Kevelson, owner of Ideal Bias Binding Inc., a maker of baby bibs. “All we said was 'You have to come in the office and get the key to go.'” He said he locked the bathroom and put the key in the office because he wanted to catch the culprits who were smoking in the loo, littering the facility with cigarette butts, and violating fire code regulations barring smoking in some sections of the factory.” (*literatim* an excerpt from *Void where Prohibited: Rest Breaks and the Right to Urinate on Company Time*, Marc Linder, Ingrid Nygaard, 1998)

“In 2009, contact centre workers in Scotland Yard's control were being forced to record every visit they made to the bathroom during their working hours. Workers reported they felt immensely offended and humiliated. Superintendent Russ Hanson-Coles claimed forcing the phone operators to record their bathroom visits as “code three” deterred employees from taking unnecessary breaks. The term code three refers to any type of unscheduled break whether that being a bathroom visit or the need to fill up one's water bottle outside of their scheduled rest breaks.” (*literatim* “Police must record toilet breaks”, BBC News, 2009).

The excerpts we have just read demonstrate the gradual replacement of capitalism as a societal framework and as a kind of “supreme authority” in the place of the state and national governments. The state has only a passive and legislative role, only implementing the measures demanded by the capitalist elites. One can speak in this case of the “deep state”, of state within state. That is to say, a power hidden behind the classic appearance of a state apparatus, but which in reality has real control and the notorious “monopoly of force” (Max Weber). In this work, it is not a question of putting a name or a qualifier on this “deep state”. The fact is that it does exist, but to try to define it more precisely would be tantamount to making this essay a partisan one. The aim of this essay is not to adopt precisely this or that point of view, but to present the different points of view. From the study and presentation of various extracts from laws and press or scientific journal articles, it can be concluded that the classical state we conceive of no longer exists in this form in the twenty-first century. Here, the term 'deep state' is used in the historical sense of its semantic definition. i.e., 'an invisible power, not detectable among the legal and legitimate institutions of the Republic, but which weighs on major political decisions and the functioning of society' (*cf.* Jean-Paul Burdy and Jean Marcou). Reading these excerpts does not allow us to say with certainty whether the current measures regarding access to workers' toilets are good or bad: this would not be a scientific argument. Debating whether or not a measure is good or bad is a political matter, which is absolutely not the point here. This work is based on an obvious observation: All humans need, at one time or another, to go and relieve this natural need to urinate, to pee, to empty their bladder. The essay is focused on how the capitalist logic of permanent production (which we have explained at length and precisely in the preceding sub-parts) manages to coexist with this need of workers. After studying and presenting these excerpts, we can conclude the following: capitalism only seeks profit, and respect or integrity of natural persons is not one of the foundations of the legislative framework governing access to workers' bathroom breaks.

#### 4.

#### INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND COMMON NEEDS, I. E. PREVENTING WORKERS FROM GOING TO THE RESTROOMS, IS A GAME OF CONSEQUENCES

The first three parts introduced the state of our contemporary world and the history of the construction of the omnipotence of the capitalist model, i.e., how capitalism has imposed itself in

our personal lives. This fourth part focuses on the sociological, psychological and personal consequences of this capitalist omnipotence in relation to the fact that we cannot urinate when we want to. Once again, it is not a question of defending either the capitalist model or criticizing it harshly. It is not a question of saying “such a viewpoint is right or wrong”. But to present a work that is as relevant and complete as possible.

A survey of 266 workers conducted by the anti-discrimination association Southern Poverty Law Centre in Alabama states that “almost 80% of them say they don't have the right to go to the toilet when they need to”. In Minnesota, “86% of workers report having fewer than two-bathroom breaks per week”. Not being able to go to the toilet is frustrating in many ways. Firstly, on a physical point of view: the urge to urinate is a physical pain that increases depending on the volume of urine in the bladder. Secondly, on a personal point of view: when someone blocks us to empty our bladder, it is a denial of our fundamental freedom and independence, i.e., the fact that we are a free human being. Finally, on a social level: it is very humiliating because it degrades us in relation to others. We have to pee, and the others don't, so we are in a situation of inferiority towards them. If I ask permission to go to the toilet, it's because I'm not able to hold myself back and keep my body under control. I am relegated to the stage of a wild beast, of a child, in other words those who are dominated by their impulses. What makes all the difference between a human being and an animal is that a human being controls his or her impulses. The balance of power between a boss and an employee is very unequal. Of course, it depends on each country. But as we have seen in the previous section, even in countries where the state was historically interventionist (*cf.* the case of Germany above), liberal reforms have been adopted to reduce the legal requirements for labour law legislation. The state thus places the employee, who by definition has nothing, alone in front of the boss, who by definition has everything. The boss has the assets: the employee needs the assets. Labour is therefore not an inherent relationship of equality between the productive forces. From the moment the boss holds the monopoly of force granted to him by the State, the employee is alone in claiming his fundamental rights. Moreover, it is interesting to look at this terminology of fundamental right. What exactly is a fundamental right? Strictly speaking, it is a basic, elementary and primary right. They are essential for the individual. This definition is very vague: there is no consensus today on what a “basic right” is. Rights and duties vary from time to time and from country to country. The customs and habits of a country differ hugely, and to impose a general definition would be to clash with the customs of the cultures of the world. Let us start from the premise that every country has the right to respect for its culture, traditions and customs. The United States has historically been built as a federation of capitalist states (*cf.* James Parisot, Meyer Weinberg). It was the refusal to pay taxes imposed on the colonialists that led to the American Revolution (“no taxation without representation”). So, the US is a country with a capitalist tradition, so if one were to suggest that going to the toilet during work is a fundamental right, it would run counter to this capitalist tradition. A defender of capitalism would say: certainly, an employee is required to work for a certain period of time without being able to pee. But does the employee prefer his company to go bankrupt because of the time he loses at the toilet, or does he prefer to keep his job and his salary? The employee is also a father: what will he say to his wife and children if he no longer has a job? How will he feed them, provide for their needs? An employee is also a mother: what example of social success does she set for her children if she is no longer employed? An employee is also a young girl: how will she fit into social life, find a boyfriend/girlfriend if she is no longer employed?

Not being able to go to the toilet when you need it is obviously loathsome. But the consequences have to be understood. Capitalism considers this to be the cost of keeping your job and having a job. So, we can ask ourselves: is it better to live on your knees than to die standing up? This is an open question that we all have to ask ourselves. Do we want to be integrated into the system at the price of sacrificing some of our freedoms or do we want to be marginalised and disdained by the system?



## PART TWO.

BEING A 20-YEAR-OLD GIRL IN 2020: AMIDST  
STEREOTYPES, SOCIAL PRESSURE AND THE  
OMNIPOTENCE OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY, HOW  
DOES IT FEEL TO BE A YOUNG GIRL IN OUR TIME?

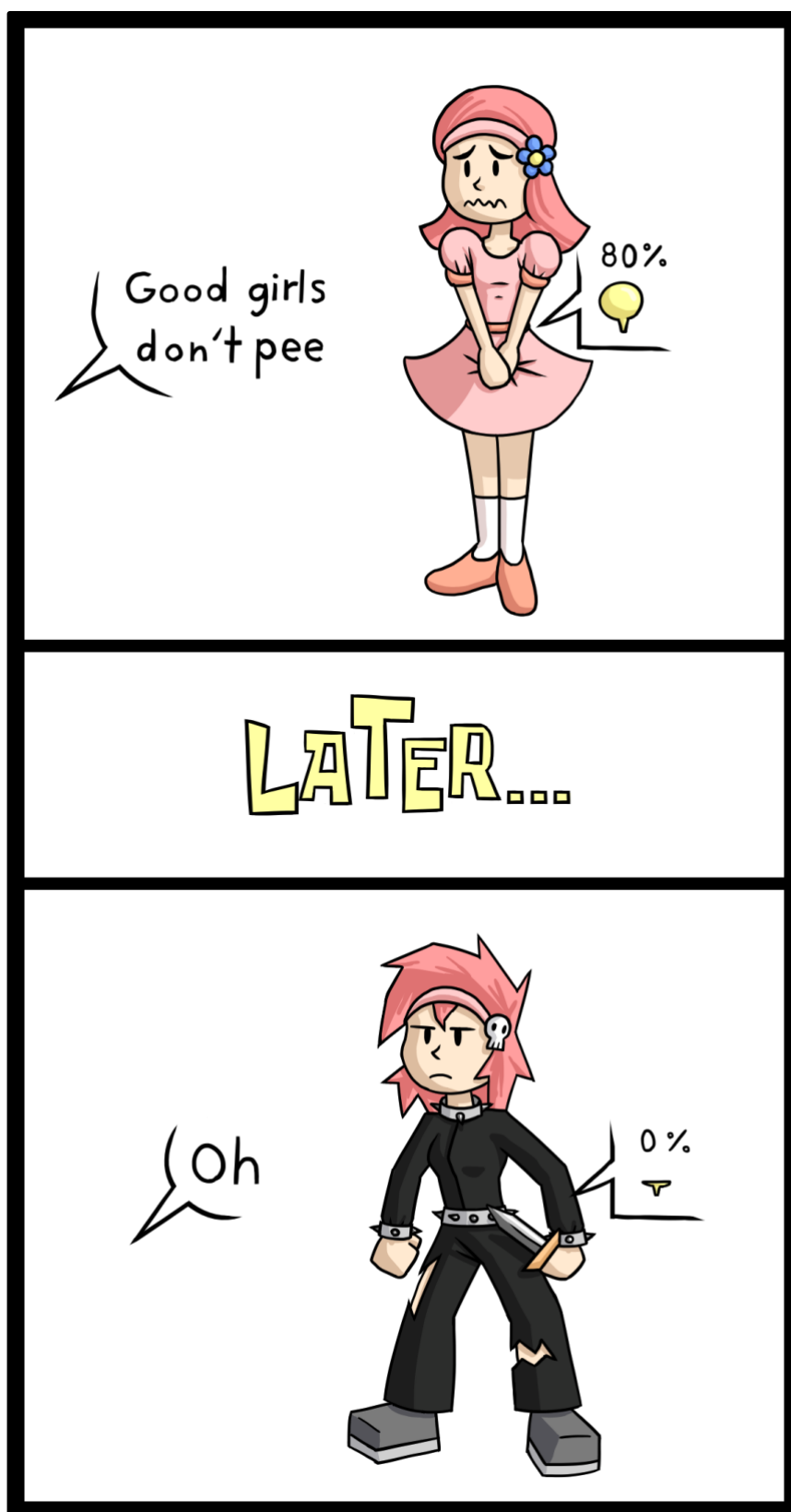


IMAGE N°1. Drawing of the digital artist Bombality, "Good Girl don't pee" (2020).



IMAGE N°2. A man urinating in a Paris street in front of two young women (The Times, 2018).





IMAGE N°3. Two young girls pissing and smoking on a pier in Italy (Tumblr, 2016).

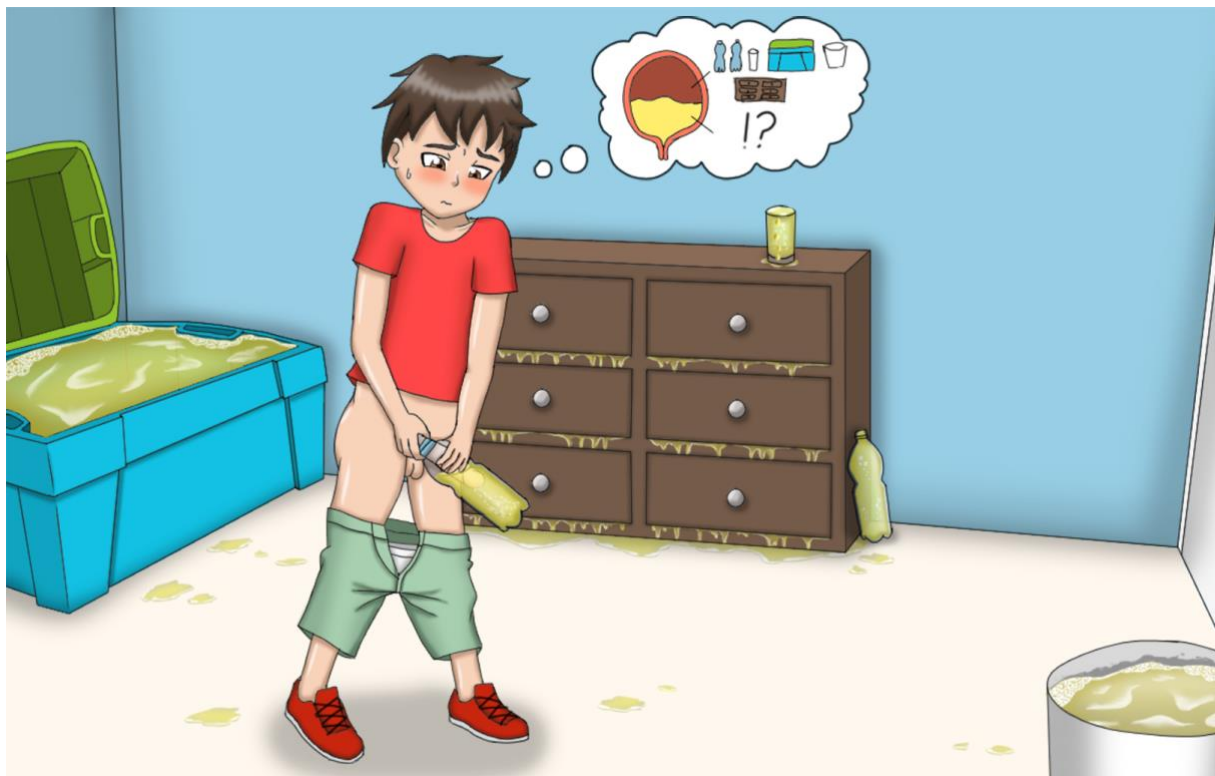


IMAGE N°4. Two cartoons by digital artist Papergami, "No homework, no breaks" (Pixiv, 2020).

A young teenager cannot leave his room until he has done his homework. He cannot go out "under any circumstances". He is desperate because he has to pee so badly. His penis is erect and despite this, jets of urine spurt out.



Three images have been presented. They are a cartoon and two photos. Image #1 is a sketch by the graphic artist Bombality called “Good Girls don't pee”. Image #2 is a photo taken by a journalist from The Times in 2018. Image #3 is also a photography, anchored on an anonymous Italian Tumblr account. Image #4 is a serie of two cartoons made by digital art artist Papergami in 2020 entitled “No homework, no breaks.”

The first drawing depicts two characters, a girl and a boy. They are both dressed in a very stereotypical way: the young girl in a dress and tiara, the young man in a knight's habit with tousled hair. The girl has a full bladder and asks to go to the loo, but the reply is that “a good girl don't pee” (verbatim). Regarding the male character, he doesn't need to pee, his bladder is empty: nonetheless, he elicits interest. The second image is a photograph illustrating a Times article from September 2018. The photo shows a man urinating in a newly installed pissoir on one of the riverside docks in the French capital. In the distance, the man is waving at a boat passing over the Seine with his hat on while urinating. At the same time, two young girls pass behind the man and look at him questioningly. Their eyes are full of both astonishment and disgust. The third image consists of two young girls urinating on a deserted jetty. One of the two girls has a cigarette in her mouth. There are beer bottles next to them. The picture is from an unidentified Italian Tumblr account. Picture no. 4 consists of two drawings: the first one at the top of the page depicts a young teenager locked in his room, looking desperate because he has to pee so badly. He has an erect penis and is desperately looking for a place to relieve himself urgently. Behind the door, a voice tells him that he will not leave his room until he has done all his homework. The second one shows the young teenager relieving himself in a bottle. He has already peed in every possible corner of the room: cupboard, drawers, dustbin. His bladder is only half empty.

Let's start immediately to analyse the public's reactions to these four images. The first is unexpected, the second makes people smile, the last two images invite us to grin funny, but the third is absolutely scandalous. “A good girl doesn't pee” – why not, after all. A man urinating in a pissoir on a street – it's commonplace. A young teenager with his penis in the air and trying desperately to relieve a huge bladder makes us laugh and find it burlesque. But two young girls peeing in a deserted space – it's shocking and indecent. Which leads us to the question: why are we outraged at the last picture and not the first two?

These illustrations perfectly match with our subject: discrimination based on the gender of individuals. A young girl doesn't urinate. To be perfectly accurate, society does not explicitly prohibit young girls from going to the toilet. Societal codes are much more subtle. They suggest and imply that young girls do not have to urinate. Technically, there is nothing to prevent an eighteenth-century aristocrat walking in Regent's Park or Vauxhall from crouching behind a bush and emptying her bladder. However, she doesn't. Why not? Because it would be immoral. A human society exists only through traditions: religion is in a sense the codification of these traditions. Myth legitimises the traditions of society (*cf.* Robert Alan Segal). We exist because of something (Rome exists because of Romulus). The majority of human societies have attributed to men a place of builder, and to women a place of consolidator (*cf.* Patricia Campbell & Jennifer Storo). The man builds society, while the woman perpetuates and embodies the values of society. This idea which is old as the world is built on the physical difference between men and women and the myth of the primitive society of “hunter-gatherers”. In Greek, Latin, Japanese and Hindu mythologies, men most often represent bellicose and all-powerful characters, while women represent emotions or are related to birth and reproduction. e. g., Aphrodite goddess of beauty, Diana goddess of birth, Amaterasu goddess protector of political power, Kali goddess of time and preservation. The Christian religion in the West and Confucianism in the Far East have embraced this idea and made it the basis of their ideologies. Confucianism is the moderation and discretion of women; in Christianity (and even Judaism), women devote themselves body and soul to the family. It always comes back to the same thing: the perpetuation of the family and therefore of society. Or even more so: the woman who gives life through childbirth becomes the symbol of the continuity of society. It is not by chance that Jewishness is only transmitted by the mother. Also, the states are most often personified by women. e.g., Athena for Hellas, Britannia for the United Kingdom, Columbia for the

United States, Germania for Germany, and so on. A man is strong and can fight; a woman is fragile and emotional. The man builds society when the mother gives birth to the future generations of society. So, since the mother is the symbol of society, she has to be perfect. But human beings are by nature imperfect: women must therefore be as perfect as possible. Christianity accentuated this notion of perfection with the image of the Virgin Mary. The mother of Jesus portrays everything that a woman should be: she was not tarnished by sexual relations (she reserved her virginity for God) and was devoted to her family. Religions generally take a negative view of sexual relations because it distracts men from God (*cf.* St. Augustine). Love should be reserved only for God. Man must come closer to God (strive for perfection) and not to the beast. Religions consider sex as necessary (not useful) only for reproduction. The only purpose of sexuality is to have children and to start a family. A “free” form of sexuality does not allow one to get closer to God and hence is finally to be avoided in order to remain consistent with faith (*cf.* Vassilis Saroglou & Caroline Rigo).

So why do we find comical, burlesque and even eclectic the two drawings showing a young teenager trying by all means to relieve himself (*cf.* Image #4)? We have just partly answered this question. A girl is a model, the very essence of all the virtues of human society. On the contrary, the boy is presented as a conqueror ready to sacrifice his life and honour to save the integrity of the community. Such a caricature would not work with a girl. A boy can relieve himself just about anywhere (as can be seen in the second illustration: he urinates wherever he can). For a girl, it is much more delicate: she cannot urinate in a bottle, nor in the drawers (possibly in the basket). This physical “ease” unavoidably exacerbates the gender clash. A boy who needs to pee has something “cute” and “candid”. On the other hand, for a young girl, it is “vulgar” and “inappropriate”. How else can we explain the development in the art of the *puer mingens*, i.e., the young boys represented in painting or sculpture as urinating? The *puer mingens* are the epitome of the virile boy. e. g., *Venus and Cupid* by Lorenzo Lotto, *The Bacchanal of the Andrians* by Titian, the desco da parto by Apollonio di Giovanni. One of the most famous *puer mingens* is the Manneken Pis in the Belgian capital, Brussels. It is the local pride and joy. Its female equivalent, the Jeanneke Pis, designed in 1985 by Denis-Adrien Debouvrie, is much less famous and much less visited. Moreover, coincidence or not, the Manneken Pis is openly exhibited, while the Jeanneke Pis is separated by a fence from the street. One of the paintings depicting a *puer mingens* is very interesting. The seventeenth-century Neapolitan painter Andrea Vaccaro's painting *Susanna and the Elders* is a typical example of this boy/girl segregation. It chronicles a biblical episode, chapter 13 of the *Book of Daniel*. Suzanne, watched as she takes her bath, refuses the dishonest propositions of two old men. In retaliation, they accuse her of adultery and condemn her to death, but the prophet Daniel, still a teenager, intervenes and proves her innocence. In the middle of the painting, the girl in question, Suzanne, is portrayed hiding her chest and vagina to escape the lustful glances of the two men. The prophet Daniel is depicted on the right as a naked boy urinating. The woman is presented as an everlasting victim, whereas the young boy will later be her saviour. The prophet is therefore portrayed as a virile and powerful boy, even though he is clearly younger than the girl, he will still be able to protect and save her. To depict a man in *puer mingens* is to recognise from childhood a powerful virility and therefore an extraordinary courage. Conversely, to represent a young woman doing exactly the same thing is disgusting, immoral and even grossly pornographic.

This historiographical explanation and the pictorial example we have picked up now helps us to have a better grasp of what capitalism has inherited. The capitalist system is the progressive result of medieval corporatism (XIV<sup>th</sup> century), the first globalisation (discovery of the Americas by Europeans in 1492 and intensification of maritime trade), physiocracy (XVI<sup>th</sup> century) and laissez-faire (XVII<sup>th</sup> century). The Industrial Revolution was the fruit of all these successive liberal economic theories. We mentioned it in the first part. It was precisely on the basis of this discrimination between men and women that American public toilets charged women and not men in the 1960s and 1970s. The argument was that men use a urinal, while women need a more cumbersome infrastructure, so women have to be charged for it. This kind of practice still exists: an article in the Oxford Mail of 2017 reports that women have to pay 20 cents for access to the toilets in one of the city's shopping centres, while it is free for men. Charging for access to the toilet itself is a practice that dates back to antiquity. It was the Emperor Vespasian who first introduced a tax on public toilets in the Western world. Admittedly unpopular, it really catapulted the western world into the primitive era of capitalism. This prompted Karl Marx to say: “since every commodity disappears when it becomes money it is impossible to tell from the money itself how it got into the



hands of its possessor, or what article has been changed into it. Non olet', from whatever source it may come." Money has no smell, and the end justifies the means of production. It doesn't matter where the wine comes from, as long as we are exhilarated...

We have seen the very contrasting representation of women and men in relation to their need to urinate in art. But what about literature? Here are three pieces of state-of-the-art information about the relationship between women, their need to pee and the restrooms:

"Between each plate, they made a hole, the Norman hole, with a glass of Eau-de-vie, which put fire in the body and folly in the head. From time to time, a guest, having had one too many, would exit to the nearby trees, relieve themselves, then return with a new hunger in their teeth. The farmer's wives, scarlet-clad, oppressed, their blouses stretched out like balloons, cut in two by corsets, inflated from above and from below, remained modestly on the table. But one of them, more embarrassed than the others, was leaving, so everyone leaves at once. They returned more joyous, almost laughing. And the heavy banter began." (*literatim* an excerpt from *the Norman Prank*, Guy de Maupassant, 1882)

"We had already been driving for 2 hours when suddenly a huge traffic jam appeared. We get stopped on the motorway, get out of the minivan and take the opportunity to get into the hard shoulder and pee. Relieved, we get back into the vehicle to listen to the radio and wait for it to happen. In front of us there was a Belgian registered car with a family in it. After a while, it was pretty clear that this little world also had to pee. A boy of about ten years old came out first and proceeded in the same way as we did. He pissed for a long time, with a powerful jet, which proves that he really needed it. A few moments later a man, who I suppose was the father, got out of the car and peed as well. 20 minutes later, we saw the back door of the family car open with some hesitation, and a girl, about 16 years old, stood between the two doors out of sight. She couldn't get to the other side of the slide, which was too tall. But thanks to the height of the minivan, we didn't miss anything of the show. The teenager pulled down her trousers, her panties, she crouched down and started to pee on the hard shoulder, with a powerful jet for about 50 seconds. She peed really hard, there was now a huge puddle of urine. As soon as it was over, another 25-year-old woman came out, maybe the sister, and also pissed for about a minute. Why can't the boy and his father go and relieve themselves? Men do that, just about everywhere and in a simple, natural way. But for women, the rules of decency have to be respected. Because this show was still a bit indecent. A 16-year-old girl pissing freely when everyone can see her. And most of all a 25-year-old woman who gives a very bad example. Both of the girls could have held back and waited for the end of the traffic jam that was announced on the light panels. Actually 30 minutes later, we started again and in 20 minutes we could reach the rest area with toilets. And there they could have queued for the ladies' facilities. So, 30 minutes more waiting time + 20 minutes of travel time + about 10 minutes of queuing at the ladies' toilets. In one hour, the problem was solved. I didn't want to create controversy, I just wanted to say that a 16-year-old girl should be able to control her bladder and not just let herself go like that. About the sister, she was supposed to set an example." (apocryphal text)

"In 1987, a man, a woman, and their daughter attended a Tchaikovsky concert at the Hollywood Bowl. The most notable thing about their outing, all these years later, is something that actually wasn't the least bit unusual: The two women waited in an interminably long line for the bathroom, while the man did not. The customs of public-restroom construction began to coalesce in the 19th century. Then, "the main concern of the male city fathers was to provide toilets for men, whose role in public space was accepted and indeed regarded as important to the industrial economy," writes Clara Greed, an urban-planning scholar in the United Kingdom, in her contribution to the 2010 academic anthology *Toilet: Public Restrooms and the Politics of Sharing*. "From the outset," she explained, "public toilet provision for women was seen as an extra, as a luxury, or as problematic in other respects." (*literatim* "The Long Lines for Women's Bathrooms Could Be Eliminated. Why Haven't They Been?", Joe Pinsker, *The Atlantic*, 2009)

The first excerpt is from a short story by French novelist Guy de Maupassant, *La Farce Normande* (Normal Prank in English-language). It is a pastoral novel which depicts the feminine condition of the French peasant world at the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. Maupassant's text goes even beyond the simple context of France, as it can also be applied, to a certain extent, to the condition of peasant women in Europe. At the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, the European populations were transformed by the Industrial Revolution, and the peasant world was gradually marginalised to the benefit of the world of industry. Maupassant perfectly presents the state of mind of his century: a girl doesn't urinate, and definitely not in the public space. In the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, European metropolises such as London, Paris and Brussels gradually equipped themselves with public toilets... for men. Women were like "obliterated" from public life. Society is not at all interested in their natural needs - which is perhaps the most natural of all: to urinate. Women are only considered as a labour force and the point of gravity of family life. This theme is taken up by authors such as the French Émile Zola in *L'Assommoir*, or the English authors Jack London and Charles Dickens, who are very sensitive to social issues. The male workers, in contrast to the women, have no apparent problems urinating in the public space. The pissoir at the time was not at all designed for women. In Amsterdam, for instance, public toilets were designed in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century for men only. Today, only three public toilets are accessible to women in the Dutch capital. This may be the beginning of the explanation: it is easier for a man to urinate. He undoes his trousers and shorts and pisses freely standing up. It is quite a different matter for women, who are also permanently relegated to a state of inferiority compared to men. This discrimination is religious and serves as a pretext for states to justify the legal status of women as minors. It was not until 1884 that British legislation recognised that women were not the property of their husbands (Married Women's Property Act). Capitalism is based on very old and long-established habits and customs in societies. There is systematic discrimination against women in many civilizations around the world (Europe, Americas, Africa, the Far East), and few societies were and remain matriarchal (some societies in Oceania). It was because women were relegated to the rank of perennial minors compared to men that they did not take the same place as men during the Industrial Revolution. It was precisely the Industrial Revolution that predefined the relationship between men and women in the workplace. Furthermore, it is due to the stereotypical nature of the female gender (a girl is a symbol of virtue) that the relationship that girls had (and still have) to the latrine was (and still is for some) complicated. By the way, capitalism was not and is not always the only form of restriction or oppression of individual freedom. An old Indonesian custom dictate that young married couples do not go to the toilet for three days after marriage.

The second excerpt, apocryphal, is pretty accurate. It presents a narrative point of view and therefore a personal (and therefore subjective) opinion on an event whose facts it relates. There is no question of denying or questioning this point of view. Although he was the only or rare witness to a scene which is obviously unverifiable (searching for a list of all the traffic jams where Belgian cars are present would be pretty laborious if not impossible...), this story is not improbable. What is even more interesting is that this story is not certain, but quite possible and credible. This is what makes its strength and narrative value. This excerpt reflects three things. Firstly, the contemporary societal context: the urgent need to urinate during a traffic jam on a motorway in a context of massive use of the car for all journeys. A foreign car, as the narrator says: he explains that it is a Belgian car, so ipso facto alien as to its nationality. Secondly, the narrator's point of view. We know that the narrator is a boy, probably a teenager or young adult, since he identifies with another boy in the car. He says that the latter "has peed like him". The narrator establishes a dichotomy between the protagonists of his story. This dichotomy is based on gender difference. On the one hand, the boys (his friends, himself, the father & the boy in the car); on the other hand, the girls (the two sisters in the car). Finally, the relationship between boys & girls and the current state of mind. This excerpt was not chosen just by chance, between a XIX<sup>th</sup> century novel and a newspaper article about the fewer public toilets for women. It highlights the ancestral relationship of domination and judgement between men and women. The narrator seems shocked to see two young girls urinating so openly and shamelessly. We could have seen them, he protests. Nonetheless, it should be pointed out that the girls' attitude is not so common: the 16-year-old girl hesitates before going out, trembling and unsure of herself. One might think that the 16-year-old girl must have been very reluctant to go outside to urinate. It was probably a situation of emergency. In any case, this is what the narrator tells us, pointing out that the girl had to "pee very badly". Judging the narrator's attitude or point of view should not be made too hastily. To give an opinion on this is not at all the

purpose of this essay. On the contrary, we should rather seek to understand this point of view, which reflects a very interesting social vision: how does a young man react nowadays to this kind of situation? It is all too simple to call him either a misogynist or a retrograde one. Unfortunately, this is all too frequent a phenomenon in the public debate. To hysterise and bipolarise the discourse serves no scientific or historiographical interest. What is the point of this kind of attitude? It is intellectually and socially dangerous to violently denounce and banish from society an individual who does not think in a conformist way. This kind of "cancel culture" is a blight of our century. The narrator's words are in keeping with the Judeo-Christian conception of Nature and the human body. Moreover, the narrator does not consider that young girls should not urinate: but that they should respect the limits of society, for their own safety. A young girl urinating on the side of a road is actually not sheltered from a misadventure. By calling the two girls to order, he is in fact calling society to order. Society has limits, and while behaving in this way, the girls may have crossed such limits.

The third excerpt is from an American press article. It focuses on the lack of women's toilets in public spaces. In general, there are a lot of press articles on this societal subject, which shows us the interest in this topic. Why exactly is there so much interest? Primarily because women make up more than half of the population. All the girls have, one day in their lives, been confronted with a hurried need to pee when they were in public. Secondly, because the place of women has considerably changed since the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, much more visible than before. In the past, women went out only a little: this was the case for common women, who didn't have time to go to the pub anyway, but also for bourgeois women, who were most often at social functions. Finally, because we have been living in an era of demands for freedom since the end of the 1960s and the sexual revolution. People who were once regarded as a 'minority' (e.g., homosexuals, women and ethnic minorities) started to claim equal rights. This struggle for equality between men and women includes equal access to toilets for both sexes. The role of capitalism is fundamental here. It has not so much taken up an antiquated tradition of religious misogyny as it has created ex nihilo a pretext for relegating women to the background. Building toilets for working boys is a necessity that capitalism has not been able to circumvent. The costs are not too high in principle: boys urinate standing up and do not actually need a huge infrastructure. It is quite a different matter for girls. They need to crouch down and therefore sit on something to urinate, as well as wipe themselves after doing so:

“In 1869, when New York City opened public toilets in a heavily trafficked part of the city, there were facilities for men and woman. The women's toilet, probably an afterthought, was inadequate. While the women's stalls in the New York toilets could accommodate working-class women, they were too small to accommodate the large dresses of upper-class women. The toilets also were unheated, which made the seats very cold in winter, and the stalls lacked enough privacy; thus, few women used them.” (*literatim* an excerpt from *The Disappearing Public Toilet*, Taunya Lovell Banks, 2020)

Besides, one of the most salient examples is the 1904 town plan for the London toilet block on Charing Cross Road. This plan accurately reflects the state of mind of the time. Certainly, there are separate toilets for men (left) and women (right). But the space is very untidy. The men's toilets have 12 cubicles and 13 urinals; the women's have only 5 cubicles.

It wasn't until the birth of trade unions and their rise to strength that toilets became the norm in the UK. In 1824, trade unions were legalised - a first in Europe. It was not until 1871 in Germany, 1884 in France and only 1921 in Belgium (freedom of association being allowed by the Belgian Constitution of 1831 but prohibited for workers). This British pioneering spirit can be explained quite simply by the fact that the country had begun its Industrial Revolution earlier, unlike the European continent, which had just been launched in 1824. It was not until the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century that companies-built privies for workers. These latrines were far from modern comfort: they were mostly toilets outside the factories made in a very rudimentary way (a hole in the floor). Not having women's toilets in companies was common in the United Kingdom until the 1919 Act was passed making them compulsory. Companies used this as an excuse not to hire women and thus ultimately not to build more sophisticated sanitation facilities.

To have a proper understanding of the situation in which girls find themselves today when they have to use the facilities to urinate, it is necessary to grasp the complex history of the development of toilets. In the first part, a brief history of our capitalist society has been discussed to provide a global view of our subject. i. e. capitalism today makes us consider the relationship between girls and restrooms in a distinctive way. The need to empty one's bladder is as old as the world and has been around for ages. By the way, it is noteworthy to note that English has a considerable number of synonyms to express this action. Before the word toilet was commonly used from the XIX<sup>th</sup> century onwards, other terms were used: either referring to the room itself (the latrine) or to the act of urinating (going to relieve oneself, to micturate, to take a leak, to make water, etc). It is very interesting to see that the word piss is also used in most European languages. In Polish pee is pronounced *siusiu*, in French, Italian, Romanian and Spanish *pipi*, in Russian *Пописать* ("popisiat"). This is due to the Latin etymology of the word (pissare), which comes from the sound of flowing urine (onomatopoeia). In medieval English, the word "privy" was used to refer to the place where you pee. The current word is derived from the French "toilette" and was only introduced in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. "Faire sa toilette" meant to wash, clean, make oneself clean. The literal translation is washroom or bathroom. It has become a euphemism and a metonymy for the room where you pee (the toilet). Today it is a universal word that can be found almost everywhere (airports, museums, shops, etc.). Taking an interest in the etymology of the word is not fortuitous or a useless digression. All the words used in English to say, "I'm going to go pee" either refer to a shameful action ("privy" comes from the French "privé", private) or to a weakness of the human body (to make a leak). When someone says he is going to relieve himself to say he is going to pee, it means that he is going to unload a weight from his shoulders, to remove something that bothers him, that hurts him. Etymologically, then, going to pee is an action that we are ashamed of, that bothers us and makes us uncomfortable. When we go to the privy, we hide from the others' gaze because it is an action that is not very rewarding. It is precisely because it is not very rewarding that we are ashamed of it, basically. It reminds us back to our state of nature, of a wild beast. We all want to give a perfect image of ourselves. Human beings are imperfect, and we hide our imperfection (including that of urinating). Furthermore, peeing is the most universal thing ever: it brings all human creatures to the same hierarchical level. But human beings are proud and arrogant, they always want to be the strongest. "Lowering oneself" to pee means finally recognising that we are not stronger than others and consequently a personal disgrace. Since man has lived in society in a sedentary way, urinating publicly has been punished in the name of public hygiene (cf. Louise Milliers and her study on the Roman Empire and public health). Urinating on the public highway has been criminalised in Europe and the United States since the second half of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, with the growth of cities requiring the control of public hygiene.

To have to pee is never a pleasure, whatever the centuries. Generally speaking, the lower the social status of the individual, the less comfort he or she can have. As we have already noticed from the previous quotations, peeing for a woman is even less enviable. The Georgian period (XVIII<sup>th</sup> century) and especially the Victorian period (XIX<sup>th</sup> century) plunged British society into a kind of powerful moral puritanism. First of all, the context of the period needs to be understood. In the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, European countries including England underwent a dynamic intellectual revolution known as the Enlightenment. It was above all a revolution of ideas, but not of morals. Throughout the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century, the court of the King of England became stronger and more familiar with the strict protocol of etiquette of other European courts, notably that of Versailles in France. Unlike the continent, Britain was never invaded by Napoleon Bonaparte and was not influenced by revolutionary ideas. Unlike Italy, Poland or Greece, where the ideas of the Revolution of 1789 will fuel local independence aspirations. With the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Europe plunged into an era of conservatism and moral rigour. The Industrial Revolution was a revolution in technology and the economy, but not in morality. Christian rigorism did not falter throughout the XIX<sup>th</sup> century in the United Kingdom, especially since it was embodied by Queen Victoria herself. During the Georgian period, a young aristocrat was constantly concerned to find a place and most importantly an opportunity to relieve herself. The Victorian era is innovative insofar as it completely obliterates the natural needs of young women, who must be models of wisdom and virtue. A young woman devotes herself entirely to her family, her husband (the pater familias) and her children. This perfection is praised by Coventry Patmore in her 1854 poem *The Angel in the House* ("Man must be pleased; but him to please is woman's pleasure; down the gulf of his condoled necessities, she casts her best, she flings herself.").

In the public space, a girl did not often have access to a place to relieve her bladder. This would have first presupposed the existence of women's conveniences. Secondly, she must get permission from an adult. A young woman from the bourgeoisie might not go to the toilet without embarrassment when she was in public:

"I unbuttoned my braces, dropped my slight summer trousers and lay on my back in front of my sister.

"Oh, my God! Roger, if anyone saw you," she said softly.

- "No one is in the neighbourhood, Berthe," I replied in the same tone. Then I got up, stood in front of her, lifted up my shirt and said: "Since I have seen you completely, you can see me completely. Well, Berthe, it's through the little hole at the end that I piss, but now I can't, although I want to.

- I've been craving it for a long time too, Berthe says softly, but I'm ashamed, you mustn't look at me, Roger!

- Come on, Berthe, don't be mean, if you hold back too long, your bladder will burst, and you will die. That's what our nurse used to tell us." I quickly lifted up her petticoat and shirt, forced her to squat and pee. Berthe, trembling and hesitant, looked around and then began to pee. I quickly bent down to see everything and saw a thin, wide stream of water falling obliquely on the floor at the top of her slit.

"But no, Roger, she cried in a tearful tone. This is obscene!"

She stopped peeing and got up suddenly."

(literatim an excerpt from the novel *The exploits of a young Don Juan*, Guillaume Apollinaire, 1911)

When reading this little excerpt from an apprenticeship novel, one must bear in mind how ashamed and embarrassed the young girl (i.e., the sister of the narrator Roger) is to pee in front of her brother. The boy has no problems, apart from a hard-on, which blocks him from peeing. Only the girl is embarrassed: she is a bourgeois young girl who was brought up in a strict environment where good manners are of the utmost importance. It's very cynical actually. The girl doesn't have any physical difficulty in emptying her bladder; the boy does. The girl is ashamed; the boy is not. Besides, the boy has to force his sister to make her pee. At first, he used an assertive argument (if you don't pee, you're going to die). Then he squats her down and lifts her skirt. Another ironic thing: the boy has to pee, while the girl has had the urge to pee for a quite long time. If she has been holding back for a long time, it is because she can't or won't ask to be away for a few moments to empty her bladder. In spite of the comfort she enjoys, she has a relative freedom of action to dispose of it. It was rather the girls of the populace, the girls "without morality" (from the bourgeois point of view) who urinated "freely". However, the term "freedom" must be nuanced. Urinating in the street is in any case quite frowned upon and even punished by law from the Industrial Revolution onwards. At a time when cities developed and urbanised massively, public health rules had to be imposed. The girls of the populace did not have any modern comforts. In the cities, the toilets were generally common either to several houses or several flats. The generalisation of toilets in flats only dates back to the 1970s in the West. Being a girl and having to pee at night in a London ghetto flat at the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century meant getting out of your room, going to the courtyard outside, and urinating squatting over a dirty toilet bowl, without heating or any lights. Since a woman was to be the "angel of home and family", her place was considered in Victorian times (and even later) to be solely in the marital home. A woman did not have to go out. And indeed, she couldn't possibly manage to do so. Since there were few, if any, public toilets for women, going out meant not being able to empty her bladder at all. Going outside was therefore conditioned by the amount of time one could last with a full bladder. As a result, this restricted mobility. A woman could not go out for at least half a day because she could not reasonably hold out for six hours without peeing. Consequently, women had to drink less, hold a full bladder longer than men and go out only as seldom as possible. According to British researcher Clara Geed from the University of Bristol, the lack of adequate toilet facilities for women encouraged them not to go out and take an active part in social and political life. Thus, a considerable amount of catching up had to be done in the 1970s and 1980s, when "minorities" became more visible and claimed the same rights as the "majority". This backwardness is partial, since inequalities still exist today: women still wait more time to go

to the public toilets than men. Moreover, the process of achieving gender equality in this field has been a long one:

“No restrooms at all poses problems for women like Audrey Jo DeClue, the first Chicago female lineman for an Illinois power company. She was forced to relieve herself on the side of the road, with no trees or shrubs for privacy, in the presence of co-workers. New York female taxi drivers are often forced to find another line of work due to the lack of public restrooms, whereas male cab drivers apparently have a little glass jar under the seat” (*literatim* an excerpt from *Potty Parity in Perspective: Gender and Family Issues in Planning and Designing Public Restrooms*, Kathryn H. Anthony and Meghan Dufresne, 2007).

## 2.

### GOING TO THE BATHROOM WHEN YOU ARE A YOUNG GIRL IN 2020: APPROACHING THIS THEME THROUGH THE NARRATIVE STYLE

As we saw in the previous section, our society has established a system of class inequalities, but also a gender hierarchy. Women are worth less than men. In this section, we are going to look at a young girl's point of view: how does she understand all this?

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I have always known that our society is plagued by injustice, disorder and chaos. I think I was even born with that impression. Very early on, I became aware of my being. Not of my being as an existence on a metaphysical level, but rather on a literally physical level. I was a girl, and society was not about to make me forget that for a single moment. As a young girl, brought up in a sibling group of three boys, I became aware of this at a very early age. Society had decided that boys should be "like this" and girls "like that. In short, it had fallen to the boys to be, and me to appear. In particular, I discovered this scholarly, albeit partial, distribution of societal roles through the most elementary needs of my body. Boys and girls, we inevitably went to the bathroom many times during the day to relieve our sometimes-heavy bladders. The need to relieve we in this way was probably the most common and equal thing that all human beings have with each other. But this great feeling of equality ended there: a girl doesn't urinate!

“A girl doesn't urinate”. I think I first heard this phrase in my father's mouth and then my mother took it up again. I was a teenager then, and we were in the car with my whole family. As we were driving on the highway, I suddenly had to pee. At first, I tried to ignore it. But as the hours went by, my little craving became a furious craving. After several hours that seemed interminable to me, I timidly remarked: I have to pee... By saying this, I had just caused a real storm in our little car. My brothers, drawn from their torpor, sneered and imitated the noise of the water. My father raised his eyebrows of incomprehension. And my mother raised her arms, lamented. Lamented for what? I had to pee so bad! Didn't they feel like peeing too, after all these hours? My father answered me curtly that it was out of the question to stop right away. You're holding back," my mother told me. Half an hour passed, then an hour. I remained prostrate, one hand on my crotch, hiding my tears of despair. "I have to pee!" This time, it was one of my brothers who had exclaimed. To my astonishment, my father pulled over to the nearest gas station and we stopped. My brothers got out. While I was about to imitate them, my mother blocked my way. "A girl doesn't urinate. Learn to hold it in." And none of my protests, my screams, my tears, changed her mind in the least. So, I stayed in the car, my bladder ready to explode, helplessly contemplating the gas station toilet in front of me. I couldn't get out until we arrived home four hours later whilst my family made fun and mocked me.... On that day, a bigger principle became evident to me: a girl doesn't urinate. I was ashamed, really ashamed of myself that day. And I promised myself that from then on, I would never again exhibit my cravings for urine to others.

Arriving at the age of finding a job, I had the opportunity to apply this rule, this maxim, this proverb that apparently seemed to be universal. As a young woman, without much experience in the world of work,

I started as a secretary in a very large multinational company. I thought it was a simple job with no great constraints; I very quickly became disenchanted. They put me behind a computer, and I had to transcribe files of several hundred pages. I was warned immediately: no way was I going to leave this chair without the five hundred or so pages of files being typed on the computer. And if I needed to take a bathroom break, I asked naively. If you get up before you're done and go to the bathroom, also think about going to the management to get your letter of dismissal," the assistant manager explained to me with a sarcastic smile. The ten months I spent there were ten months of agony and torment. I don't remember going home once without basically rushing to the closet. Not a single night, my panties were not wet and sticky from my own piss.

Then I found a job as a stewardess in an airline. I guess it wasn't really my resume that convinced the recruiter, but rather the fact that I was a pretty, beautifully proportioned young girl. He seemed especially, on the day of the job interview, satisfied due to the size of my breasts and my thin and elegant thighs. Initially, I was only doing short flights, and that didn't bother me. At least I was traveling. Then I was assigned to do long-haul flights, and even several flights of several hours in a row. As it was the crisis, I had to take another stewardess position in another company. And sometimes I would take several flights lasting several hours without a single break. I had no choice. Or, actually, I did have a choice: the choice not to be able to pay my rent and not to eat. Following a big scandal involving a hostess from my company who was trafficking drugs in the toilets, all airlines decided to prohibit stewardesses from using airplane facilities, under penalty of firing them and being severely punished. We had to go only to those of the airports. Only pilots and co-pilots were allowed, and we could only watch them empty their boys' bladders while we struggled to contain our stream of urine. At the time of the landing, especially, it was a real ordeal: we had to wait upright, the hands along the body, without moving, that all the passengers take their luggage and finally leave the plane. Then, it was not finished: we had to run to the nearest toilet, sometimes even queue for endless minutes, pee at full speed and hurry to get to our next flight. Delays were more than frowned upon: the company took part of our salary if we weren't there on time. On top of that, if we were late, we had to put up with mocking and humiliating comments from the pilots and co-pilots. For them, a girl who was going to urinate was a weak girl. With the other hostesses, we kept trying to prove them wrong. But it was so difficult... Someone who has never held back for ten hours or so, serving drinks and then remaining impassive cannot understand what I had to endure. Because the stopovers where I could urinate were quite rare: I just changed my uniform and rushed to the next flight, trying not to listen to the compelling signs of my swollen bladder. I had less than ten minutes to change my uniform, finally empty my bladder and its torrent of piss, and get to the counter for my next flight. It was simply not possible. The bigger was the airport, the more horrible it was for me, I had to run from one side of the airport to the other. Plus, my uniforms were often too small, and I had to fight for long minutes to fit my baggy breasts into a tiny top. But the most painful moment was when I had to change my underwear. As I was flying long haul, the airline would ask us to change our underwear and especially... our knickers. Standing naked with our bladders about to explode and our vaginal lips boiling was a real Chinese torture. And I don't know if the airline did it on purpose or not, but the panties we had to put on were systematically too small. As if we weren't suffocating enough...

It wasn't unusual that during one of these long-haul flights, one of the co-pilot boys would come and see us during our off hours, where we would sit in the back with our thighs together trying to forget about the fire that was literally burning our bladder. The co-pilot boys were always coming to empty their little boy's bladders in the back, passing right in front of us, to make fun of us. They left the toilet door ajar so that we could hear the sound of their warm urine pouring into the water in the lavatory. And they sighed with small sighs of relief, as if they had been holding it in for hours! And we remained seated, impassive, suffering martyrdom in silence... Sometime or other, one of the co-pilots would want to challenge us and play with us. He approached one of us, and the selected stewardess joined him in the cabin. There the co-pilot used to kiss her and caress her bosoms, and especially her lower belly which hurt so painfully. It never really happened without the hostess agreeing: we all more or less agreed. First of all, because it was only a game, for the boys, and they never hurt us. Secondly, because we were just hostesses. If one of us had had the misfortune to refuse, or even to report these actions to the management, the company would have certainly sent her away without unemployment benefit. Hostesses are the lowest level of the hierarchy in airlines. They are scorned by the rest of the staff, especially management and co-pilots. It was a time of economic crisis and recession: we had a job, and we had to consider ourselves happy enough as it was, capitalism explained to us. And finally, because we were girls. Simple girls, whom the social sphere had declared inferior to boys. A girl is sensitive, whereas boys are not. A girl has to remain a symbol of purity all her life, whereas boys do not. A



girl doesn't show her bodily problems to the rest of the world, whereas a boy can do so without bothering anyone. For girls, it is impure, or sinful, as far as religion is concerned. For boys, it's just natural. So precisely because we had to be paragons of virtue, we tried to show the boys co-pilots that their mockery didn't even raise our eyebrows. It was so tough, so rough! But we fought with all our strength to show them that we girls can wait at least six hours before running to the toilet! On a long-haul night flight, as we were flying over the Mediterranean and I was operating on the Cape Town - Amsterdam flight, one of the co-pilots (a new recruit I didn't know) nodded at me to follow him. Holding my thighs together, I entered the washroom with him. The cabin wasn't very wide, and I found myself glued against his chest. I looked up at him. He was a good-looking boy, rather handsome even. His uniform showed off his abs, which he had been doing every night since he was seventeen years old. He was a little taller than me even though the innocence and the candidness that emanated from his eyes made him appear very young. His hair in battle made him look like a romantic poet, Wordsworth's style. I imagined for a moment that I was his girlfriend, that we were both in high school; he was a novelist, and I was his muse. But I wasn't his girlfriend, I wasn't the girlfriend of anyone. In high school I only dated guys who weren't particularly interested in my personality. Only because I was a beautiful teenage girl with a slender body and large tits. My so-called "boyfriends" only stayed with me on certain nights or at certain times to actually have fun with my body. They didn't give a shit about talking or chatting with me. Once they had properly kneaded my breasts they used to go out and drink beers with their buddies. For them and for the society, that was the role of a girlfriend: having fun and showing off with a beautiful girl on the outside. Remembering all this, I cuddled up in the young co-pilot's arms. Kiss me, I whispered. All trembling and hesitant, he brought his lips close to my mouth. He was very shy. I liked that. He gently unbuttoned the jacket of my blue uniform, letting my gorgeous breasts appear in my bra. He looked at them with such lust and envy, you could see it in his eyes. Touch them," I told him smiling. And he began to caress them delicately, as if he was afraid of damaging them. That made me laugh. But if at first, he had a little trouble, he did very well for the rest: after caressing my breasts, he sucked them like a little boy. Then he got down to serious matters: he pulled up my skirt and took off my panties (I was a bit ashamed, as there were a few urine stains). He squatted down and softly licked me, then more and more quickly my burning vulva. I just wanted, at that moment, to get rid of all the urine that was itching my body, and each lick was an additional pain. With the orgasm I reached a new peak of excruciating pain. When I finished getting dressed, a small stream of urine escaped me. I had to fight with all my strength to avoid the catastrophe. And as I used all the strength, I had left to hold back the thousands of litres of urine that were violently hitting the walls of my small bladder, the young boy who had licked me so well now turned to the toilet. He was finally going to do what he had originally come for. He looked embarrassed with his adolescent face. Embarrassed to do it in front of me, knowing that I wasn't allowed to do it. Go ahead, don't look at me and do what you have to do," I whispered quietly. But he hadn't heard my consent and was relieving his teenage bladder. His urine hit the basin for a while. Every second of that sound seemed like an unbearable agony to me. Then the noise stopped, he put his clothes back on and we went out without saying a word. He looked all confused when we separated. Resuming his mature and virile boyish air that he liked to give himself in public, he went back to the cockpit confidently whilst I sat down next to the other stewardesses, my bladder bursting more than ever. We were flying over the Alps and in an hour and a half we would finally land in Amsterdam. From there I would hurry to get on the plane to Heathrow and get home. Be patient my bladder, be patient...

And when I went home, sometimes my agony lasted a little longer, like I haven't endured enough. Because my boyfriend was sleeping at my place and I was reluctant to leave his sight for even a moment. I was so in love with this boy that I only managed to go out with him after several years. He was just coming out of a relationship and he finally agreed to go out with me. But he didn't love me the way I loved him - so passionately! I was willing to do anything for him. I wanted to show him that I could bear anything. When he was around, I tried to be with him all the time, so that he would finally fall in love with me. One evening when I came back from a day of suffering where my patience and my sphincter were severely tested, he suggested that I take a shower with him. How could I refuse? It was a great opportunity. In spite of the desperate clamours of my bladder, I undressed and held on tight, managing as best I could to contain my litres and litres of piss: I frankly couldn't piss vulgarly in front of this boy of my dreams! While kissing me languorously, he caressed my crotch. And my salty tears of pain mixed with the fresh water of the shower. Then the agony continued in bed, clenching my fists tightly and holding back my cries of pain with all my strength. "A girl doesn't urinate", I constantly repeated to myself as a sort of leitmotif. And when we finally reached orgasm, I had to wait until he fell asleep before discreetly leaving his arms and sneaking into the bathroom to pee all over the place.

The only days of the week when I wasn't working were the weekends. That is to say, I wasn't under the same societal pressure that prevented me from going to relieve my bladder. On weekends when my boyfriend was there, I tried to go as little as possible because I hated going in front of him. I was very reluctant to expose him to this kind of thing, especially since he once told me in conversation how much he admired his old girlfriend for never going to the bathroom when they were together. This obviously made me jealous but also extremely sad. I had hoped, and still hope, that he would finally fall in love with me as much as I loved him. But the truth is that he was always thinking about that other girl. At the same time, it has to be said that his former girlfriend was the kind of person who would do anything to please. She was brilliantly educated, very popular, and gorgeous. All I had in addition was a slightly larger chest size than hers. But that was all I have. She had slept with all the hottest and brightest guys, meanwhile I did the same with all the losers of the region. So, since I had managed to get her boyfriend, I was willing to do anything to keep him with me, anything at all. Even to skip my bathroom breaks. One Saturday, I remember, he suggested at breakfast that we should both go away the following weekend to a romantic town not far from London. I was obviously thrilled and so happy that he offered me something like that! I imagined us hand in hand, walking down one of those medieval streets on the continent. It turned out that I was finishing my Friday day with a flight from Glasgow to Brussels, so my lover suggested that we spend the two days in Belgium. He had planned a precise itinerary: we would both meet on Friday evening (he would leave his job in London and fly to Brussels) in the Belgian capital, and the next day we would leave for the small town of Bruges in the north of the country until Sunday afternoon. You can imagine that I accepted immediately. The whole week before this weekend I was overexcited. I was a bit stressed all day on Friday because I wanted to avoid any urine leakage: I couldn't imagine what my boyfriend would have said in the evening if he had seen my wet underwear. Plus, I had put on very light transparent panties and that didn't really help to reassure me. When I arrived at Zaventem airport in the evening I had a strong urge to urinate, but I was holding back, clinging to the idea that I would go to the toilet just before I met my boyfriend. But my boyfriend had the great idea to come and meet me immediately when I got off the plane! When I saw him on the passenger bridge, I almost wanted to cry in desperation at the idea of holding myself back a little longer! Of course, the stewardess toilets were not in the same place as the changing rooms where we were exchanging clothes and I couldn't sneak away for a moment to empty the litres and litres that were itching my bladder. Phew, at last the day is over, we are finally going to be able to pee, other stewardesses laughed. As I came out of the changing rooms, my boyfriend kissed me languidly with a passion that I had never seen before. It obviously made me very satisfied, but it was so hurtful at the same time! Then he took my hand and put it in his and we went out of the airport to take a taxi. All the way there he squeezed his hand tightly into mine and I tried to look at the night scenery to think of something other than my bloated bladder. The taxi dropped us off in the centre of the city and we went to a very crowded restaurant not far from the Mont des Arts for dinner. We sat side by side on a Belle Epoque style bench. He leaned on me and took my knee and put it on his. This was close to making me lose control of my bladder. I was not finished with my surprises: first, he didn't release our handshake for a moment and he even thought it was a judicious idea to place it against my lower abdomen. Then we were in a country where the national drink was beer. He made me drink a pint and a half at least! He would have misunderstood that I refused his toast... It was an abominable torment! As I looked up around me, I happened to come across a teenage girl at another table with a group of friends. She seemed desperate too, not being able to escape to the toilet either, literally stuck between two boys much bigger than her. She was clearly too shy to ask for anything, especially to go to the toilet.

Visiting the toilet... It seemed so easy for some, nonetheless! The boys would get up with no problem at all to go and empty their boys' bladders. But not the girls. The girls stayed at the table and kept drinking to fill these girls' bladders. A girl doesn't urinate, the society said. And when they came out of the bar, the boys would urinate openly against a wall, in a dead end, while the girls would watch them do so, retaining themselves very tightly. I recognised myself so much in this young teenager... I remember, at seventeen years old, I saw myself again at the pub with a few friends. There were other girls of course, but also boys who wanted to show us how powerful and virile they were. Me, a shy, fragile and a bit reserved teenager, I didn't dare leave our table to go and empty the litres and litres of beer we were drinking. I was so afraid that the others would laugh at me! That was what they had done to one of the girls that night. One of my friends, having been holding back from urinating for hours and unable to bear it anymore, got up and ran almost to the toilet. When she came back to sit down, relieved, the boys laughed at her and almost humiliated her. You are still a child, they told her. You'll never find a boyfriend if you behave like that, they added condescendingly. You'll stay a virgin for the rest of your life if you can't keep yourself from peeing at least long enough to be penetrated, they laughed loudly. If you have too much urine in your bladder, put some in

your breasts, so you'll have a real breast and that will change us from your small breast B, they jeered scornfully. For a boy, if he can't literally masturbate with our breasts, our breasts have no interest at all.

I recognised myself so much in this teenage girl... Then the reception of our desserts and new pints of beer brought me back to reality. My boyfriend didn't talk much, but he seemed very happy and fulfilled. He used to kiss me on the neck and kept kissing me all the time. This made me very happy too and only the extreme pain in my bladder prevented me from taking full advantage of the situation. I almost have to physically stop myself from running to the bathroom while my boyfriend was paying the bill. When I came out of the restaurant, I could hardly stand upright because my lower abdomen was so painful. Afterwards we went for a walk in the old town, wandering through the streets around the Grand Place. When we passed close to the Manneken Pis, I almost gave up completely. This statue is a perfect representation of our society: the boys pee quietly, while the girls have to keep litres and litres of piss inside their bodies. This tradition of statues of boys urinating, these so-called puer mingens, is the epitome of the relationship between men and women: the domination of one sex over the other. The men, free and all-powerful; the women, servile and submissive. On the way to our hotel, we came across a long-time couple of friends sitting on the terrace of a crowded bar. So, it was inevitable that we would not stop! They were a couple like us, and my boyfriend got along very well with the guy. They had gone to college together in Amsterdam and even dated a pair of twin sisters! As for the girl, we were in the same boarding school in faraway Wales, and three years of high school were enough to make us very complicit and close friends. So, we settled down with them, and unfortunately recommended two more pints of beer. I didn't know my friend's boyfriend very well, but he was a beautifully proportioned and very funny boy. At the table it was mostly the two guys talking. My friend was a bit nervous and tense. She didn't say much, just smiled. As for me, I crossed and uncrossed my legs all the time, as discreetly as possible, repressing my eager urge to urinate. We sat at this bar for at least half an hour. We left together; their hotel was not very far from ours. The two boys walked in front, looking a little drunk, laughing and joking. The two of us were following them behind. My friend was walking in a strange zigzag pattern. What's wrong? I asked her subtly. At first, she didn't answer me, just smiling. Then, as I insisted, she said surreptitiously: "I have to pee! But I can't, my boyfriend put a chastity belt on me this morning"..." I was stunned. Firstly, because she too needed to relieve herself urgently, but also because of the revelation she had just made to me. She continued: "It's for Marc... He knows that I work with a lot of boys and that they constantly hit on me... I told him that it didn't matter and that I remained faithful to him, but he didn't seem convinced... He told me that with my breasts I could make any guy's feelings change... Actually, the belt is my idea: I told him that every morning before work he could tie it on me and keep the key until the evening..." Saying all this, she clenched her fists very tightly against her crotch. She was in so much pain, her vulva trapped and desperately waiting for her boyfriend to deign to free her. I wanted to say something, but she just interrupted me. "No, don't say anything, not now," she sighed. "Listen to me. Do you remember that night we spent together in your bed at boarding school? There was no heat, it was horrible." She smiled melancholically. "It was cold, so you offered me to come and sleep in my bed, both of us, under your duvet. That night, embraced in your arms, I had a peeing urge as strong as tonight. I was naked, against your warm body, and I couldn't let go of your arms without waking you up. I didn't want to wake you up just to run to the toilet! The hours went by slowly and I was waiting for daylight so I could finally relieve myself! I guess that was the price I had to pay for sleeping with you... Now I'm going home with my boyfriend, he loves me & at least he protects me... With a bit of luck, he'll find the key to my belt despite the fact that he's completely drunk... The last time, with his colleagues at work, he went to the pub and came back to the flat completely drunk. And I begged him to remember where he had put the key, but he couldn't do anything except play with my breasts... Despite my exploding bladder I had to wait until the next day. Tonight, we'll see..." She took me in her arms, and we kissed, lips to lips, breasts to breasts, full bladder to full bladder... A tear ran down my cheek. "Don't cry," she whispered, "don't cry". Then our boyfriends arrived, making a lot of noise, and we split up. My bladder reminded me how much I needed too to empty myself. My boyfriend picked up the keys from the hotel reception desk. At that time there was no one in the lobby, just a very shy girl who was the receptionist. She gave us our key and we took the lift to our room. I wasn't very comfortable taking the lift with my bladder full. When I was working as a secretary for a large multinational company in East London, I experienced a very bad lift experience. One afternoon, as usual, all the secretaries had a quarter of an hour break at five o'clock. The fifteen-minute break that we were given was actually very short, as we had been forced to sit in our seats since mid-morning without being able to get up for anything, so we all went to the toilet at that time. We all looked forward to this break: the only other free time we had during the day was a lunch hour. And that put our bladders under severe strain, because we could only relieve ourselves twice in an eleven-hour day. It was also not well-liked to go to the bathroom during breaks... It was very

common for us to accidentally wet our pants, despite the sanctions that the company imposed on us for this. Then one afternoon I was waiting with a few colleagues for the lift to finally reach the toilets which were three floors above. Once inside, the lift got stuck between two floors. At first, we thought it was a bad joke. Four girls stuck in a lift, with a full bladder, desperate. But they were. No matter how many times we pressed the buttons, the lift wouldn't start. So, we had to wait for two and a half hours, dying, with our hands clenched tightly against our crotch and praying that we wouldn't have an accident, until the breakdown was fixed. And the most ironic part of it all was that the company didn't allow us to go to the toilet because we had exceeded our break time! That day I urinated discreetly in a deserted street corner when I left work a few hours later, I couldn't bear it anymore. But luckily, we had no problems with my boyfriend, and we made it back to our room without any incidents. As I started to undress, my boyfriend took me by the arm and gave me a languid kiss. He slowly took off my trousers and top before unhooking my bra. He interrupted to take off his clothes as well. It was the opportunity I was waiting for. "Where are you going?" he cried just as I was about to go into the bathroom to finally empty the pounds of piss I was holding in my bladder. "You certainly didn't go to the toilet like a vulgar little girl, right?" he added condescendingly. "Well, I... actually..." I stammered. "My ex-girlfriend never used to go to the toilet like that, in such a visible way I mean. She always held back when she was with me and didn't let anything show about her pain. Once we spent an entire weekend making love in bed, and not once did we go away. Now, come back, I'm tired and I'd like to sleep in your breasts." I didn't even have time to say anything: he took me by the wrist, stuck me to him and started licking my nipples. I was distraught. What could I do? If I refused, he would certainly take it very badly, throw me out and I would be all alone. If I accepted, I would continue to suffer the martyrdom with my bladder that insisted on being emptied imperatively. I had a terrible night. I couldn't get much sleep because of my bladder and my boyfriend holding me tight. I think around five in the morning I finally managed to loosen up from his hug and slowly make my way to the bathroom. I breathed a huge sigh of relief when I sat on the toilet and was able to empty the pounds of litres into my bladder. It was such a good time... When I went back to bed, I had the pleasant sensation of having an empty bladder that I had almost completely forgotten. The next day, unfortunately, my boyfriend noticed, as I hadn't been able to flush the toilet. He didn't say anything but was quite upset. I was a little ashamed, but what else could I do? On Saturday morning, while we were waiting in the hotel lobby for our taxi to go to the station, my boyfriend kept staring at the receptionist. Look at her," he whispered to me. She keeps wiggling on her chair, as if she has to pee! A bit like you last night, he added with a scornful look. I lowered my head piteously. "I'm going to see her, that'll be fun." "Leave her alone, poor girl", but he didn't listen to me and got up towards her. "Hello Miss", he said obsequiously. "There, I've got a little problem. My girlfriend (he pointed at me) has been drinking a lot and has to pee a lot, her bladder is as big as a football (he mimed the football with his hands). Of course, I told her to hold it in, that she was a big girl anyway! Anyway, that's what I think, considering the size of her breasts! (he laughed) So that's it, do you have a toilet here? Maybe a staff toilet? he insisted. "I'm... I'm not sure that... well if it's for... actually..." she stammered. "I know it's not an ordinary request," said my boyfriend. "Usually, girls know how to hold their pee-pee... Like you, for example, I'm sure," he added loudly. The hostess reddened. "Well... We do have toilets for the staff, but at the moment... they're closed..." "They're closed?" answered my boyfriend, raising his eyebrows like he was astonished. "That's annoying. But suppose you have to pee?" he said innocently. "Well... I'd have to wait for my boss to come in, explain the situation to him, and then he'd have to open the toilet for me!" "He would have reason to refuse to let you use the bathroom?" continued my boyfriend with his fake innocent face. "Well... He's doing this so that we reception staff don't have to go all the time, to avoid wasting time, you know. Plus... I went during my shift early this morning and he won't let me go back there now!" My boyfriend exulted. I knew that at this very moment he must be getting a hard-on. Unfortunately for him, our taxi, which was supposed to take us to the North Station to catch the train to Ghent, arrived just now. It was almost with regret that he left the hotel. "If only I had had a few more moments, she would have peed in front of me, that bitch!" he grumbled in the taxicab. I sighed and tried to think of something else...

I have always known that our society is plagued by injustice, disorder and chaos. And me, poor girl, I was just a toy in its hands."

## PART THREE.

### A UCHRONIC PROJECT BUT NOT SO DISTANT FROM OUR REALITY: THE VICTORY OF CAPITALISM BY CONTROLLING THE WORKERS' PEEING URGES

The major problem of capitalism is the limits of the human condition. The human race is imperfect. As far back as antiquity, people complained about the finiteness of individuals, who are not only failing, but are also mortal. This is the very meaning of Stoic philosophy, of the Epistle to the Corinthians and of Confucianism. All human philosophies agree on the same point: the control of one's body. If one manages to control the body and therefore the vital needs of the body, then one comes to complete the world, Nature itself. This part presents a uchronic project. It's about proposing an answer to this problem that capitalism is stuck with - to control the peeing needs of the workforce is to produce more, much more.

The name of this project is “Together for a better society”. It is about enabling each and every one of us to integrate and succeed individually and collectively in tomorrow's world, is the group's ultimate goal. Perhaps it may sound very hypocritical and very burlesque: but this is exactly what liberal reforms look like.

### For what kind of public?



→ Girls who are high school and university students, i.e., all females from age 15 to 24.



→ The period between the ages of 15 and 24 is an apprenticeship period for young girls. They are at school and become really political but also economic actors. It is thus an ideal age to learn to hold it.

### Why a project like this?



→ Young girls do not dare to leave their jobs to go to the toilet and often work with a full bladder due to social pressure.



→ The established timetables do not allow enough time for the girls to go to the toilet for the time needed.



→ Young girls are not always allowed to go and relieve their full bladder.



→ Very often, young girls do not have sufficient access to adequate toilet facilities when they feel the need.



→ The sanitary facilities available are insufficient in number and generally obsolete with a critical infrastructure.

### Why young girls in particular?



→ Young girls need to control their bodies and in particular their urine for moral reasons: “Only the tree that has been blown by the wind is really vigorous, for it is in this struggle that its roots, put to the test, are strengthened.” (Seneca); “Girls must control one's body, that is to say, one must not allow oneself to be overwhelmed by one's body.” (Christian maxim).



→ Demographically, there are more girls than men in the world. As a result, girls represent a considerable and not insignificant labour force. Moreover, a young girl is still at the beginning of her life and is a novice: she has fewer expenses to make, so she can be paid less. “There is a fundamental principle in liberalism: that in the conduct of our affairs we must make the greatest possible use of spontaneous social forces” (Hayek).



→ Scientific reason: Women generally have a larger bladder capacity than men. The average bladder capacity is higher in women (875 ml) than in men (700 ml). Hence, a young girl offers a higher level of interest to a company than a boy, because the girl can work longer and need fewer hours off to pee.

## Why is it necessary to regulate girls' access to bathrooms?



→ The problem is that even if a girl urinates less than a boy, she is still a human being with natural needs. By controlling and regulating her pee breaks, the company will be more efficient and productive. If you look at the statistics, companies lose a lot of money in wages paid during pee breaks. For example, a girl who works 10 hours a day and is paid £8 per hour and four days a week earns £1600 a month. If the company gives her at least 4 breaks in the day, the girl spends an average of 7 minutes on the toilet per break. This represents 28 minutes out of the 10-hour working day and therefore 196 minutes per week. With 196 minutes representing about 3.2 hours, the company loses £24 per week, or £6 per day!



→ A girl who needs to urinate and can't go may have leaks in her panties. By wetting her panties, a girl will work less well because of the wet feeling of her underwear and ultimately be a less effective force of production. A less efficient production force is a real waste for the company. The worst situation is when a girl pees in her pants/skirt/work uniform. If this is factory work, it means stopping an entire production line (a terrible time loss). If it is work in contact with customers, it can have a bad reputation on the company and undermine its credibility. A girl who has a full bladder and is not able to restrain herself can therefore be a major problem for a company.

## So, in practice, how can they be supervised?



→ Positive discrimination. Access to the washrooms may be regulated according to the size of girls' breasts. According to a schedule determined by the company, girls with breasts of cup A can urinate at x time, girls with breasts of cup B at y time, etc.



→ The control of their feeding. Nowadays, the consumption of nutrients is excessive. The Western world suffers from a bad diet, a very high rate of cardiovascular disease and obesity is widespread. By closely controlling the diet of young girls, we allow their bodies to be nourished in a way that is very proportional to their needs by eliminating what is superfluous. Moreover, it is a public health measure.



→ With urinary plug-ins. Enabling the company to make better profits can only be achieved by completely eliminating expensive breaks. Urinary plug-ins can be given to young girls so that they can hold their urine more effectively. By inserting a plug into their vagina, they can prevent accidents and leakage of urine. They can urinate before or after work, but not during work. For this, the best thing a company can do is to hire girls who are minors but who are at least 16 years old. At the age of 16, a young girl is officially able to work. There are limitations on working hours for them. It is therefore sufficient to make them work five or six hours a day without letting them go to the toilet, as British legislation requires a mandatory 20-minute break after 6 consecutive hours of work. The advantage is that at this age girls are not entitled to a minimum wage. By hiring many of them, they can even replace a full-time employee for a lower total wage and without taking a break thanks to the plug in the vagina.



→ A chastity belt locked by the employer may also be a solution to consider. A chastity belt with a padlock prevents any attempt by young girls to urinate without their boss's consent. Each girl would put on a chastity belt when she arrives at her workplace, and her employer would remove it once she has completed her hours.





→ Nappies have an undeniable advantage: it receives the girls' urine tightly without interrupting their work. This is an economic advantage: cheaper than a chastity belt, for example. Most importantly, it avoids the need to build and care for girls' toilets. Wearing a nappy is less cumbersome than wearing a chastity belt. A nappy is discreet, can be put on in the morning when the girls get dressed for work without asking the boss to check directly (as is the case with the systematic padlocking of chastity belts). It's a process that already exists: some bosses make their employees work in layers, especially domestic servants & maids. As reported in an article in the French newspaper *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 2015: "Our boss didn't want us to use the ground floor toilets, reserved for the masters, so we had to go up to the maids' floor, and as a result, she felt that it was wasting too much time. So basically, we had to wear nappies. The housekeeper used to mark our names on the nappy on those days, with the date."



→ Charging for access to toilets in the workplace. This is a very classic method and does not require a lot of resources to implement. It does not cost the company anything and it even pays for itself. At the end of the month, the girl either receives her salary minus the toilet visits, or she pays each time. Eventually, it may be advisable to think about increasing the price if a girl goes to the toilet very often to maximise profits.



→ Providing fewer pee breaks for young girls in order to maximise company profits and optimise their bladders. Companies should define a reasonable number of pee breaks to avoid a slowdown in production and work. For example, a bathroom break every four hours seems appropriate for a full-time worker: out of 10 hours of work, she is allowed to pee twice, which is largely acceptable to the company. It is self-evident that pee breaks should last as little time as possible. The company may charge for minutes that exceed the time limit.

### **Which method should be chosen according to the various professions?**



→ For girls who do manual work in factories, which requires long hours in front of an assembly line, the plug should be considered. It is cheaper than the nappy, and the company is not going to spend a lot of money just for female hand workers. Besides, the nappy encourages young girls to urinate and thus to be less concentrated for a few tens of seconds. The plug prevents any possibility of urinating and thus puts all the attention back on the work. It may be interesting, nonetheless, to offer nappies to some young working girls who have worked particularly well and are very diligent. This will provide an incentive for performance and efficiency. When a girl achieves her goals, she may be allowed to wear a nappy instead of a plug.



→ Professional or managerial occupations are occupations that involve people who work in offices. They have therefore acquired a certain level of education and occupy an intermediate position in the company. Their salaries are higher than what they spend on their basic needs (food, housing, heating). They can easily spend money to go to the toilet, and this will not represent a substantial decrease in their purchasing power. It will encourage them to be less idle and more productive: finish a project instead of going to the toilet all the time.



→ All public service staff, i.e., police officers, nurses, ambulance drivers and civil servants, first and foremost have to be efficient. It is difficult to be efficient when you are wearing something uncomfortable on your body, such as a plug, a nappy or a chastity belt. The simplest solution is to strictly control their food and drink intake. If a young girl drinks just enough, then she will go to the toilet much less often.



→ When a young girl becomes a teacher or holds a teaching position, she has to provide many hours of instruction. Thanks to the elimination of pee breaks, a young teacher can teach many more classes than usual. Teaching requires a lot of concentration: for the same reason as manual workers, wearing a nappy is not ideal. In addition, because they will have to teach for several hours in a row, young ladies have to learn to hold themselves back for a long time. Wearing a chastity belt with a padlock, which absolutely prevents them from urinating, is a good idea. It is all the more relevant as it will force young female teachers to work all their hours and do their work properly, which is far from being the case in many countries today (*cf.* Brookings's Hamilton Project on absenteeism). As long as they don't work efficiently, they won't pee.

### **What are the key goals of this project over the short and medium term?**



→ The reduction of pee break times, which represent a considerable cost for the company. With the money saved on pee breaks, the company will be able to speed up production, sell more and make more profit. A company that makes more profit can pay its investors better, and thus ensure its sustainability. By reducing their pee breaks, workers actually secure their jobs!



→ More profits for the company mean hiring more people. It is necessary to give preference to part-time hiring or employing people on a contractual basis. That's why young girls are the ideal target. Under 20, a young girl should be paid at least 6.45 pounds per hour. Because they are young, they cannot claim a full minimum wage (£8.72/hour from age 24). It is obviously best to employ girls who are at least 16 years old, as the legislation requires a minimum wage of £4.55 per hour. In addition, a young girl does not have many expenses: she works alongside another activity (e.g., studying). Her salary is therefore pocket money, which is not fundamentally vital. As an example: a 17-year-old girl can work 5 hours 45 per day (unfortunately many legislations impose a compulsory rest period after 6 consecutive hours of work). She works four days a week. Paying her £4.55 per hour, this represents a salary of £24.8 per day, £99.19 per week and £396.76 per month. This is the minimum that the company can afford. The best thing to do is to hire them as apprentices: British legislation allows them to be paid less than £4.55 per hour, or £4.15 per hour. It's definitely a choice to be considered, since it concerns all girls up to the age of 19!

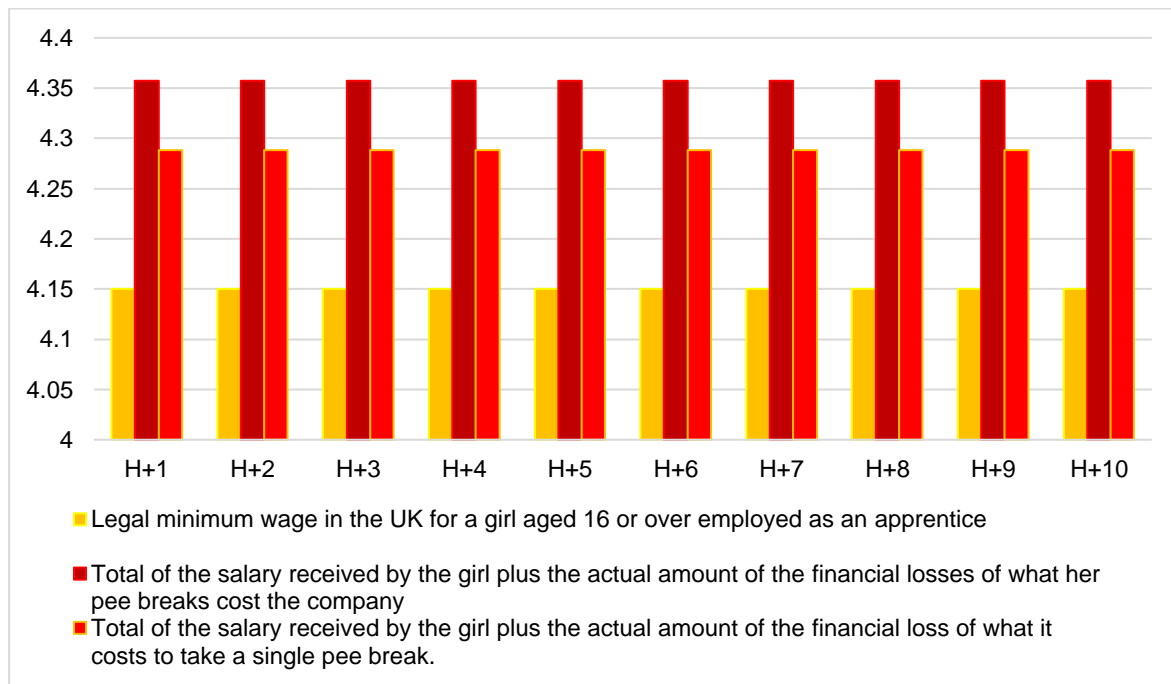


→ By hiring young girls on fixed-term and part-time contracts, you have several advantages. On the one hand, hiring more people and dividing the work between several part-time people. On the other hand, not paying a full salary for employees who are over 24 years old and instead paying young girls who cost half as much (8.20 pounds per hour as opposed to 4.15 pounds per hour). Hiring young girls means fighting youth unemployment, which is a scourge of capitalist society. More part-time jobs mean a stable job, a stable salary and lower unemployment!



→ Hiring young girls from the age of 16 means introducing them directly into the labour market. They can both have a real job with real responsibilities (which gives responsibility and empowers young people) and continue their studies so that they can later enter a middle management profession. By then hiring them as managers from the age of 24, the company must legally pay them £8.72, in compliance with UK law and the regulations of the Secretary of State for Employment. As they have become managers, they have a higher salary, so the company can charge them for access to the toilets. Nothing is lost, nothing is created: everything is transformed!

Fig. 1: costs & benefits for a company. The red curve represents the cost of hiring a 17-year-old girl who has 5 toilet breaks per day of six minutes each for 10 hours of work. The orange curve represents the benefits of hiring a 17-year-old girl who has only one three-minute toilet break per day for the same working time. The yellow curve represents the minimum wage (£4.15).



Hiring girls for Long-Time Work (LTT): a sustainable proposition for increasing production and company profits?

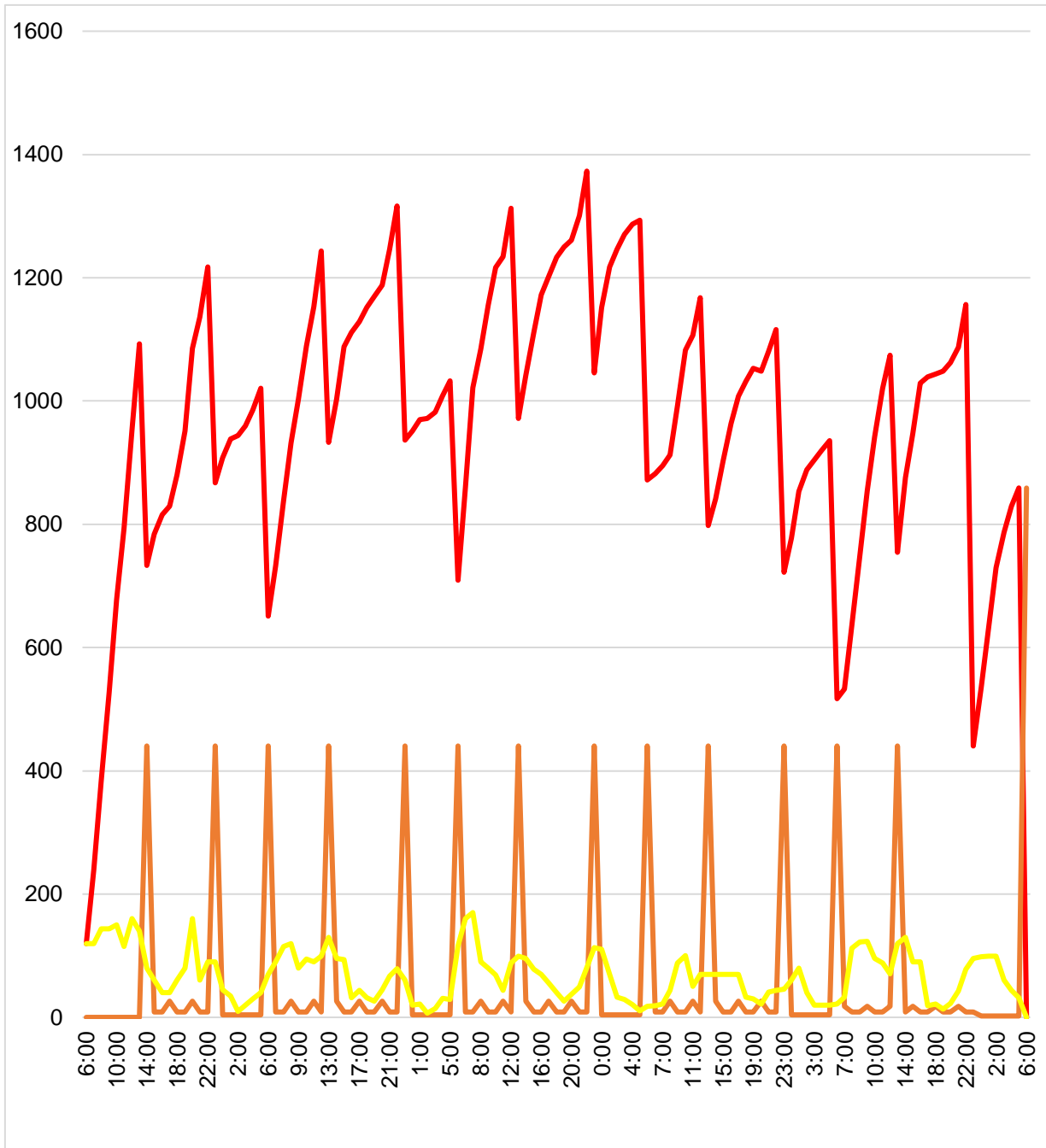


→ One company chooses to employ young girls for Long Time Work (LTT): that is, their hours are from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. during the week. In compensation, the company undertakes to house them on site and provide them with everything they might need (food, heating, water). She is allowed to urinate as soon as she has reached 125% of her full bladder. She can empty 50% of her bladder three times a day: at 6am, 1pm and 11pm. She wears a nappy, which allows her to urinate only 1% per hour and 3% every three hours. The girl wears the nappy at all times throughout the week. She is only allowed to remove it with the employer's permission at 6 a.m., 1 p.m. and 11 p.m. She urinates in front of the boss in a test tube until she has emptied 50% of her bladder. The rest of the time she wears a locked chastity belt.



→ Working long hours increases the company's productivity, which is freed from time constraints. As soon as they wake up, employees are ready to work and there is no longer any delay or absence. They are fed, housed and laundered by the company. Their salary is proportional to their longer working hours, so it increases, but this does not represent too heavy a cost for the company, which, in return, does not pay for holidays. The maximum working time set is 12 hours a day, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. or 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. With a sleep time of at least 8 hours, girls are perfectly fit to work. Especially since an adult needs an average of 7 full hours of sleep. Young girls who are at least 18 years of age are therefore preferred, with 20 years of age or older being optimal. They are paid £77.4 on average per day and £541.8 on average per week. This is a substantial salary, since they do not have to pay rent or pay for their meals. Moreover, it prevents the phenomenon of the working poor and precarious workers. The company recovers housing and food costs in three ways: through state support for businesses; return on investment (profits generated); non-payment for hours not worked, i.e., holidays. This Long Time Work scheme is in line with working time legislation.

**Fig. 2: evolution of the quantity of urine in the bladder of a young girl employed over a period of 7 days with a long working time contract, according to the inflow and outflow from her bladder.**



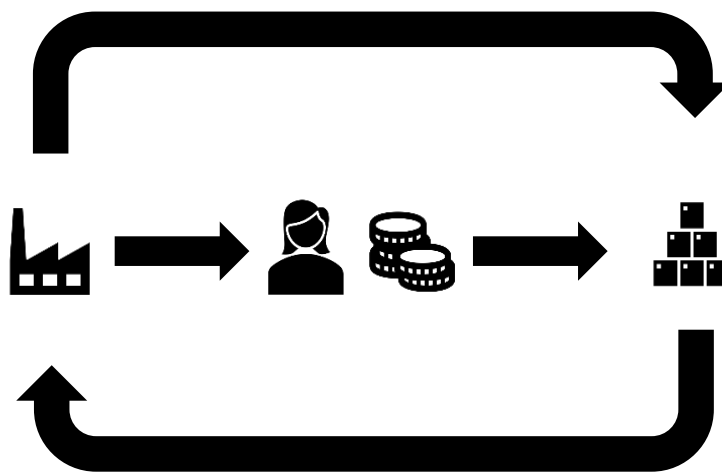
Comments: The amount of urine in the bladder is the red curve; incoming urine is the orange curve; outgoing urine is the yellow curve. All data is in millilitres, based on daily nutritional averages. The maximum quantity of the girl's bladder which is studied is 880 ml. The young employee can only urinate after one week in front of her boss and with her employer's permission. The advantage of this project is that there is absolutely no need to build sanitary facilities for young girls. In addition, making employees wear nappies is not something "unprecedented" or new in the work environment. It is a practice that has been going on since the 1950s: "At that time, some women working on assembly lines were not allowed to leave their jobs and had no choice but to wear nappies." (cf. Daniele Linhart).

The project of long-term employment contracts is very interesting and deserves a certain consideration on this point. The fundamental question is how to organise the ethical and social relationships of individuals. And, to take up the idea present in the American Constitution, how should the search for individual and collective happiness be organised? Capitalism is one answer among others, just as democracy is one political conception among others. Capitalist democracies are today the most widespread form of political and economic regime in the world. As Winston Churchill said, "Democracy is the worst system, excluding all others." Contemporary economic problems are due, among other things, to the inadequate economic balance between state power and private actors. By considering the state as the enemy of the economy, Friedrich Hayek and the Chicago Boys committed a serious miscalculation. The foundation of economic liberalism is precisely omnipotence. But this omnipotence cannot be entrusted to private actors, for reasons that are firstly material (incapacity) and secondly ideological (for the economy to be stable, the force must be impartial). The State is therefore an obvious and unavoidable economic partner. It is the only one that has a monopoly of all-powerful force. By relegating the State to second place in economic affairs, liberalism is in fact only indulging in the unpredictability of Fate and economic actors. One of two things: either one considers production as the heart of the economic project, i.e., produce as much as possible by betting on a completely hypothetical growth. Or one considers the needs of individuals (which are the sure value of the economy, such as food or housing) as the fundamental element of the economy. i. e. by quantitatively evaluating the needs of a population through mathematics and statistics, one can then produce in a certain way and have sure growth. The focus should be on constant long-term profits rather than purely hypothetical short-term profits. Economy is like a love relationship. Either one chooses to privilege sexual relations, or one decides to build something lastingly with the other. To consider capitalism as an enemy of state power is to misunderstand the very history of capitalism. On the one hand, today's capitalism inherited from the Industrial Revolution is the result of the intensification of trade in the XIV<sup>th</sup> century with the Silk Roads, the discovery of the Americas by Europeans in the XV<sup>th</sup> century with a view to finding new sea routes to India, and physiocracy and mercantilism in the XVII<sup>th</sup> and XVIII<sup>th</sup> centuries. The European wars of religion led the main philosophers of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century (John Locke and Thomas Hobbes, among others) to advocate the omnipotence of the state as the only actor capable of ensuring civil peace. This legacy of the religious wars that plunged the European continent (and in fine the Western world) into considerable insecurity for individuals should be acknowledged. With a powerful state, trade can develop. The French philosopher Montesquieu said in 1748: "The natural effect of trade is to bring peace". On the other hand, when industrialists like Adam Smith began to plead for economic "laissez-faire", it must be remembered that they were arguing against the European absolutism of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century. The 1815 Corn Law Act passed by the Westminster Parliament was a law whose sole purpose was to protect British wheat farmers, who were the big aristocratic landowners at the time. For all practical purposes, it should be kept in mind that it was a state-led, dirigiste capitalism that made European economies prosper in the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. It was also this same form of planning capitalism that enabled reconstruction in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and the development of new economies. e.g., in Korea with Park Chung-hee, Brazil with Juscelino Kubitschek, Egypt with Gamal Abdel Nasser. In the end, it was Roosevelt's dirigisme that enabled the United States to emerge from the Great Depression in the 1930s: without the New Deal policy, the classic liberals would probably have paralysed the country for a long time. Basically, arguing that "prosperity is just around the corner" is only relevant if the State helps us to go just around the corner.

We have just mentioned three names of statesmen who have accompanied the economic development of their country: Chung-Hee, Kubitschek and Nasser. They were certainly not men known for their passionate love of fundamental freedoms and the democratic process, far from it. But this is precisely the heart of the capitalist project: totalitarianism. Well, that's a word of contrast, to say the least. Capitalism is totalitarian in the sense that it must in essence be total. Some liberals naively believe that capitalism is based on the freedom of enterprise and the freedom of individuals. There is nothing false, nothing more absurd than to think such a thing! This cannot be the case by the very conception of capitalism. Economic enrichment and domination can only be that of a handful of individuals. Power, domination, cannot be shared! How do you want to live in a world where everyone would be the boss of his company without employees? To say "everyone can succeed" is both hypocritical and futile. How many start-ups have failed? Furthermore, to think that "everyone has to become a boss, or their own boss" is even more stupid. First of all, not

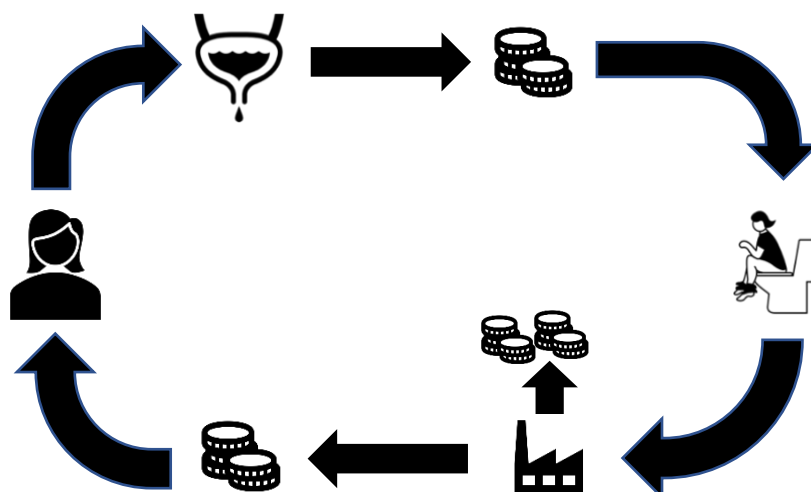
everyone has a personal interest in conquering the world. Governing is one thing but behaving like a statesman is something else. Becoming master of oneself does not mean freeing oneself from the limits of life in society. It is to be consistent with oneself. Submission to an established order is a prerequisite for all social life. For this social life to be sustainable and for individuals' primary needs to be met (eating, drinking, resting, living without being attacked by one's neighbour), the state and the economy must be in balance. The state is the shield: it protects. The economy is the sword: it advances on the path of progress. The relationship between individuals and the company should be as follows. One cannot live without the other: there are no men without the benefits of the machine, and there is no machine without man. Individuals and the company are complementary: individuals are the arms and legs; the company is the head and the brain. Above the company is the State. The State knows the needs of its population thanks to its all-powerful statistics, because "governing is to anticipate the future". The State tells industries what to produce: industries manage this production.

**Fig. 3: the virtuous circle of the capitalist economy. The factory worker produces and then buys this product with his wage.**

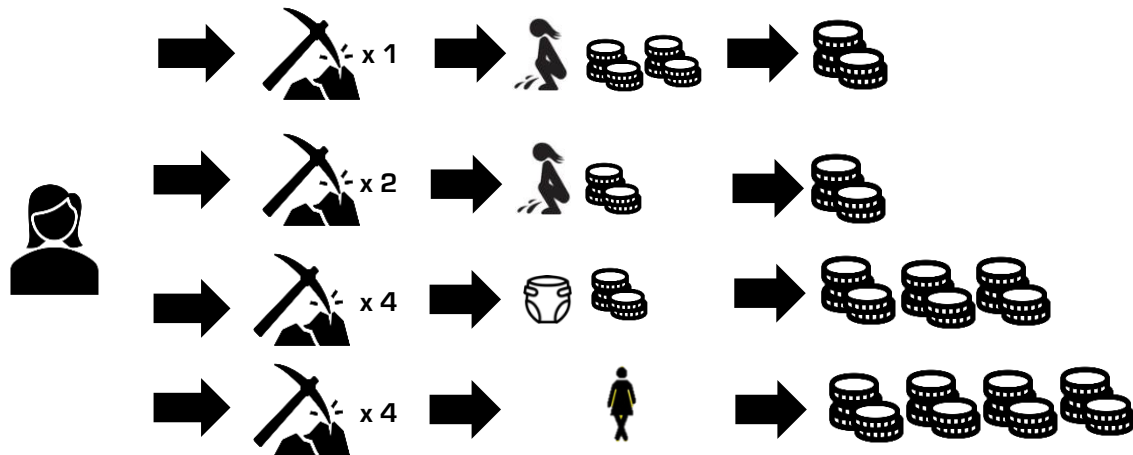


Labour and enterprise are at the heart of capitalist society. The enterprise must be all-powerful in capitalist ideas: the worker who has produced an object can buy it with the wage that the enterprise gives him. This is the Fordist idea: it encourages the worker to be as meticulous as possible in his work while producing as much as possible. This is in the worker's own interest: if the product is missing or defective, the worker is dissatisfied. This idea is therefore a "win-win" idea, while keeping the worker in a labour force approach only.

**Fig. 5: The virtuous circle of sanitary economics. An employee has to pay with her salary to be able to use the toilet and the price of the toilet then leads to profits for the company.**



**Fig. 6: The managerial perspective to be implemented in companies to ensure better productivity.**



Imposing something by force is always a bad solution. A Latin maxim says it well: “Violence is the last refuge of incompetence.” But then, how to make the unacceptable, i.e., the total servitude of the worker, accepted? (Unacceptable from the worker's point of view, of course). Has the last word been said? No. You have to be much smarter, much more cunning, much more skilful. There are two great things that will enable us to achieve our goals.

Firstly, based on the idea that money does everything. Absolutely everything. Human civilization has never been so dependent on money. Today, everything can be bought and sold. Tomatoes, kidneys or even individuals are sold. Humanity has a fantastic creativity when it comes to selling and buying. The individual is materialistic, especially the individual of the XXI<sup>th</sup> century. It is either a curse that Karl Marx already deplored in his time, or a true happiness for capitalists. To paraphrase Marx, time was invented by watchmakers. We also quoted him in the preamble to this paper: as soon as something can be sold, we fall into a Dantestic circle where money is at the heart of human exchanges. The first thing humanity has ever done, as soon as it emerges from Prehistory, is to trade. Charging people to go to the toilet is very common today. But charging people for access to the toilet in the workplace is quite new. When this happens, public opinion is quite shocked, especially in Western democracies. We put our finger on the problem: the decay of the democratic system. This is the question to ask the public: do you prefer a democracy with unemployment and inequality, or a strong regime based on capitalism and corporations where everyone would have a job? Yes, everyone. By relocating foreign production to national soil, and basing the geo-economic model around industrial specialisation, it is possible. This is a thesis defended by many liberal economists today (*cf.* David Ricardo: specialisation benefits all countries). It is not a question of questioning globalisation, but of setting limits to it around common rules and global economic governance. This is the thesis defended by the French economist Jacques Attali: without relocation and global economic planning, we risk sinking into a chaos equivalent or even worse than that of the Great Depression of 1929. We must therefore turn to a programme focused on the economy. Well-being through work. By making the female worker pay to go to the toilet, we reap the benefits (so in fine we pay her less). The worker's primary concern is to save as much money as possible: this is a primary economic behaviour. When she tries to save money, she will try to go to the toilet less often, and therefore work more. The company is a winner in all cases: the first, because part of the salary used by the girl worker goes directly to the company; the second, because the worker produces more. If the company is a winner, then the worker is a winner because he is not put out of work; if there is no unemployment, there are no price fluctuations, all the more so because wages and prices are set by the company thanks to its stability. If there is economic stability, there is social peace. Because individuals are only interested as far as their wallets are concerned. As we mentioned, this is a primary reflex. If there is a £20 note in our wallet, we are happy; but if it is no longer there, then we are frustrated. As the worker has a primary economic rationale based on her wallet, access to toilets should be guided by this wallet. Figure 6 establishes cause-and-effect relationships: if the female worker works normally, she has to spend



money to pee at her workplace. If she works more vigorously, the price for access to the toilet is lower. If she works faster, the company allows her to buy and wear a nappy. Finally, if the employee works intensively without peeing, she earns more money. By controlling the worker as much as possible, e.g., by controlling their breaks and encouraging them to work more to earn more, the company can know the health of its workers. It does not control by their health for its own pleasure: but first and foremost, for its own survival and therefore for the survival of the company. The optimum is even to control the worker's living environment (this was what we were talking about earlier with long working time contracts). The second providential thing for capitalism is the digital revolution. This is undoubtedly one of the most formidable things for capitalism. Work is becoming automated: it's a question of having more docile workers, much more docile because they have no carnal limits! Capitalism dreamed of it: the progress of science has offered it. Certainly, robotics will not be able to replace certain crucial sectors: technology is currently unable to drive high-speed trains or cars. But robotics can replace workers. This is an extraordinary opportunity! It's the absolute fantasy of all the bosses and captains of industry, from Baron Rothschild to the Earl of Bridgwater via Ford and J. P. Morgan. Since the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century and the intensification of the process of globalisation, the bosses used to set "classic" workers against foreign workers. This was known as the fifth column. But one problem remained: while fifth column workers could be paid less and exploited, they remained individuals and had compelling physical needs. So, robotics is a fantastic new arrival. Not only will there be no need to negotiate anything with a frustrated worker, but there will not even be a need to pay his successor! Capitalism having this absolute weapon (nothing can compete with robotics), workers will finally have no choice but to accept the conditions set by the company. To keep the jobs that will not have been replaced by robotics, people will fight to the death, even if it means accepting very hard-working conditions. Robotics is the more or less long-term destruction of the proletariat and the total and absolute loss of its influence in society. The civilization of 2050 will be a completely bipolarised human society. First of all, the states will have only a minor role (destined to disappear) in favour of a regulatory world governance. Secondly, society will be divided between the elites and captains of industry (the dominant ones) and the remaining workers, forced to do the remaining tasks (cleaning robots, for example) under harsh conditions. The 2050 plebeians will be unable to do anything: the elites will divide the populace, because it is necessary to divide in order to rule better. By dividing the workers (by promising them better living conditions or a higher income), the elites will be able to rule completely.

**Fig. 7: A boss insists that his female employee keep working no matter how badly she has to pee.**



The Covid-19 crisis has changed people's relationships at work. Personal photomontage.

The coronavirus pandemic that the world has been experiencing since March 2020 is further good news for capitalism. Containment policies have led to a dramatic fall in industrial production. Halas! Woe, said you? Did you? No. Capitalism doesn't destroy itself but perfects itself. A drop in industrial production means recovery. So, we're going to have to work harder! The argument is strong: work more to revive the national (and even global) economy. This implies that stopping working, even for half a minute to relieve the pressure of a painful bladder full of litres and litres of urine, is an almost anti-solidarity, anti-patriotic and individualistic act. Which is ironic, because capitalism is accustomed to being based on individualism... A global pandemic is good news for the capitalist economy. Let's analyse for example the economic & political consequences of the last great global pandemic, that of 1918-1919. Commonly referred to as the "Spanish flu" (although it didn't originate in Spain but in fact in the United States), it is the most recent pandemic we can look back on. It is far too early to draw all the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis, apart from the catastrophic unpreparedness of the liberal democracies: the country most in mourning is the United States, while the virus from China (Wuhan) has caused far fewer deaths there. Incidentally, we have no reliable data that can be used to estimate the number of deaths in China: it is estimated at 4,634 deaths by the Chinese government. It is probably higher, but certainly not as high as the 242,000 or so American deaths. Such a figure could not be concealed and would not go unnoticed. On the other hand, we have all the hindsight we need to understand the effects that the Spanish flu has had on the world and especially on the capitalist economy. The Spanish flu came from the United States from March 1918. However, some historians and researchers believe that a causal link is likely to exist between the deaths of Indochinese soldiers in France in 1917 and the Spanish flu (cf. Freddy Vinet). The flu became fatal from September 1918 and was popularised as the "Spanish flu". This was because Spain, a neutral country during the First World War, freely published information about it, while other countries at war minimised or denied it to avoid demoralising their populations. In the summer of 1919, the flu gradually stopped spreading, which marked the "end" of the first major contemporary pandemic. The economy of the time was already highly globalised: Europe and the United States had already dominated trade since the end of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. John Menard Keynes in the *Economic Consequences of Peace* discusses this subject of an already highly interdependent world economy. Capitalism emerged strengthened from this pandemic episode: creation of a hygiene society (which in 1945 would become the WHO) under the aegis of the League of Nations (the forerunner of the United Nations); reinforced economic cooperation (1922 Genoa agreements); the baby boom of the 1920s which boosted the labour force. In addition, economic catch-up means an acceleration of the pace of industrial production. For companies, this is an opportunity to circumvent labour law regulations in the name of this famous economic catch-up. In South Korea, between 1953 and 1983, this was particularly the case: workers' rights were violated on the pretext of the modernisation of the country (cf. *A little ball launched by a dwarf*, Cho Se-hui, 1978).

**Fig. 8: What an advertisement could be to incite people to produce at an increasingly rapid rhythm.**



A young girl needs to pee... but will she risk stopping all production in her factory "just" to go to the toilet? What could be an advertisement, a personal photomontage.

The economic damage caused by a total stoppage of production will have catastrophic and harmful effects on a capitalist society. Capitalism is precisely based on production. If we stop producing, it's not just our economic system that stops: it's our whole life, because we live to work. If there is peace and therefore "economic normality", we have to produce, but at a constant and regular rhythm. As much economic abnormality, we must not only maintain the constant and regular rhythm of production but make up for losses. One of two things: either we accept the economic and ultimate collapse of our lives, or we accept to work more so that tomorrow will be potentially and hypothetically better. This was the philosophy of some developing countries that we mentioned earlier: work to become a developed country and have a bright future, or decline. This is to some extent the current state of mind in the world: either we accept to "work more so that we can hypothetically live better later", or we sink into the quagmire and doldrums. This kind of philosophy is a massive opportunity and a huge advantage for capitalism, because it can now exploit people openly in the name of "economic catch-up"! The greed of workers, telling them to take less rest time, marginalises people who take breaks. And so, production can be carried out at a constant pace. By saying "whoever takes a break endangers not only the production of the factory, but of the whole country", those who take breaks are presented as monsters who want to sacrifice the Nation and the following generations (the children) just to satisfy their own interests (going to pee, for example, at the very moment when the whole country is collapsing). The link is: taking a break to pee = killing children!

But one could argue in response to this economic analysis about the positive consequences of Covid-19: what about telework? Doesn't it kill this dithyrambic approach? No, it doesn't! That's underestimating the "tyrannical genius" of capitalism and humanity. On 10 November 2020, the Deutsche Bank (one of the world's largest banks and thus the spearhead of capitalism) proposed to tax employees who telework. According to the bank's report ("Konzept#19: What we must do to rebuild"), a 5% salary deduction should be considered for all those who choose to telework. This salary deduction would be deducted by the State and redistributed to those with modest incomes. This idea may seem surprising: redistribution may seem to be a leftist idea! In reality, it is quite the opposite. The Deutsche Bank adopts a long-term view. By redistributing money to the most modest workers, who are often, incidentally, women, we encourage consumption by modest households. By consuming, individuals keep the economy alive. It is therefore a virtuous circle: the teleworker produces, the individual with a modest income can buy with the taxed money of the teleworker. Telework is therefore not the programmed destruction of the capitalist economy, but its transformation. As we said before: in capitalism, nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed. On the contrary, telework has reinforced the presence of work in the life of the individual. From now on, he or she no longer has to go to work: work is located at home. The travel time saved becomes working time. Teleworking makes it possible to make people work longer by counting transport time as new working hours. Notwithstanding these advantages, it is quite difficult to directly control the worker, especially his break times. It is foreseeable that, with the rapid progress of technology, teleworkers may be required to wear a chastity belt to prevent them from taking excessive toilet breaks. Chastity belts would be tele-controlled by the bosses from their offices. A teleworking girl or boy would have no other option but to work until their boss unlocks their chastity belt and allows them to pee. A joint study by Mirjam Tuk of the University of Twente in the Netherlands, Debra Trampe of the University of Groningen and Luk Warlop of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven has demonstrated that having a full bladder increases reactivity and reduces spontaneous impulsive and thoughtless choices. In other words, with a full bladder, the individual will be better able to make a decision:

"You seem to make better decisions when you have a full bladder," Tuk says. So maybe you should drink a bottle of water before making a decision about your stock portfolio, for example. Or perhaps stores that count on impulse buys should keep a bathroom available to customers, since they might be more willing to go for the television with a bigger screen when they have an empty bladder. The results were a little surprising from a theoretical point of view; a lot of research in psychology has supported the concept of "ego depletion"—that having to restrain yourself wears out your brain and makes it harder to exert self-control over something else. But Tuk says this seems to work in a different way, maybe because bladder control is largely an automatic, unconscious process." (*verbatim* an

excerpt from *Full Bladder, Better Decisions? Controlling Your Bladder Decreases Impulsive Choices*, Association for Psychological Science – APS, 2011)

An article in the British press (*cf.* references part) revealed that this was one of the techniques used in December 2011 by David Cameron at a crucial European summit. The British Prime Minister needed to make some very important decisions and this technique apparently helped him.

**Fig. 9: The current climate leads to abuse and the rise of disrespect and decadence.**



“It's a park not a toilet': Residents left horrified as boozers' poo and wee on doorsteps”, photo from The Daily Star.

This image represents all the decadence of our time. The contemporary world is finally its own victim: by dint of proclaiming that “all individuals are equal, all individuals have rights”, the contemporary world constantly stigmatises authority and traditional values. The result is sufficiently explicit: as the photo shows, individuals no longer care about established rules. Urinating in the public space is formally forbidden. But people, on the sake of individual freedom, don't care.

“Protests are being planned at urinals across Amsterdam over the lack of female public toilet facilities after a judge criticised a woman for not using public male toilets after getting caught short on the streets of the city. Geerte Piening, 23, was fined after she asked her friends to cover for her as she urinated off a street on a night out in Amsterdam's Leidseplein district. Piening decided to fight the charges in court, only to be criticised by the judge who said that despite the lack of toilets available for women she should have made use of the facilities made available to men. “It would not be pleasant, but it can be done,” the judge told her.” (*literatim* a press article, *Protests planned at Amsterdam urinals over lack of women's toilets*, Daniel Boffey, The Guardian, 2017).

This excerpt shows something essential. Faced with the lack of women's sanitary facilities and thus the lack of planning on the part of the government (the “elites”), individuals are reduced to acting alike by deliberately violating the rules established by the “elitist society”. By the way, there is no doubt that the refusal to build more women's toilets is the will of the people (and therefore of women) but rather of the political & economic elites. Building public toilets for women means investing public money, therefore spending and losing money. In failing to plan ahead, the political & economic elites contribute to destroying the basis of the habits and customs of society. When the state disappears, individuals have no choice but to act and decide for themselves. It should be pointed out by the way that the reluctance to build more women's toilets is economically absurd: on the contrary, toilets are a very profitable economic sector. All the more so as women make up more than half of the population, and therefore a considerable number of customers.

This societal decay is denounced by some authors and writers, such as the French polemist Éric Zemmour. In October 2014, Zemmour reacted very strongly to the words of Jacques Attali, a mondialist who supports global governance, which we have already mentioned:

"I listened to the sermon from Father Attali and I'm still a bit dazzled. There are the baddies and the goodies. There are the bad ones who want purity, purification, almost the horror of Nazism and then there are the nice ones who are benevolent and altruistic... Ah, how beautiful it is! It's beautiful, except that it doesn't exist, Monsieur Attali! Especially because it makes a mockery of what one is, not of what one becomes, but of what one is! (...) You speak of a man "outside himself". You speak of a man who spends his life in airports. But that doesn't exist, except for you!" (*verbatim* Eric Zemmour to Jacques Attali, French TV show, October 2014)

The polemist Zemmour highlights the division of society between, on the one hand, a capitalist world which favours "globalised elites" and a "silent majority" (the famous "silent majority" popularised by Spiro-Agnew and Nixon in the 1970s) which is the other side of "happy globalisation". Zemmour divides society vertically. At the top are the political and economic rulers who advocate more free trade. At the bottom, the people and the labour force who can no longer keep up and who, moreover, no longer follow (marginalised) and no longer want to follow (anti-globalisationists). The political field has become bipolarised: the parties supporting liberalism and those rejecting it. It is not a left-right cleavage, but an elite-population cleavage. However, the bipolarisation of discourse (the globalisers vs. the globalised in Zemmour's discourse) has limits. After all, it is very easy to say, "those who don't speak suffer and actually want that." We make the silent majority say anything and everything. Generally speaking, the political world abusively uses the formula "there is a majority of people who in reality want...". In reality, we cannot say exactly what the majority of those who do not speak or do not express themselves, because, by definition, they do not speak. Zemmour's reasoning is: if they don't speak, it's because they can't, because the discussion is monopolised by the globalised elites.

Another intellectual who has taken an interest in this issue of societal decadence is the American Ross Douthat through several of his works, the most recent of which is *The Decadent Society: How We Became the Victims of Our Own Success* (2020). In this book, Ross Douthat analyses the standardisation of society and our world, which has evolved over fifty years or so from several coexisting societal groupings to a single uniform and homogeneous society, erasing all traces of difference in the name of equality. As we saw in the first part, our world is uniform: the way of life is broadly the same for someone living in Vancouver, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Manchester, Bombay, Tokyo or Melbourne.

"This is very close to the argument New York Times columnist Ross Douthat makes in his new book, *The Decadent Society*. According to Douthat, the US — and really the entire Western world — is stuck in a kind of cultural doom loop. In many ways, Douthat says, we've become victims of our own success and are now locked in a state of malaise, in which our culture and politics feel exhausted. Douthat's definition of a "decadent society" is that we're trapped in a stale system that keeps spinning in place, reproducing the same arguments and frustrations over and over again. Trump's election is simultaneously a sign that a lot of people were desperate for something different and a reflection of the shallow and frivolous culture that spawned him." (*literatim* an excerpt from a press article, *The case that America's in decline*, Sean Illing, Vox, 2020).

This thesis of the decadence of the Western world is not new: it can be considered in many respects that it was after the First World War that an ideological shift took place. It was with the outbreak of the First World War that the world really moved into the XXth century. Art is a very good argument. Between the art nouveau of the 1900s (of which the city of Brussels is an archetype with the urban planning of Baron Victor Horta, but also the Paris metropolitan designed by Fulgence Bienvenüe) and the avant-garde of the inter-war period (whose figurehead is Marcel Duchamp), there is a real chasm. The Great War marked a tipping point where, for the first time, one wonders: where are we going? During the Industrial Revolution, the idea was that technology would liberate mankind, and that the future would inevitably be better (cf. Lorenz Dieffenbach: work would make the whole population better, even the marginalised). But the war of 1914 was a war unlike any we had seen before: firstly, because of its colossal toll (18.6 million dead), and secondly because of the violence of the fighting with the use of technology (mustard gas, sarin gas, aeroplanes). In 1918, no one could any longer believe that work made man free and that technology

freed him, since on the contrary, it had massacred him. When a 20-year-old man goes to the front in 1914, promising his fiancée that the war will be short, he cannot imagine how much he will suffer martyrdom. The horror of the trenches, the insalubrity, the rats, hunger, thirst, death. When he returned in 1918, he was simply disfigured: starting a family with his fiancée was no more than an old dream. 1914-1918 thus marked the beginning of the decline of the West, as it prepared the causes of the Second World War and the advent of post-war capitalism. If the Second World War had not occurred, there would probably have been no mass capitalism linked to the economic reconstruction of the 1950s and 1960s. The post-war years accelerated the decline of Western civilization.

According to two main authors, Julius Evola (Italian) and Alexis Carrel (French), who knew the instability and the disillusion of ideologies in the aftermath of the Great War, the weakness of society and the main problem is the instability of economy. This is a very relevant argument: liberal democracy is the cause of Western decadence. Julius Evola is one of the “fathers” of fascism (which has nothing to do with Nazism: on the contrary, fascism is an ideological conception whereas Nazism is a nationalist obsession). In his book *Riding the Tiger*, he concluded that the spirit of widespread decay in Europe and the West is partly inherited from the Enlightenment and the concept of “individual freedom”. At the time when individual freedom took precedence over collective consciousness, the West was condemned to gradually decline and lose all political and cultural influence in the world as it gradually destroyed itself from within. The French doctor and eugenicist Alexis Carrel also mourned in his book *Man, the unknown* in 1935 the accelerated standardisation of Western society, which is heading for its own demise:

“The necessity for this renovation is becoming more evident each year. Newspapers, magazines, cinema, and radio ceaselessly spread news illustrating the growing contrast between material progress and social disorder. The triumphs of science in some fields mask its impotence in others. For the marvels of technology, such as featured, for example, in the New York World's Fair, create comfort, simplify our existence, increase the rapidity of communications, put at our disposal quantities of new materials, synthesize chemical products that cure dangerous diseases as if by magic. But they fail to bring us economic security, happiness, moral sense, and peace. These royal gifts of science have burst like a thunderstorm upon us while we are still too ignorant to use them wisely. And they may become highly destructive. Will they not make war an unprecedented catastrophe?”  
(*literatim* an excerpt from *Man, the unknown*, Alexis Carrel, 1935).

By dint of demanding more individual freedom, individuals came to destroy the state and thus to find themselves in a situation of anarchy. Political instability is the enemy of the economy, and therefore the enemy of a peaceful society. The construction of capitalist society is a good thing (or at least the least bad thing), as well as the construction of a strong corporatist state. But men make history without knowing the history they are making. By depriving companies of private initiative, the authoritarian regimes of the inter-war period (e.g., Salazar's Portugal, Dollfuss' Austria, Ioannis Metaxas' Hellas, Horthy's Hungary) prevented the necessary development of their economies. By refusing to regulate the economy in the name of “laissez-faire, laissez passer”, Western democracies killed free enterprise by provoking spectacular crises (Great Depression of 1929, Subprime Crisis of 2008). The liberal democracies of Great Britain, the United States, France and Germany have been experiencing a considerable recession in their political power for almost forty years. Liberal democracies are victims of their own success. By proclaiming that all individuals have inalienable rights, they themselves create political instability. By proclaiming that everyone should work in the service sector and study for a long time, they create economic instability by removing a key pillar: agriculture and industry. In the end, everything had been said in the XVII<sup>th</sup> century by the mercantilists: agriculture and industry are the two pillars of a healthy economy. By becoming overly dependent on a single sector that produces only abstract wealth (financialization of the economy), liberal democracies provoke their dependence on other more dynamic economies (that of China, for example). The European and American democracies have lost or are in the process of losing the influence they used to have. The British Commonwealth is now an empty shell - a far cry from the days of Queen Victoria. The most stable regimes are political regimes that exert complete, that is, total power over society. Only total control can lead to the disappearance and annihilation of the instability that is the enemy of individuals and the economy. The state has the

monopoly of force; companies have the monopoly of trade. This alliance of two supranatural forces is the one that all the countries of the world must imperatively endeavour to achieve.

In this democratic slump, the emergence of an authoritarian regime is inevitable. A strong capitalist economic and political regime is therefore a path to salvation.



## CONCLUSION.

It was impossible for the author of this essay not to address a Marxist point of view on History. i.e., History is just a succession of social clashes. Throughout this essay, we have tried to show the class struggle that existed at first between the world of the workers and the world of the bosses. The economic, political and societal world was made by a handful of men, “penis-bearers” as feminists say, excluding two-thirds of the population. To see plots everywhere is absurd, but to see none anywhere is to misunderstand History: yes, our society was indeed built by a handful of individuals, but who, far from the caricatures, are less followers of a “white Zionist world conspiracy” than the victims of their personal egotism. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan and Rothschild are just a few of the names that have contributed to building contemporary society - inequality of fact and culture. De facto inequality because all individuals are not equal: some are beautiful, some are tall, some are deformed, etc. Inequality of culture because the traditions, habits and customs of societies are based on this inequality of nature. Individuals are twofold in this inequality of culture. Women are categorised as “weak” and “fragile” due to natural causes (menstruation, for example) while men are considered “strong” and “solid”. All this is an amalgam and an exaggeration. The emergence of monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) has reinforced this weight of the misogynistic and inegalitarian tradition. Although it is still very difficult to establish what the sacred text and its application really says. In Islam, the wearing of the veil did not appear until the Middle Ages. In Christianity, Mary Magdalene is not considered a prostitute until the VI<sup>th</sup> century. There is no mention of the inferiority of women in Jewish texts, although the place of the woman in the household remains a very common idea. Fortunately for the world, women have also played very brilliant and eminent roles and have enabled human society to move forward. Nevertheless, what these women have in common is that they have had to fight to have the same status as men (Matilda effect: women's contributions to scientific research are minimised in favour of men).

The capitalist economy was built around this gender clash. The harem effect, for example, in science, is a good example of this. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the British astrophysicist Edward Charles Pickering systematically hired women in subordinate positions to collect and analyse these data. The lower salary of women permitted Sir Pickering to recruit them for this kind of work, which was not better remunerated than a female worker (about 25 to 50 cents/hour). Capitalism very quickly integrated one thing: you have to divide in order to rule better. What would weaken capitalism is the union of workers. For capitalism to prosper, a scapegoat must be appointed among the working class. This can be immigrant workers, which is common rhetoric, but it can also be women. Capitalism cannot succeed on its own: it needs political power. It is thanks to political power that capitalism managed to quell the workers' strikes of 1894 with the intervention of the National Guard and the explicit support of President Grover Cleveland. The ultimate goal of capitalism is to make the workers “love” their work. And to a certain extent it works. In the 1960s and 1970s, capitalism promised workers a nice house in the suburbs if they worked hard. By making people believe that everything depends on them (their work), you can make them believe anything. To a certain extent, this idea of liberating work has succeeded in making a mark on people's consciences. Today, everyone is looking for a job and goes to work on their own, because deep down they know they have no choice. Either they go to work or they no longer have social ties and no longer eat. This is the great success of capitalism. Nowadays, the progress of technology gives capitalism an extra strength. Now the workers will have no choice but to work more under conditions decided by the boss or to be fired. The disappearance of the welfare state (which we discussed in the first part) is an additional asset. From now on, nothing will stand in the way of the “dictatorship of management”.

Bosses of the world, unite! Let's look together at our workers chained to their machines, forced to work with an overflowing bladder!

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## APPENDIX.

### Concise analysis of images and cartoons to support our argument.

Additional remarks and ancillary elements. Six documents have been added: in the respective order, a drawing by the artist Papergami ("No homework, no breaks"); a drawing by the artist Rexone ("the hostess Claire"); two extracts from a comic strip by the artist Rexone ("the Viking Astra"); a personal text on the aristocracy in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century ; a brief analysis of the relationship between girls and girls concerning their urinary needs; another personal text on the unequal relationship between boys and girls and how the urinary needs of girls are an advantage for boys.

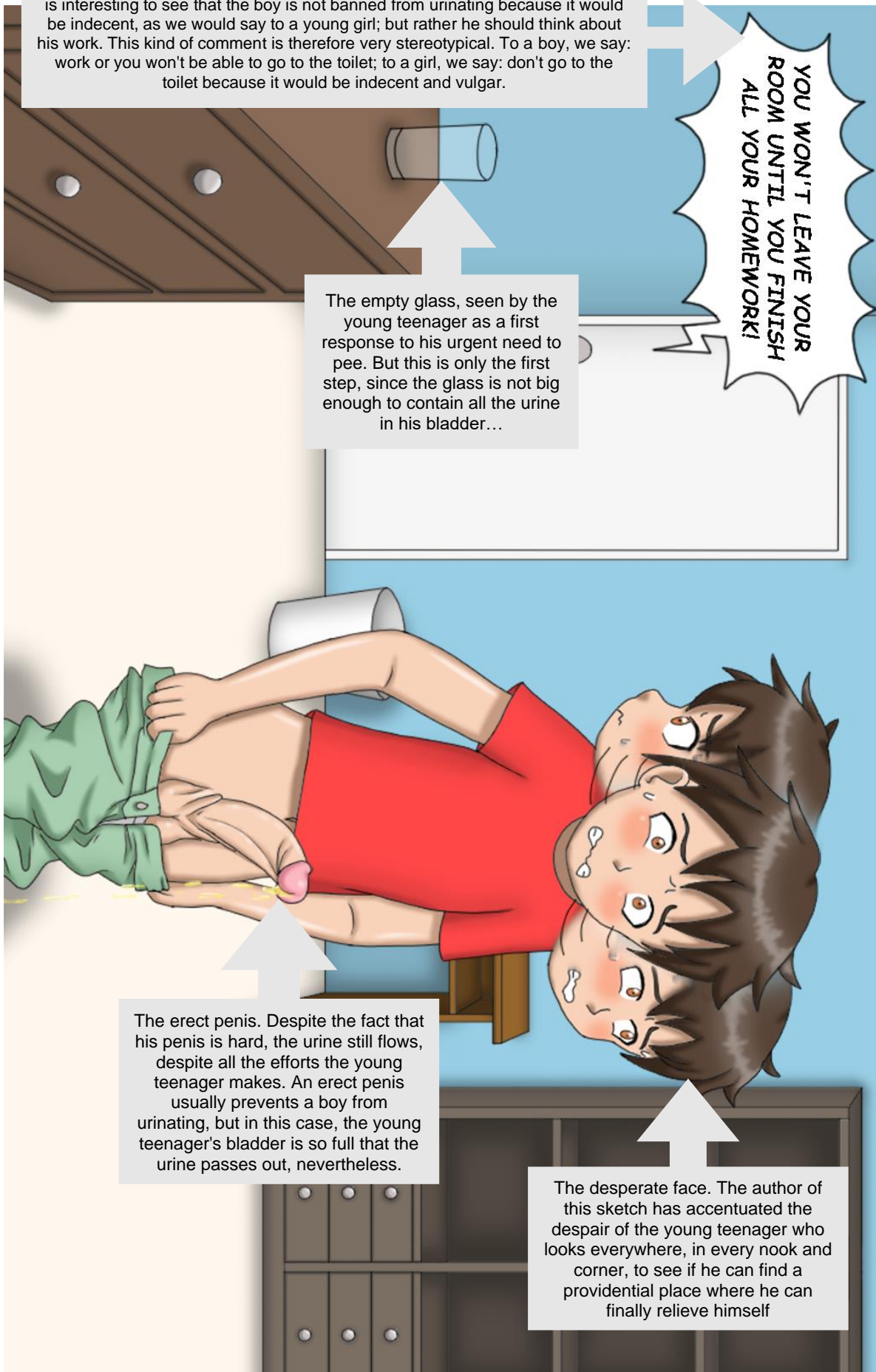
The threat and the ultimatum: you will not leave your room under ANY pretext. It is interesting to see that the boy is not banned from urinating because it would be indecent, as we would say to a young girl; but rather he should think about his work. This kind of comment is therefore very stereotypical. To a boy, we say: work or you won't be able to go to the toilet; to a girl, we say: don't go to the toilet because it would be indecent and vulgar.

**YOU WON'T LEAVE YOUR ROOM UNTIL YOU FINISH ALL YOUR HOMEWORK!**

The empty glass, seen by the young teenager as a first response to his urgent need to pee. But this is only the first step, since the glass is not big enough to contain all the urine in his bladder...

The erect penis. Despite the fact that his penis is hard, the urine still flows, despite all the efforts the young teenager makes. An erect penis usually prevents a boy from urinating, but in this case, the young teenager's bladder is so full that the urine passes out, nevertheless.

The desperate face. The author of this sketch has accentuated the despair of the young teenager who looks everywhere, in every nook and corner, to see if he can find a providential place where he can finally relieve himself





The tense faces. This shows that the young woman is trying at all costs to keep control of her body. On the one hand, the brain orders the bladder to hold back. On the other hand, the body requires the brain to empty the bladder immediately.

Toilets only for  
Passengers.  
Cabin Crew strictly  
PROHIBITED!

The prohibition sign. All the power of this image is contained in this inscription. There is no material hindrance preventing the hostess from using the restrooms. Only this sign, which in itself symbolises the potency of capitalism.

The inflated bladder of the stewardess. Her bladder needs to be relieved immediately because it is an emergency situation. Her bladder can be visible through her uniform, which means it is an urgent situation.

Drops of urine dripping down her thighs anyway. These drops of urine could have run down the toilet right next door: but this is not the case.

The toilet is literally next to her. However, the hostess is not going to use them because she has been forbidden to do so. Who has been forbidden? The company. So, there is a moral line that she cannot cross. In reality, it is less a moral line (respecting the society's prohibitions) than a fiduciary line (respecting the rules so as not to be fired and be unemployed).





The elaboration of a plan to secretly urinate in spite of the ban.

Temptation. The young Viking girl takes advantage of the man's absence to urinate. He's not there, so he won't know.

The revelation of the pot-aux-roses and the shame of this discovery. The dishonour does not only affect the girl but also the man who is ashamed of her.



The dramatic revelation ("I have to pee in spite of the ban")

The moral argument. You don't urinate because it's dishonourable.

## A personal text: a fiction about hierarchical relations in XVIII<sup>th</sup> century society in the West

"The sublime Duchess of G. had a character that was not suitable for exposing herself to the slightest contradiction, the slightest gesture of insolence and insubordination. In short, he was someone who liked to command. One of his servants made him the bitter one - or the just one? - and learned the hard way that it is better not to antagonise the powerful. Raised as usual by her capricious mistress, the young lady had slept very badly. The disgusting room in which she lived was the least enviable and her mistress had had a bad night. The maid, a beautiful blonde Venetian girl of barely twenty years of age, had to dress the duchess as usual. But the latter was lingering. It took her a long time to choose her finery, her clothes and her dress. And the maid had a furious desire to relieve herself, more than usual. The duchess always found something to keep her occupied for as long as possible before reluctantly allowing her to relieve herself. This time, the litres and litres in her bladder made her lose her mind. After a long quarter of an hour of hesitation on the part of her mistress, she dared to express herself.

The presentation of an inegalitarian and highly hierarchical society. As the poet says, "the dalliance of the greatest is the misfortune of the weakest".

The servant-girl does everything she can to respect the rules and satisfy the vagaries of her mistress.

"Madame will forgive me for speaking in this manner, but your devoted and faithful servant that I am cannot continue to remain impassive any longer, so great is my desire to relieve myself!

The irony of the mistress's answer shows the omnipotence she has over her maid. She treats her handmaiden as she pleases.

"How right these words are! I am in a hurry. There you are. Are you looking forward to the moment of salvation? Well, take this pierced jar to relieve yourself; it will teach you to dominate with more reason the affliction of your poor body.

The disgraceful and dishonourable revelation. By openly expressing her desire to urinate, the young maid exposes herself to retaliation from her mistress who has all the power over her. A young girl does not have to urinate, and a servant girl even less so.

"But Madam! How can I relieve myself in such a container?

"It will teach you to put your vulgar needs before mine. Now finish your work in silence!"

The expression of omnipotence. The mistress "knows" and will "teach" the ignorant handmaid how to live.

One can easily guess the malaise and despair of the maid, who, according to a well-informed person, would have had a hard time holding herself back all morning. Her programme wanted her to accompany Madame on her daily walk. During this walk, a curious person even saw the young girl put her hand in her panties to hold her overflowing urine. But all her protestations did not convince the duchess to change her mind, who, exceeded by the demands of her maid, warned her to hold her back until the evening if she did not keep quiet!"

The total servitude of the servant girl to her mistress. She has already tried to "rebel" by complaining that she had to pee. Here she is trying to make this rebellion forgotten by imploring her and arousing pity. She is not trying to *convince* her mistress that she needs to pee immediately, but to *persuade* her.

## **The relationship between girls and girls in relation to toilets and their urinary needs: remarks & comments**

Just imagine. Two beautiful teenage girls together. One receives the other at home as part of a language exchange. Only one language of communication, English. And the same situation: each one wants to prove her superiority to the other. Two young girls gathered together for an afternoon, each wanting to show at all costs her strength over the other's. And this assertion of self-control appears - almost - immediately as the control of one's bladder. A whole afternoon of drinking and talking! Every girl has the urge, the furious urge to urinate. They disguise their discomfort properly, masking the real situation with skilful play. Thus, by drinking - admittedly, from the tip of her lips - her glass, she sends her partner a signal of full self-control and of no need to go and relieve herself. This reinforces the despair of her partner, who is obliged to do the same in order not to appear weaker. She does even better, by drinking longer than her partner. Does she really drink from her thermos flask? It doesn't matter what the truth is, as long as you send a signal of fullness to your opponent. The host has to wait for his guest to burst first. After several hours of incessant struggle with her bladder, this one finally agrees to say what the other has been waiting for so long. But this battle of egos could be prolonged, if the other girl. But then, the situation would quickly turn to the advantage of the girl who was a little too eager, as she would go to the toilet and leave her young friend in total disarray, forced to hold herself back for a moment without losing face. A "one size fits all" solution? Almost. The best way to avoid such an ordeal is to confess your desire. If admitting that you want to relieve yourself doesn't seem very honourable, you have to admit it afterwards. The girl who finds herself forced to confess her desire has an advantage here; she is at home. Does her guest need to go to the toilet? Well, let her lead the way! That way, she takes the first place in the toilet. And shows her desire at the sight of her guest. So, she shows her guest what she can endure without complaining. Her goal? To urinate in front of her for as long as possible: she almost forcibly brings her guest in by holding the toilet door open for her. She finds herself in this humiliating situation almost in spite of herself. This exhibition has only one aim: to humiliate the other girl, by showing her what she is capable of doing. The clear jet hits the toilet bowl for a long time, and the correspondent, forced to wait, stands and watches this demonstration of strength. To ultimately show her superiority in this situation, the young girl "forgets" that her guest also wants to relieve herself. The latter is forced to remind her, as she heads towards the main room: "wait, I want too!". The laughing - even mocking - smile of her hostess and her falsely exasperated sigh show her disdain for her friend's desire. What, she didn't have time? The other girl dares to ask for relief after seeing what *she* can endure! It is in this posture that the young woman gives her approval, coming back to her: it is an *ultima colpa* – her ultimate blow, her last and fatal wound.

### **Another personal excerpt: how the urinary needs of girls are an advantage for boys.**

A young girl was sitting in the fourth row on the right, by the window. On her left, a boy was sleeping. The girl was not sleeping. She was very agitated and was moving around in all directions to find a comfortable position. Her face was that of a girl who is fed up with everything, who wants to be alone, in short, that of an adolescent girl. She looked like she was in pain, squirming in her seat. This young girl's name was Pauline. She had just turned twenty.

Pauline wanted to go to the toilet. She had been sitting down since the beginning of the journey, she had slept a little, but was woken up by a terrible urge to urinate. She was worried about waking up her neighbour to go to the toilet at the back of the bus to relieve herself, so she tried to go back to sleep, in vain. She was waiting for the young boy to wake up so she could ask him to move over so she could go to the toilet. Pauline had tried every possible position; legs crossed, thighs together, hands between her legs... Without success. Her condition was getting worse, she wouldn't last much longer. She took her phone, looked at the time: 10:12. At noon the bus would stop to fill up with gasoline, and the passengers could go outside to stretch their legs. If her friend didn't wake up before that time, she might have to hold on until then. Judging by her condition, this was highly doubtful. At 10:25 a.m., her young friend was still asleep and barred her way. She tried to push him gently, but he was stronger than she was. However, she had to go out to relieve herself before it was too late! So, in despair, she decided to call him on his mobile phone. The ring would wake him up, and she could go and urinate! Pauline unlocked her phone and dialled her friend's number. The friend's phone was balanced on the boy's lap. The ringing of his mobile woke him up. Pauline hung up; he must not know she had called him. Then she played her trick.

"Alexandre (because that's the boy's first name), I need to go to the toilet, can you let me through please?"

He looked at Pauline. She was beautiful, Pauline. He had always wanted to be closer to her. And, exploiting the situation, he haggled.

"Yes Pauline, of course I'll let you through. But on one condition..."

She was ready for anything, squirming in her seat.

"You're going to let me touch you, and then I'll let you go. Anyway, if you refuse, you can always wait for the lunch break," he added, with a smile on his face.

She had no choice. She nodded, ashamed to comply with the boy's request. The boy was taking his time, aware of his friend's desire. He stretched, then undid Pauline's zip. Impossible to resist, she thought. It's either that, or I make a fool of myself in front of everyone by pissing myself. Her vagina was hot. Alexander's hand caressed it lovingly. His other hand was on her lower abdomen and then moved up towards her breasts. Pauline wanted to fight, but Alexander looked at her sternly. Her mouth stuck delicately to her friend's lips. She allowed herself to do so, playing into the boy's hands. Suddenly she felt a pressure in her lower abdomen: Alexander pressed with all his strength on his bladder, which was exhausted and emptied. Pauline couldn't do anything more, helpless, her panties and then her trousers got wet. Alexandre, satisfied with his work, sat back down on his seat and went back to sleep. Pauline looked disastrously the damage. Tears flooded her face.