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# **Mapping Diversity in Social History**

Ercole Sori

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KNOW – Knowledge, Technology, Human Capital

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# Mapping Diversity in Social History

## Summary

The paper is an overview of diversity in history, starting as far back as the societies in classical Ancient Europe and traditional non-European societies, where differentiation was basically between the enslaved and free population and the out-of-caste in India.

With the end of slavery the European feudal society adopted a functionalist tripartition based on priests, warriors and peasants.

The analysis continues in pre-industrial Europe (1500-1800), where in many cities class struggle was represented by the conflicts between crafts and between cities, with some participation of the élites. In 17<sup>th</sup> century England only one class existed, and class struggle was the struggle inside one class. Other considerations on the stratification of pre-industrial society are related to classes inferred from empirical subjectivity, social hierarchy and horizontal and vertical solidarity.

In industrial society, the paper discusses the Marxian, Weberian and Marshall models and the syncretism between status and class.

The second part of the paper is devoted to diversity outside formal society with the definitions of the processes that generate the marginalization of people and social groups, while the third part of the paper concerns the urban milieu and social integration/differentiation. Considerations are made on urban topography (e.g. ghettos, “miracle courts”, etc.) and on the relationship between topographic position within the urban tissue and positioning in the social pyramid.

Finally, the last part of the paper is an excursus on the historiographic assumptions and policies toward diversity and marginality.

**Keywords:** Diversity, Marginalization, Social history, Social integration, Social Differentiation

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# ***Mapping Diversity in Social History***

by Ercole Sori

## 1. DIVERSITY WITHIN FORMAL SOCIETY

### *1.1. Societies in classical Ancient Europe and traditional non-European societies*

The fundamental differentiation was between enslaved and free population and, inside the latter, between ruling classes (*élites*) and common people (*plebs*). Slavery did not come to an end at the end of the Ancient period, but with the conversion of Slav populations to Christianity the slave trade in Europe began to disappear [Ennen, 1975:221]. This tripartition is similar to that applied by an historian-sociologist to the preindustrial European and extra-European city: upper class, lower class and out-of-caste [Sjoberg, 1960]. A typical caste stratification was that of the traditional Indian society, being the possible evolution of a society divided into orders, when the purity of the blood was to be defended and became hereditary religious purity or impurity. In Vedic India it was the result of a race clash complicating the traditional tripartition (warrior and chief, poet and priest, plebeian) and adding a socially inferior fourth “colour” – the “blacks”, the “losers” – or the “untouchables”. In 18<sup>th</sup> century India 200 castes and 2000 sub-castes could be found within a specific hierarchy ; affiliation was by birth, endogamy was the rule and the subsequent specific lifestyle was to be adopted. No individual social mobility existed, apart from that of the entire sub-caste from which one could be excluded if unworthy, becoming in this way a social dreg. No products or labour market existed in the caste society. Caste-professions cooperated without usurping each other bordering functions; In conditions of overabundance one could change profession moving to a lower caste [Mousnier, 1971:17-21; Burke, 1980:86]. The same sort of order can be found in “marginal” layers in pre-industrial European society.

### *1.2. The European feudal Society and its Subversion*

With the end of slavery, the European feudal society adopted a “functionalist” tripartition – priests, warriors and peasants- which, however, still resembled a self-representation of dominant social actors, that is to say a justification of the privilege not to work established by those who didn’t work [Burke, 1980:83]. A similar objection can be made to the social hierarchy theory by Mousnier, who assumed the distinctions made by his contemporaries, in 17<sup>th</sup> century France, on the basis of juridical tractates regarding “orders” and “dignities”, which must be considered, from an historiographical point of view, socially self-referenced [Ibidem:88]. Starting from the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century urban revolution a new actor, the bourgeoisie, was to be added to the two “active” social orders of the feudal word – clergy and aristocracy –, with a social structure which lasted until the end of the *ancien régime* [Pirenne, 1971:143]. Sjoberg [1980], on the contrary, considers the middle-age European urban bourgeoisie hegemony as a pause in the continuity of the power held by clergy and aristocracy until the French Revolution [Sjoberg, 1980:89]. According to Pirenne, who uses the terms “order” and “class” interchangeably, the bourgeoisie was a “rootless class and at the same time a class of free-men who neither cultivated the land on which they settled nor owned it. It was a privileged, juridically separate order, isolating itself from the popular rural mass; it conceived liberty as a monopoly and had a caste-attitude which was first its strength

and, by the end of the Middle Ages, its weakness. The subversive role of this bourgeoisie – as distinct from the rural masses - derived from economic growth, the spreading of the market and money. Cities began to expand the market, attracting the countryside which was stimulated to augment rural production (agricultural colonization) whose profits went to peasants. A similar scenario was that of land properties and monasteries. A “free” peasant appeared (a non-serf) with a *burgenses*-like juridical status. A money-based wealth appeared, along with money-valuable products (capital). Inflation appeared, with a redistribution of wealth in favor of merchants and craftsmen, at the expense of land owners, also thanks to the loan and its consequent interest rate [Pirenne, 1971:143-149]. The rise of these new and economically active social actors was favoured by the fact that professional incomes were tax free [Fasoli, 1973:62].

These economic and political transformations had relevant consequences on a socio-cultural level. At the end of the Middle Ages some lay spirit began to spread, in spite of the general continuity of religious feelings. The clergy privileges – wealth, fiscal immunity and an economic activity exploiting market benefits without bearing the relative burdens, began to arouse tensions. Power conflicts (parish priests elections) and competence conflicts (hospitals management) arose between civil and religious authorities (although without anti-clericalism) [Ennen, 1975:223]. Merchants and craftsmen founded schools for their children, since business and productive work was opposed by the pedagogy of religious schools [Ibidem:226].

### *1.3. Pre-industrial European society in the modern age*

As for the origins of capitalism, an intense debate has been going on among social historians about the transformation of social stratification before industrialisation.

1.3.1. *Proto-classes and popular backlashes.* This is an attempt to apply the Marxian approach to late Middle Ages and modern European society. Disorders, strikes and controversies in 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century European cities marked the end of the solidaristic and cooperative climate of the previous “horizontal” urban society. However in this case it would not be correct to speak of proletariat and class struggle because of the very nature of the struggle, or rather conflicts between crafts and between cities, with some participation of the élites [Ennen, 1975:216-218]. The so-called “Tumulto dei Ciompi” (textile workers) in 14th century Florence is one of the best known backlashes. According to Porshnev, who analyzed the popular revolts in France between 1623 and 1648 in class terms, these were conscious acts of subversion by peasants against an unjust social order, during which peasants joined on a local basis to burn castles. Mousnier does not agree with this interpretation and considers those backlashes as mere violence outbursts; on the contrary, peasants and aristocrats were united against central government tax collectors [Burke, 1980:88-90].

1.3.2. *Only one class.* According to Laslett, if the concept of “class” were one of “social status” and of various degrees of consideration implied in relationships, it would be wrong to speak of one class in the pre-industrial world; but, if by class we mean power and richness, class conflict, inner solidarity and so on, at least in 17th century England (the Stuart period)

only one class existed. A distinction must be made between “social group” (people with the same social status) and “class” (political management of economic power): in the society of that period, only one class was able to act in conformity with a common plan regarding the entire society; “class struggle” was the struggle inside one class, the only class according to the former definition. There was a clear distinction between those who “counted” (gentry, gentlemen) and those who “didn’t”. But that was not a static society: social climbing was possible for those who were at University, the professionals, clergymen and those in the army [Burke, 1980:88-90]. L. Stone is aware of this dynamism when he distinguishes English social structure into two separate ages. Aristocrats and gentry surpassed the other social groups in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the status achieved by medical, juridical and ecclesiastical professions enabled their members to compete with the aristocrats [Burke, 1980:92].

- 1.3.3. *Empirical subjectivity*. Some authors have tried to stratify pre-industrial society using values and criteria on the basis of which contemporaries perceived social differences and modelled their behaviors accordingly. For example, according to sociologists and social historians, the principle of marriage between “diverse” can be seen (different religious belief, class, ethnic group and so on), as the best indicator of social integration. For what concerned *ancien-régime* France, Daumard and Furet – observing the marriage market segmentation by socio-professional actors – identified 13 social groups. According to Mousnier, instead, this criterion has an economic connotation, being based on socio-professional categories drawn from the contemporary economic and social structure [Burke, 1980:91].
- 1.3.4. *Social hierarchies*. According to Mousnier, instead of speaking about social class or proto-class, it is possible to examine social stratification (for past times, above all) mixing five measuring scales: \* *legal stratification* (not present in all societies; it availed itself of laws, jurisprudence and custom); \* *social status* (the most important scale, measuring differences in consideration, dignity, rank, honour and prestige between diverse individuals and social groups like households, corps, colleges, communities); \* *economic hierarchy* (based on the nature and dimension of available resources, often confused with social status); \* *power scale* (measuring the possibility to influence the will and behaviour of others, including the influence on public opinion); \* *ideological stratification*. The combination of these scales and measurements will create a stratification by orders. Orders tended to divide themselves into “states” and to be hereditary, characterizing different societies in space and time: India, at the beginning of the Vedic period; feudal France; China between 1368 and 1912. The society by orders was based on consensus and characterized by “state” endogamy and heredity [Mousnier, 1971:7-15]. Richness, according to Mousnier, didn’t determine status: a poor aristocrat is socially more important than a rich merchant [Burke, 1980, 89-92].
- 1.3.5. *Horizontal and vertical solidarity*. These types of solidarity were referred to class structure (horizontal) and hierarchical structure (vertical). As for pre-industrial society, Mousnier underlines that vertical solidarity mostly

shapes social relationships, e.g. between owners and tenants or *patrons* and “clientes” E.P.Thompson, an English scholar who studies the rise of the working class, argues that 18<sup>th</sup> century England was characterized by vertical solidarity (for what concerns plebs) and a still uncertain identity and consciousness of the rising working class [Burke, 1980:89, 92].

#### 1.4. Industrial society

- 1.4.1. *The Marxian model.* Class society made its appearance in market economy, of which it embodied the main values such as a role in the productive process, the social and political importance of the entrepreneur, earnings. It had no juridical discriminations but only *de facto* differences, though weakened by correctives (patrimonial heritage, endogamy) [Mousnier, 1971: 22,24]. Class, Marx argued, is a social group with specific functions in the productive process as owner of one of the classical “factors” (land, capital and labour). Classes had contrasting interests and different ways of thinking and acting. This is a schematic view: Marx himself varied between dichotomies (exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed) and more analytical categories (Roman slaves and plebs, serfs and medieval labourers) or, again, referred to exceptions to the general framework (lack of consciousness and solidarity, as for mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century French peasants). According to Burke, the class concept fits very well into the European 19<sup>th</sup> century society, while other societies and ages should be defined by different concepts [Burke, 1980:84-86].
- 1.4.2. *The Weberian model.* According to Weber, what differentiates classes is not the productive factor, but the possibilities of their members to act on the market. Weber identifies four hierarchical “power” levels on the market [Mousnier, 1971:24-25]: a) *owners of goods to sell* (they were not obliged to do so, because they could transfer such property from consumption to investment later exchanging the product in view of a profit and so becoming entrepreneurs); b) *rentiers*; c) *owners forced to sell their own products to survive*; d) *sellers of labour force*. As for pre-industrial Europe, Weber used notions both of class and rank, conceived as a group whose destiny was determined by social status and the related honour granted legally or by birth, with powers and privileges. In the short period, for example, huge consumptions could unify owners and non-owners, but in the long term property ended by discriminating between the two groups [Burke, 1980:86-87].
- 1.4.3. *T.H. Marshall.* According to Marshall, social classes corresponded to the place occupied by individuals in the business hierarchy, from the director to the temporary staff. This model originated in an open-society like capitalism and big business U.S.A. This is a competitive society based on opportunities, in which class is measured by economic and professional success to which, in principle, everyone could aspire. Mousnier suggests that in this model liberal professions and intellectual work (technocracy) – whose relevance is increasing more and more in contemporary industrial societies – are not represented [Mousnier, 1971:25].



### 1.5. *Synthesis and intermediate situations*

- 1.5.1. *Syncretism between status and class.* While Marx was interested in power relationships and conflict, Weber privileged values, ways of life and consensus. Class and rank corresponded in this way to these two different points of view and observations about contemporary society. Burke states that class and rank categories should be integrated so as to provide a framework within which deep social differentiations can be better analysed [Burke, 1980:87, 93].
- 1.5.2. *Intermediate situations.* According to Mousnier, distinctions between social stratification models and their evolutive trends aren't always clear and univocal from an historical point of view. 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century England, for example, experienced a slow transition from an order-based society to a class-based society. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century United States some anthropologists have found a sort of involution generating stratified-by-order pockets in a class-structured society. With the transition to monopolistic capitalism, the "new middle class" becomes stagnant in social mobility terms, particularly in a period of economic depression. New anxieties re-emerge both about status and anything representing a social standing: good manners, good pronunciation, education, old school relations, "exclusive" clubs, etc. [Mousnier, 1971:28-32].

## 2. DIVERSITY OUTSIDE FORMAL SOCIETY

### 2.1. *Tools of analysis*

- 2.1.1. *Definitions.* The processes of marginalization of people and social groups take place at two levels, not necessarily overlapping: that of socio-cultural values and the level of socio-economic relationships. These processes generated almost four stable or provisional conditions [Schmitt, 1979:262; Berengo 1999:521]: a) *unlawfulness* (the social deviation by excellence, of people breaking the law); b) *marginality* (involving those who deviate from the norms but still retain a formal status in society. It was a reversible, temporary condition (reintegration) generated by a process opposite to social integration. The term marginality can also refer to a sort of gray zone between acceptance/legality and exclusion/illegality); c) *exclusion* (an often ritualized fracture with the social body, leading to isolation and discrimination); d) *minority* (it includes those who are not recognized as permanent members of a community. A minority may not be weak or precarious, e.g. mercantile colonies). Borders between these conditions were not always well clear and single conditions could be variously combined. For the European Middle Ages, J. Le Goff adopts a different criterion, distinguishing – within the marginalization process – four categories with uncertain boundaries: \* *those who were excluded or bound to be excluded* (criminals, wanderers, foreigners, whores, suicides, heretics); \* *The disqualified* (people who did defamatory jobs like butchers, dyers, soldiers of fortune, or sick, invalids, poor, women, children, old people, bastards); *Marginals in the strict sense of the word* (declassified like poor knights, madmen, beggars, usurers – these last very close to exclusion); *Fictitious marginals* (geographical marvels, monsters, savages).

Social history has recently explored with more precision minority and deviant social and cultural areas using the following key concepts.

- 2.1.2. *Border*, that is to say the system of norms, values and behaviours respect to which one was considered “inside”, “marginal” or “outside”. Border and edge could also have a spatial meaning referring to a knowledge getting weaker and weaker while going far from a well known “centre”, a line beyond which an “elsewhere” lies. It could be a world crowded with monsters and prodigies, an oniric horizon where Europeans projected their ghosts and their repressed desires (sexual freedom, nakedness, a “reversed world” where horses rode men and which was used to persecute heretics and condemn deviants from the “centre” [Schmitt, 1979:263].
- 2.1.3. *Labellers and labelled*. It is the identification of social groups able to define the norms (labellers) and of the ones subject to the norm itself (labelled). One well-known example was witchcraft, invented by 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century Inquisitors to fight fortune-tellers and heretics. This concept can be applied to the so-called “able-bodied beggars” of Elizabethan England, too, seen as healthy, idle and loner vagabonds and not as unemployed. Labelling, originating from a clash between social groups, institutionalized deviance also through the language, coining a disparaging lexicon to identify single deviants [Burke, 1980:77-78; Le Goff, 1979:24].
- 2.1.4. *Symbolic violence*. This was a process leading subaltern groups to recognize the legitimacy of the dominant culture against their own culture perceived as illegitimate. One example was the Counter-Reformation attack against the popular religiosity of the peasants who were persuaded to consider their culture as idolatrous, superstitious and even satanic [Burke, 1980:76-77].
- 2.1.5. *Transit rites*. It is the codification of the transition from one condition (marginality) to another (exclusion), usually taking place in three stages: separation, junction and aggregation. A similar rite can be found in the ban, with which one person was deprived of citizenship. Also the reversal process (re-integration) is often ritualized. Sometimes the imposed punishment symbolized the exclusion from the world of the living: heretics were walled up, lepers were buried in the grave, after the ritual *separatio* [Schmitt, 1979:262, 271; Le Goff, 1979:25].
- 2.1.6. *Social control*. It is the whole of the formal and informal practices which punished deviance and rewarded conformity to dominant social values. This concept becomes more complicated if society is made up of different social groups, each one with its own values and in conflict with the others. as happens in multiethnic, multireligious and multicultural societies [Burke, 1980:80]. In pre-industrial society – between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century, above all – formal mechanisms of social control multiplied and specialized as a consequence of demographic growth, population expulsion from the traditional economic structures, urbanization and rise of big cities. The capital city, above all, was the symbol of the order reigning all over the State, the laboratory for new forms of social control exercised by the State in contrast with the Church and primary socialization structures [Sori, 1982:13-17]. Informally, the society itself exerted social control, as in the

case of French *charivari*, a rite with which an old man marrying a young girl (or a husband being beaten by the wife) was derided by the whole urban quarter. This punishment allowed the man who had broken the social norm to be reintegrated in society. [Burke, 1980:81].

- 2.1.7. *Integration and re-integration mechanisms*. Many were the social structures delegated to such roles. First of all, of course, came the family, whose more or less traumatic breaking or abnormal functioning (detachment, dispersion, widowhood, orphanhood, illegitimate birth) often meant vagrancy, poverty, criminality; sometimes the detachment from the family was of a provisional nature, as in the case of “poor students”, clerics in search of benefits, job-looking *compagnons*. Other reintegration instruments were the craftsman shop, which often presupposed the boy’s cohabitation; groups of youths (*abbayes de jeunesse*), aimed to limit juvenile violence and excesses; and also the *charivari*. Some institutions were also relevant to this point: some juridical institutes of pseudo-kinship; Franciscan or Dominican tertiary orders, better than unofficial beguinnage; parochial, quarter and job confraternities; university colleges [Schmitt, 1979:278]. Heretics salvage and their reintegration into the Christian community took place thorough expiation acts, with long-term imprisonment and the obligation to wear exterior distinctive signs. Hard labour was the solution proposed to the *Hôpital Général*, the *Zuchthäuser*, and the *workhouses* interneers, as an instrument for the reeducation of the laggard poor and their reintegration in the productive world [Ibidem:272, 276].
- 2.1.8. *Diversity within diversity*. Also a diversification within diversity existed, as in the case of heretics distinguished between “perfect” and “believers” (“*perfetti*” and “*credenti*”), and among thieves between pickpockets” and “receivers of stolen goods”. Such identity distinctions derive from social marginality subcultures, expressing themselves in different ways: distinctive signs (tattoos), tonsure for false clerics claiming juridical extraterritoriality, honour rules (oath, secrecy), tricks (loading the dice; *passé par tout*), jargon (picaroon, gangsters), undergraduates’ anarchism [Schmitt, 1979:279]. Jews were divided by “nation” (Italians, Levantines, Spaniards, Portuguese, etc.), adopting the same distinction made by merchants’ foreign communities [Berengo, 1999:524].
- 2.1.9. *Ideological bases of social diversity*. According to Le Goff, the ideological bases of marginalization processes were rooted in some typical medieval society obsessions : a) *religion*, which made heretics the marginals (or, more precisely, the excluded) *par excellence*; b) *body diseases* (as sin embodiments, they transformed automatically sick and invalids into poor, making the leper the living image of sin, condemning whores; c) *identity* (phobia against Jews and foreigners. If at the market a Jew touched some goods, particularly food, he was forced to buy them, ; d) *subjects and acts against nature* (monsters and sodomites); e) *need for physical and social stability* (leading to the condemnation of beggars, wanderers, socially unstable and degraded persons); f) *work* (its

rehabilitation function caused idle people and able-bodied beggars to be condemned).

## 2.2. Unlawfulness

2.2.1. *Civil unlawfulness.* A criminal should be the clearest image of deviance: a community member breaking community norms. Hence the pedagogic value of public punishment, from the mildest ones (pillory, cage, flogging) to the extreme one (capital punishment) [Baronti, 2000]. Deviants were then segregated from the social body. In 1297 Florence, four separate jailhouses were financed, one for those who were condemned by law-courts, another for private debtors, another for women and finally one for young people, *male se gerentes*. Specific buildings were built in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, but the notion of jailhouse and criminal became more vague. In Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in that period, custody houses for sons rebelling to their parents were opened. The same was true for turbulent university students. Inside the Tower of London there was a special prison for *night walkers*, that is the people who were arrested for curfew violation, like whores, adulteresses, clerics and laymen charged with sexual crimes [Berengo, 1999, 626, 631]. Sometimes, deviants came from the upper levels of the social pyramid. Some social structures pushed certain people towards non-conformist behaviours. In the Mediterranean area, for example, brigandage was widespread and practised by many impoverished aristocrats who, were “forced” to plunder in order to preserve their honour. Their socialization pushed them to deviance [Burke, 1980:79-80].

2.2.2. *Religious unlawfulness* The 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries saw the birth of new heresies strongly appealing to common people (Patarines, Waldenses, Lyonese, Chatarists) whose influence lasted until the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Rhineland free spirit brotherhood, Bohemian Hussites). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the “Inquisition” Court started its work which sentenced to death (by stake) heretics to bring them back to the real faith. Protestant reform was a form of heresy, which, after becoming a Church, started to persecute its own heretics (Michele Serveto’s stake condemnation by Calvin). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the heresy age declined and the phenomenon of sects took its place (Quakers, Mormons, marginals who followed religious life ideals in a secularizing world). Witch-hunting was particularly intense around the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, being the symptom of a divorce between urban and peasant culture. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century social alarm shifted from witchcraft practices to satanic possession [Schmitt, 1979:271-272, 275].

2.2.3. *Social highwaymen.* The social highwayman phenomenon is a form of pre-political rebellion characterizing the struggle between the rural feudal order and capitalism, with the creation of “village heroes” which employers’ power organizations strived to regain to their cause (see i.e. the myth of Robin Hood, but also contemporary industrial society phenomena such as Sicilian highwayman Giuliano) [Schmitt, 1979:281].

2.2.4. *Revolutionaries and rebels.* As far as the pre-industrial era is concerned it is doubtful whether deviancy, marginality and exclusion had strength

enough to challenge the dominant social order. This seems to have been very unlikely in the case of heretics and sects which, although radically critical, didn't succeed in prefiguring an alternative social order. Their criticism inherited a pulsion towards transgression, "life gone wild" and naturalism, which pervaded western world history. Being a rebel, for the morality of the time, meant being a criminal, but marginals weren't leaders of the rebellion, at the most they could be participants. Ciompi and Sansculottes weren't marginals, they belonged to the official society [Schmitt, 1979:280-281].

2.3. *Marginality*. Did a "positive" marginality exist? Generally speaking, marginality (with some exceptions, like beggars, university students, gypsies) was within the urban community and helped by the community itself. The new social history focuses upon many marginal categories.

2.3.1. *Lepers*. The leper was "Christ's poor", on whom both mercy and repulsion were bestowed. Sometimes leprosy was regarded as a crime and the leper was persecuted, for instance with the seizure of his goods, and civil interdiction. Leprosy declined in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and in particular after the 1348 plague, and between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries it disappeared progressively from Europe [Berengo, 1999, 621; Schmitt, 1979:271]

2.3.2. *Lunatics*. Middle-Age lunatics, if not frantic, were better integrated in society, though maintaining a recognizable identity. As for the poor, towards this kind of marginality a radical value inversion took place: in 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries madness was a kind of positive condition, associated with "Christ's madness" or with the "holy minstrels of God". In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the opposite attitude prevailed and madmen were segregated (*renferment*). The 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century psychiatric hospital was bound to receive the old *Hôpital Général* heritage [Schmitt, 1979:227].

2.3.3. *Poor and beggars*. "Voluntary poverty" permeated the early-medieval Christian practice well before the mendicant orders' appearance in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Governments had to face poverty as a social condition, posing administrative problems (tax exemption) and requesting care (assistance). It was therefore necessary for them to distinguish between structural poverty (as for Spain, "of solemnity") and conjunctural poverty, caused by wars, famines, epidemics. Poverty particularly affected lonely women – usually widows. Conjunctural poverty generated the so-called "shameful poor" ("*povero vergognoso*"), an impoverished nobleman or a night-begging person who didn't want to be recognized and had to be assisted in a discrete way concealing the mite destination. From the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the assistance fell on some kind of rescue charitable institutions [Berengo, 1999:588-594]. The negative economic conjuncture of the late Middle Ages (14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries) increased social and economic polarization. The poor grew in number, and at the same time municipal measures against begging intensified: flogging, in English towns; fire-branding in Augusta. Poor people's associations were rising, too. In Strasbourg and Cologne blinds and beggars groups joined, with solemn

promise for mutual assistance and solidarity and town partition into zones within which they begged. In the late 16<sup>th</sup> century Rome was divided among 19 beggars bands. City authorities themselves indicated begging zones: in front of some churches (Nuremberg), in a street reserved to beggars in Frankfurt [Ennen, 1975:219; Berengo, 1999:600-602]. Unlike “resident” poverty, accepted and protected, vagrancy-associated begging was firmly fought, as it was thought to be false poverty [Berengo, 1999:596]. Wandering and poverty lost the divine character, both functional and structural, they had had in the late Middle Ages, as happened with pilgrimages or the training of boys and *compagnons* participating in the *tour de France*. The spreading of pauperism and wandering phenomena in the late Middle Ages persuaded the ruling classes to make a distinction between “real poor” (sick, blind) and able-bodied beggars. After the 1348 plague, expulsion injunctions from towns for wanderers and able-bodied beggars increased (1351 edict, by John the Good, France; *Statute of Laborers*, England), but it was evident that the urban dimension of those measures was an economically incongruous strategy at the state level. More and more did the poor come to be regarded as potential thieves. For the 16th century ruling classes, “barbarians are inside the walls” but outside too, with gangs of beggars plundering travellers [Schmitt, 1979:273-274]. In many European cities, the identification scheme for the poor was simple: children, old people and invalids were given a badge and were authorized to beg; all the others (healthy men, always, and often women) had to work [Berengo, 1999:588-594; 596-598].

- 2.3.4. *Wanderers*. They provoked economic externalities, thus opposing themselves to resident and native marginals always recognized by local communities as their own and therefore protected. Wanderers were disliked by the local population, although they tried to disguise themselves as pilgrims. However, the definition of this category was always difficult, as they meddled with poor and beggars and were fined, imprisoned and expelled. Juridical debates arose about the opportunity that the wanderer should be qualified on the basis of the place of birth or the place of residence. In German 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century towns, foreign wanderers could only stay for three days. Alongside with flogging (England) expulsion was a frequent practice at the city level, though not very effective. At the State level, as happened in 13<sup>th</sup> century Spain, it didn’t make sense and was replaced with the refusal of assistance to able-bodied beggars. Between 1560 and 1624, in London, the number of expulsions increased, partially resolving the overcrowding of the city though not the problem of wandering on a national scale. In 1667, only one out of ten poor people assisted in Naples originated from the city, and the provinces were asked for a financial contribution. In 16<sup>th</sup> century England the wanderer aroused a strong social alarm and was often associated with epidemics or seen as a spy and a “papist”. He was therefore granted a “begging license” and obliged to become stable [Berengo, 1999:596-602].

- 2.3.5. *Shameful jobs (mercimonia inhonesta)*. Starting from the 11th century, some humble though useful jobs, gave rise to categories of marginal workers. They were connected with three medieval taboos : a) *blood* (butchers, quarterers, executioners, but also soldiers ); b) *money* (merchants, money lenders, all accused of usury); c) *dirt*, as the exterior manifestation of inner impurity (cooks, dyers, lavatory-drainers, fullers, cloth whiteners). In addition, textile workers were in the odor of heresy. Disapproval and mistrust – associated with the money taboo (“devil’s dung”) – were directed to those who sold personal attributes on the market. The whore, in conflict with the sexuophobic Christian morality, sold her body, but the same did professionals and intellectuals, selling their intelligence and culture as services. As the social utility principle prevailed over moral prejudices, many of these *status* gained social credit. [Schmitt, 1979:266-267].
- 2.3.6. *University students*. In the medieval and modern university city, students were a particular group not entitled to citizenship. German students were present especially in Bologna, Padoa, Perugia, Paris and Orleans [Ennen, 1975: 227]. Young students were considered “temporary marginals” who resided in the university city for 5-8 years; they had an undefined status being laymen reclaiming clerical guarantees. They were subdivided on the basis of their nationality and their particular, non- conformist lifestyle – turbulent and given to erotic and tavern pleasures – forced authorities to isolate them in specific “colleges” [Berengo, 1999:525, 631].
- 2.3.7. *Picaroons and soldiers*. They were considered unemployed, when not occupied at war, and lived on expedients and appropriations [Schmitt, 1979:274]. The military garrison of modern age European cities, after the municipal militia disappearance, was composed by foreigners and perceived by local populations like a foreign community [Berengo, 1979:274]
- 2.3.8. *Gypsies*. Gypsies, or “Egyptians”, actually came from the Peloponnese or “Little Egypt” and from Rhineland. They arrived in Western Europe in the 15th century, stirring up curiosity and interest in the exotic but they couldn’t enter cities, and civic authorities gave them some money to go away. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century they were equated to beggars and wanderers. A 1682 injunction commanded able-bodied men to be put in jail, women to be shaved and expelled, children to be closed in hospitals [Schmitt, 1979: 274-275].
- 2.3.9. *Beguines and Beghards*. They practiced, starting from 12<sup>th</sup> century, “contemplative asceticism” and lived a voluntary life of poverty. They can be seen as “intermediate” marginals, the expression of an uncertain border between laymen and clerics, half-placed between official society and marginality [Pirenne, 1971:155; Schmitt, 1979:274]. They were religious men who lived as laymen and were not subject to a rule. They didn’t take religious vows, neither did they join a rule officially approved by the Church, although they began to appear on the wave of mendicant orders. They were rooted in the 13<sup>th</sup> century female religious movement; in the previous century there had been a number of women who wanted to enter

convent without finding a place. First considered heretics, they later expanded their presence at the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century [Ennen, 1975:224] Suspected again of heresy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries; beguines and beghards were considered idle “not useful to God neither to the world”. In the first decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century this phenomenon declined and in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century virtually disappeared. [Schmitt, 1979:274].

## 2.4. Excluded people and minorities

2.4.1. *Islam and Christianity.* Policy towards modern European cities minorities experienced two opposite exceptions with regard to the norm. The first was the Spanish policy towards the Islamic minority slowly expelled by the *Reconquista* and replaced by a Christian resettlement. Temporary *mudejares* (Arabs remaining in Castilla and Aragona kingdoms) were marginalized within cities suburbia. In Murcia and Lorca they carried out lower activities, refused by Christian immigrants. Then they were expelled from Spain as *moriscos* (1492). Quite different was the transition of one large European city, Constantinople, from Christianity to Islamic capital city, Istanbul. Here the social structure was remodelled in the respect of diversity and tolerance, not of assimilation and religious conversion. [Berengo, 1999:522, 527-528].

### 2.4.2. *Jews.*

Jews were the minority by excellence in medieval and modern European cities, differently and variably treated by central and urban governments and characterized by high geographical mobility, both spontaneous and forced [Berengo, 1999:524]. Until the 1096-1270 Crusades, the social position of Jews in European cities was substantially good. In German cities their communities enjoyed freedom of movement, settled on royal revenues lands, and the authorities protected them and granted them customs facilitations and free-tax trade opportunities. This shows that the central authorities were interested in using this economically active minority as a lever for the market, trade, monetary and credit economy development. Jews were not allowed to buy Christian slaves, but it was not necessary for them to buy baptized slaves. They could buy urban and country lands and have them tilled by Christian waged labourers. They paid a “Jew-tax”, a sort of “gratuity” which became a remarkable source of income for local and central public revenues [Ennen, 1979:220-221]. Thus Jews were not persecuted until the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, although they were juridically excluded for they did not belong to the Christian community. They spoke everyone’s language, didn’t have to wear identification symbols and worked in many fields such as agriculture, handicraft, trade and medicine, sometimes holding public positions. It was the Crusades that transformed the Christian communities’ attitude towards the Jews into mistrust, social exclusion and, finally, persecutions and massacres. They were groundlessly charged with ritual murder, consecrated host profanation and, well before 1348, with poisoning, for they were notoriously expert in medicine [Schmitt, 1979:268-269; Berengo, 1999:544]. A progressive withdrawal of the Jewish presence following expulsions (England, 1290 – definitive; France, 1306 and – definitive – 1394; Castilla and Aragona,



1492; Portugal, 1496; Kingdom of Naples, 1510 and 1541) took place in the European cities. Christians and Jews lived together only in the Po area, in central Italy and in the Empire [Berengo, 1999:531]. The religious nature of the persecutions against the Jews is demonstrated by the fact that the 14<sup>th</sup> century economic crisis had a strong impact on the condition of the Jews who were excluded from the guilds and pushed towards financial activities (loans upon pledge) which caused them to be hated by the population. By the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century – after the 1348 plague – persecutions grew with expulsions from cities, and continued throughout the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries [Ennen, 1975:221-222]. In 14<sup>th</sup> century France, there was a continuous swinging between expulsions – when Jewish contributing capacity was lowest – and recalls, tolerance, persecutions and massacres [Schmitt, 1979:270]. In all German cities – with the exception of Frankfurt – the destruction of Jewish historical memory was completed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with the destruction of the Jewish graveyards and synagogues turned into churches. More open was the situation in Austria and Bohemia. A ruralization of Jewish communities took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Elban-sided Germany; the Jews returned to the cities of that area after the Thirty Years War and, with more intensity, during the 18<sup>th</sup> century [Berengo, 1999:532-533]. It was observed that “among all the minorities who lived between urban walls, this one was [...] the most discriminated; but, at the same time, the one that the Christian world tried hard to assimilate and absorb” [Berengo, 1999:550].

## 2.5. A "geography" of social diversity and marginality

- 2.5.1. *Continental marginality.* In relation to a civilizing centre, from time to time great diversities and marginalities are defined on a continental or intercontinental scale: barbarians (non-romanized), heathens (early-Middle Ages Scandinavians and Hungarians), schismatics (Byzantines), infidels (Muslims). Some deviants (missionaries), pushed by a civilizing and evangelizing impulse, moved towards this new world [Schmitt, 1979:264-265].
- 2.5.2. *Micro-marginality.* At a micro-territorial level, beyond the urbanized and colonized agrarian area, a wild world stretched (forest, men from the forest; desert), where the marginals of medieval Christianity lived: charcoal-burners; miners; anchores. Where the forest gave way to the moor, there were shepherds, isolated beast-companions, depositories of an arcane knowledge, pushed by loneliness towards abnormal behaviours, both of a religious (spreading of Catharist heresy) and sexual kind (Sardinian shepherds “bestial” loves) [Schmitt, 1979, 264-265].

## 2.6. Recognizing diversity

Social diversity – marginality chiefly – was often accompanied by visibility through exterior signs of a voluntary or imposed nature. Marginality might unconsciously appear from a physical alteration: the fullers and dyers’ “blue nails”, typical of vile professions; or from dressing-imposed exterior signs. In the medieval city, the belonging to a specific social order was marked by a specific dressing style, often

prescribed by municipal councils as sumptuary laws [Ennen, 1975:216]. When a rapidly changing fashion asserted itself, the recycling of out-of-fashion clothing, abandoned as garbage by the ruling class, made the lower social orders wear the old clothes of the upper orders [Sori, 1999:41]. In 17<sup>th</sup> century Great Britain, the dressing style in conformity with the belonging order fell legally into disuse, but people continued to give importance to it and resentment towards plebs wearing clothes reserved to upper social strata spread [Laslett, 1979:50]. Besides being a distinctive trait, clothing might be a symbol of common destinies. In 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries medieval cities, the early forms of “class” solidarity between discriminated boys were underlined also by several dressing elements [Ennen, 1975:217]. Members of the “Saccati” mendicant order were called in that manner because of their sackcloths [Le Goff, 1979:25].

However it was pre-industrial society which showed great imagination in elaborating exterior signs of discrimination and shame. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, obligation to be recognized appeared with respect to Jews. In 1215 the Lateran Council transformed the Muslim principle consisting of an obligation for non-muslim to wear an exterior distinctive sign (a girdle, or something else), into another kind of obligation, that of wearing a “rotula”, diverse in shape and colour according to a specific country [Berengo 1999:549]. In 1269 Saint Louis prescribed a red-fabric ring sewn on the sleeves, and Philippe le Beauu, in 1285, forced Jews to buy it, as a taxable matter. Some 14<sup>th</sup> French repentant heretics were forced to sew upon their clothes two yellow crosses – one on the chest and another on the back. Lepers might get out of their lepers colonies under the condition to be well recognizable, with white-fabric hood and collar, knapsack and harness-bells [Schmitt, 1979:269-270; Le Goff, 1979:25]. The medieval madman, moving round freely, was recognizable thanks to his shaved skull, the “labelled” poor had to wear a badge, while tramps and criminals were marked on their flesh with two letters, “V” and “GAL”, as a brand of infamy [Schmitt, 1979, 286]. Whores had to wear particular clothes when they went about in the streets and a distinctive sign and – sometimes they had to carry a little bell too [Berengo, 1999:643].

### 2.7. Trends

The response to the growth of pauperism, marginality and deviance in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was segregation, since expulsion, at its new decisional level – the national one related to the new modern and widely territorial-based State – did not make sense anymore. Already in the 16<sup>th</sup> century experiments were made to segregate the jobless in *public ateliers* and *bureaux des pauvres* but the real change occurred in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the internment of poor and madmen in France (*Hôpital Général*), Germany (*Zuchthäuser*) and England (*Workhouses*). The *Hôpital Général* was founded in Paris in 1656 and in a few weeks 5-6,000 persons were locked up in it. The *Hôpital* was a prison-hospital where tramps, beggars, crippled and madmen lived together without any form of assistance. This model was to be extended to some French provincial cities [Schmitt, 1979:276; Burke, 1980:79; Berengo, 1999:599].

### 3. URBAN MILIEU AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

#### 3.1. *Urbanization and social differentiation*

- 3.1.1. *The city of urban revolution as a marginal society.* The revolutionary nature of medieval urbanization and its role as an agent of social differentiation was underlined by M. Weber and H. Pirenne. According to Weber, the originality of the western European medieval city – compared to the city outside Europe (the Asian one) – rested on its functional base and on the social actors living in it. Economic extra-agricultural activity, merchants and craftsmen were its core, consequently developing rationality as a distinctive trait of modern man and individualism. This could happen thanks to growing freedom from primary (family, cliques) and secondary (religious associations, orders, etc.) social institutions. In determining social status, individual relations of a contractual nature tended to prevail over the hereditary (genetic and patrimonial) principle; and so did the private interest over ethical and religious traditional norms. Pirenne focused on the so called *footloose adventurers*, persons not completely included in the feudal society who founded their economic role upon long-distance trade deciding to take their abode in a place near the feudal settlement (episcopal city, the earl's castle) [Herlihy, 1976:174-175; Tabacco, 1987:327-345]. The city, in conclusion, can be seen as a society marginal to the feud, in which marginal subjects (footloose adventurers, servants, foreigners and fugitives) became the protagonists of its birth and affirmation between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries [Schmitt, 1979:266].
- 3.1.2. *The urbanization of feudal élites.* In contrast with Pirenne's generalizations, successive historiography pointed out both exaggerations about an alleged economic passivity of the *civitates* and pre-urban centres and a geographical articulation – inside Europe – of social differentiation and urbanization processes. Merchants, in Italy, were not all footloose adventurers or outsiders, but they often came from within the feudal society, such as rural land owners, lords of a castle or sometimes also knights and feudal noblemen. Rhineland, Flanders or England were different models, for the local élites didn't become urbanized and cities arose under imperial and royal patronage. The political and social Italian urbanization model was reflected in the features of the medieval city and its evolution (see beyond). As for Pirenne's and Weber's assumptions, the separation between the city and the countryside seems to be definitely exaggerated. [Herlihy, 1976:177; Fasoli, 1973:62].
- 3.1.3. *The social structure and institutions of the medieval state-town and the modern age city.* In the urban revolution state-town, limitations to individual liberties were overcome by civic sense and cooperation and social interdependence: accepting offices to which one was appointed; doing military service; associational activity; work ethics. Rights and duties were proportionate to economic means, but the have-nots too felt part of the community, although they did not participate in political life. The following scheme shows the internal organization of the Italian state town as well as the relationship between its social and institutional structure:

- The municipality: it was the “horizontal” government system with a corporative representation;
- The quarter: it was an urbanistic division;
- The neighborhood; it was the smallest of the territorial districts into which the quarter was subdivided. It coincided with the parish. It had an assembly and elective chiefs, gave infantrymen and knights to the army and guards to the city. Chiefs controlled, among other things, sumptuary sums, expelled lepers and whores and denounced heretics, gamblers, irregulars, swearers and nocturnal thieves, playing an important role in the social control system.
- The guilds; they reproduced the communal structure with the members’ general assembly, the council, officials elected with a mixed system (by lot and by vote); all the members could aspire to hold an office. They issued work norms, organized religious practices and gave assistance to members.
- The armed associations; they were joined by those who didn’t belong to the guilds, of which they reproduced both the structure and the functions.
- The confraternities; for supplementary religious practices.
- The pleasure-loving brigades
- Foreigners’ associations, “nations” and “consulates” of merchants and students, or confraternities of far-coming immigrants.

Within this kind of urban society everything was choral manifestation, community sense elevation, enhanced by a thick calendar of civil and religious feasts ; everyone felt to be part of a collective body [Fasoli, 1973: 67-68]. In such a complex institutional context, legal citizenship was an essential socio- economic element . It was not accidentally that it was used as an incentive (to be granted in a short time and without formalities) or as a sanction (refusal with loss of relative rights, banishment or expulsion). Municipalities used citizenship as an incentive, along with other concessions, to induce craftsmen to move from far away and settle in a given town, improving its productive structure and competitiveness [Cipolla, 1997:93-94]. Also the territorial authorities of the west coast Adriatic cities made use of citizenship when, between the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, attracted Slavonians and Albanians from the east coast to repopulate the countryside and the towns depopulated by the plague. Citizenship, along with the framing of the immigrated “colonies” in particular ethnic-based confraternities, enabled these last to achieve a relatively rapid social integration and professional rise [Anselmi, 1988:11-25; 57:81].

The presence of foreign mercantile colonies, grouped as “nations”, was more institutionalised. These could obtain juridical warranties and privileges from territorial governments. The distinctive feature defining the fullness of a nation’s rights is the presence of a consulate, an elective legal body representing the associated merchants, both in the town of residence and in their country of origin. It was a special jurisdiction, sometimes reduced to arbitration appealing to ordinary justice. To be – fully or partially – a citizen meant the removal of many constraints and controls to

which a foreigner – merchants in particular – could be subjected, but at the same time it meant the possible loss of privileges enjoyed by a “nation”. By the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Antwerp and Venice – this last with Slavonians, Albanians, catholic and schismatic Greeks, Turks, Germans and so on – were cosmopolitan cities, thanks to their trade supremacy [Berengo, 1999:524-525; 557:567].

- 3.1.4. *Discriminating between and within urban guilds.* In the 14<sup>th</sup> century a strong dependence of artisan guilds on the mercantile ones developed. This situation recalls, on one side, Weberian assumptions about power and the market, on the other side, the relevance of the economic cycle – it was negative in 1300 – in determining power relationships between social groups [Ennen, 1975:213]. Nevertheless, in such a phase the entire “horizontal” solidaristic framework started to deteriorate. Central European guilds, becoming conservative and “corporative” (closed to new members) no longer guaranteed social and professional mobility to apprentices who strived to gather as a league and, in any case, increased their spatial mobility. Boys’ associations were strongly opposed by masters’ associations and cohabitation between them became rare. Agreements between craftsmen of different German towns were made so that a boy driven away by one craftsman might not be accepted by another craftsman of a different town. In addition, legal obstacles to boys’ marriage arose [Ennen, 1975:217].
- 3.1.5. *Colonization and ethnic aspects of rural-urban relation.* In the towns colonized by the Germans (*Drang nach Osten*) with a Slavonic-Baltic background, or in those of the eastern Adriatic coast, under Italian-Venetian hegemony and again a Slavonic background, the social differentiation process didn’t need juridical protection or conflicts to affirm and maintain itself. It existed and operated *de facto*, with the linguistic diversity and the ethnic variety of rural-urban relationship, which became a Slavic-German or an Italian-Slavic relationship. Those urban minorities were divided by census and ethnicity, but they were united by a common religious faith [Berengo, 1999:523].
- 3.1.6. *The city of the industrial revolution.* According to J. Foster, the urbanization which accompanied the industrial revolution and its developments had no uniform outcomes in terms of social differentiation and cultural forms of collective (class) identity and solidarity. The analysis of three middle-sized British towns in the 19<sup>th</sup> century shows that, although participating in the same capitalistic reality, they developed quite different social structures. One case shows strong class consciousness and homogeneity, another shows extreme social fragmentation. The last case shows an intermediate position between the first two. The differences are explained by the author with two main factors: on the one hand, the urban elitist structure was something very different from the industrial middle class. On the other, the labour market for an industrial “single crop” system (a big coal and steel plant, for instance) produces one compact working class subculture [Foster, 1974:178-196].

### 3.2. Urban social diversity and marginality.

#### 3.2.1. Medieval urbanization social ecology.

H. Pirenne was the first to speak of social ecology in relation to the urban structure and growth models observed during the urban revolution in medieval Europe. The new social and economic actors took up their abode, opened their shops and warehouses outside the early Middle Age pre-urban centre wall. This settlement gave rise, under various appellations, (*burgus, portus, suburbium, colonia, emporium*) to the typical urbanistic bipolarity between *civitas*/castle and *burgus*, united then by the first communal walled belt built by *burgenses* commune promoters. Therefore the *Burgus*, that is the commercial settlement, was the propelling centre of institutional, social and economic innovation. As for Italy (Tuscany, in particular) the original urbanization model produced three distinctive urbanistic and socio-political structures, perfectly coinciding with each other.

- The patrician city,( 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries), the towered city formed by an aggregate of fortified noble buildings, where large clans resided importing from the city some forms of rural society. They had exterior identification marks like flags and insignia.
- The plebeian city,(13<sup>th</sup> century and early 14<sup>th</sup> century), was the communal city in the fullness of its economic, social and political characteristics Perfectly correspondent to the new arrangement was the city-planning, with straight, wide and free arteries, wide squares for markets and preaching, large churches and huge public buildings and popular quarters
- The high class city,( late 14<sup>th</sup> century and 15<sup>th</sup> century), was the smaller city after the demographic crisis of the mid-13th century, where the growing concentration of wealth and the clear signs of the aristocratization of the great families had specific consequences upon the town planning (fewer buildings, large palaces, urban renewal and public areas arrangement) [Herlihy, 1976:176-185; Fasoli, 1973:65].

3.2.2. *Near and outside the city walls.* Topographic position within the urban tissue and the social position in the social pyramid were interdependent. The miller was in a sense a marginal. He lived in the mill, at the edge of the town, operating an impressive “machine” at the time , anomalous but necessary. Sometimes he aroused some heresy suspicions (Menocchio, in C. Ginzburg’s *Il formaggio e i vermi*), [Schmitt, 1979:265]. The executioner too was subject to some sort of marginalization – both social and spatial. The executioner’s function was often imposed upon social groups regarded as inferior. Byzantines imposed it upon Jews in Candia, Turks upon gypsies, the town of Recanati (Italy) upon Slavonians, and Ascoli Piceno (another Italian town) upon foreigners. The executioner couldn’t be buried in consecrated soil, nor could he receive the Holy Communion and when attending mass he had to stand at the end of the church. His job, discontinuous by nature, could be integrated with some other shameful jobs such as lavatory-drainer, stray dogs snatcher, wheat-market cleaner, whore controller, animals skinner, surgeon. His residence could be inside a brothel, in Munich, but more usually his home was outside the walled belt

[Berengo, 1999:635-638]. Monastic hospitals, pilgrim-houses and leper colonies were usually placed outside the walls and, in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was an increase in the number of lazarettos with confined lepers near cross-roads and at the edge of the city lands [Berengo, 1999:615; Schmitt, 1979:271]. As for brothels it was often proposed to locate it outside the city along with the whores (Saint Luis, 1254), but city authorities were more cautious and ordered them to be outside the walled belt or in the immediate environs. Between the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and 1325 in Florence, it was ordered that the brothel should be no less than 1,000 *braccios* (half a kilometer) from the walls. These were warnings of a bigger, more complex problem concerning the location of such “necessary” places to which the society of the time was applying the “not in my yard” principle [Berengo, 1999:638].

- 3.2.3. *Ghettos*. They were born in consequence of the concentration of the Jews, who were first grouped in the same quarter and later segregated. The ghetto was the juridical ratification of the spontaneous aggregation realized by ethnic and religious groups to satisfy their needs (communal services, relationship facilitations, identity preservation). Berengo notes that “Where a Jewish community was formed, a list of places, buildings and structures had to be available: a synagogue, first, and then a school; the ritual bath; a butchery; an oven and, far from the built-up area, a cemetery [...] For worshipping the ten adult males requested by the Mosaic law weren’t sufficient, in practice, several services were necessary which generated by necessity a separate and distinct entity within the urban context”. The same happened with Arab *mudejares* [Berengo, 1999:553]. The origins of the Jewish ghetto are remote. In 1084, some Jews from Mainz who emigrated to Spira were placed in a sort of ghetto, although they were granted some privileges [Ennen, 1975:220]. A *Call Judaico*, with a main door to be locked from the inside for the protection (and on the initiative) of the Jews themselves, was constituted in Gerona (Spain) in 1176. In the late 13<sup>th</sup> century until 1330 in Portugal a wide *judarias* network spread; between 1390 and 1391 with anti-Jew risings in both countries, John I ordered the Jews to re-enter their quarters and remain locked in after the Hail Mary, such a measure being almost necessary for their protection. Before the expulsion Palermo had the greatest concentration of Jews in Europe, with a ghetto extending for about 10 hectares. Between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, France preferred to indicate the streets in which Jews should live although without any obligation for them to reenter their quarter and lock main doors and gates. In Italy too the open *giudecche* were transformed into closed ghettos, and the same happened within the Papal State, between 1556 and 1634, with the forced concentration of all the Jews belonging to the state (with the exception of Ferrara, Pesaro, Urbino and Senigallia) in two ghettos, one in Rome and one in Ancona [Berengo, 1999:537-540].
- 3.2.4. “*Miracles courts*”. It’s a 17<sup>th</sup> century originating reality, by which is meant a whole of urban streets and courtyards in which social marginality (criminality, prostitution and beggary) concentrates permanently. It’s still

doubtful whether it was the bad environmental quality to attract marginals or whether it was the marginals to provoke environmental decay. The scattering area of this kind of marginality was greater than that of ghettos and *beguinages*. The attractive elements of this social underworld were taverns (often associated with a brothel) or prisons (the Paris *Châtelet*) considered as crime schools. In Paris, the *court des miracles* enjoyed in time unusual topographic stability between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries [Schmitt, 1979:278-279]. City authorities – pushed by the remonstrance of both lay and religious people – decided to confine “lovely women’s houses” or “young women’s courts” (euphemisms ruled in this field) to streets or groups of streets from which they couldn’t be shifted. It was not unusual that the marginalization of the whore was added to that of the foreigner’s status. At the beginning whores came from afar, from Germany, in particular, from the areas ravaged by the 100 Years War, and from Slavony; then the recruitment area became regional but – in German cities whores and procurers were forbidden to practice in their city of origin [Berengo, 1999:638-644]

- 3.2.5. *Beguinages* and *Fuggerei*. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century free beguinage tended to disappear, and in the 15<sup>th</sup> century only the conventual one resisted, linked to a traditional monastic order rule. Evidently the demand for the social control of this phenomenon increased as shown by the centralized structure physically separate from the city housing . Two models are traceable: the collective dwelling-place (West Germany, Northern France, Wallon) and the quarter made of little houses bordering on each other, grouped around a church and placed under the spiritual control of a priest (Low Countries, the south, in particular). In that period it was not unusual for productive work to come alongside devotions [Ennen, 1975:225]. In Strasbourg, in the late Middle Ages, beguines’ houses grouped around mendicant order convents [Schmitt, 1979:278].

### 3.3. *Urbanization, social integration, economic development in the contemporary age: two case-studies.*

- 3.3.1. *Urbanization and inventiveness*. A cross-section analysis of USA and Connecticut cities at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> centuries confirms the hypothesis of a close relationship between urbanization and inventiveness, quantitatively measured by the number of registered patents. If we accept an historical transposition of this relationship (cross section = time series), we have an explanation of United States economic growth as a self-sustained process before the institutionalization of R&D activities. In a phase of non-remarkable comparative advantages in international trade, and of sectorial productivity increase, economic growth gives way to urbanization, in turn explained by Engel’s law and by changes of relative profitability between agriculture and extra-agricultural activities. If urbanization encourages greater inventiveness, however, a positive feedback effect occurs on development, through faster technological progress. This happened within the technical conditions of that time, assigning to technology the primacy of inventiveness [Higgs, 1975:259].



3.3.2. *Urbanization and slavery.* U.S. historians debated about counterfactual hypothesis that, once the South became urbanized, slavery would disappear because slavery and urbanization were incompatible. The empirical analysis shows that, at least for the 1820-1860 period, urban slavery was a solid institution flexible enough to be consistent with urban growth. The hypothesis that urban demand for slaves was decreasing around 1860 was proved to be wrong, for the 1850s fall was due to conjunctural economic factors like the slaves price growth and not to a decline of the slavery institution [Dale Goldin, 1975:246].

#### 4. HISTORIOGRAPHIC ASSUMPTIONS

For what concerns marginality, nowadays the idea prevails that “a society shows itself thoroughly through its behaviour towards its marginals”. Three were the policies toward diversity: integration (e.g. merchant), exclusion (e.g. madmen), swing from tolerance to exclusion (Jews). The urban revolution city integrated activities once marginalized by the feudal Middle Ages, through the ideology of labour and labour remuneration, giving an official and prominent position to intellectuals, merchants, craftsmen and whores too. These last were “stabilized” and recognized as a public service useful to fight sodomy, limit sexual crimes (most of all among young people), pay fees to municipality and secure public order. “Usurers” were more difficult to integrate: one had to make recourse to expedients to hide the lending activity at an interest (bill of exchange) or to the devolution to the Jews of the small loan activity for consumption [Schmitt, 1979:268,277; Berengo, 1999:641].

Long period trends between 11th and 18th century were:

- Integration (11<sup>th</sup>-13th) → Exclusion → Internment
- Proliferation and diversification of marginality forms.

The economic trend was a factor which greatly influenced the social integration capacity of the European pre-industrial town. Its 14<sup>th</sup> century reversal brought about strong measures by the municipalities against rural handicraft, and social tensions caused by the emergence of an urban proletariat consisting of disbanded handicraft-masters and workers with no more hopes to become autonomous, strong patrimonial polarization and economic policy sclerotomy. The negative end-of-Middle Age conjuncture brought about diversification between major cities, overcoming the crisis through specialisation in luxury handicraft products (Antwerp), and smaller cities, where the crisis increased and pauperism was nurtured by impoverished craftsmen and rural disqualified immigrants. The clergy too was subject to a social and economic diversification process. The number of secular clerics rose, not dedicated to souls (chaplains, officiants, lower clerics) often with very modest revenues. Not very edifying information regarding this social group is available, especially about poor clerics (wandering clerics) education and moral conduct [Ennen, 1975:213,219,223-224]. Generally speaking B. Geremek places the multiplication of marginal West European social groups at the end of the Middle Ages together with the feudalism crisis, hitting at the same time the rural economy, the urban labour market and the evangelical ideal of voluntary poverty. These were the early signals of an ordinary capital accumulation which needed, in a rarefied manpower period, the reduction of wages. [Schmitt, 1979:286; Geremek, 1992:3-18; Id., 1986:3-67; Id., 1988:VII-XXXIII].

Trends were governed by a social utilitarian principle, which defined the edge beyond which the safety of goods, people and social order was threatened. Utility favored the integration of markets and craftsmen, usurers and weavers, rejecting idle people beyond the edge. Knowledge was another remarkable boundary, beyond which individuals, like Gypsies, eluded any social taxonomy and lacked any status. These were nomads with dark-coloured skin who, to be accepted, defined themselves as pilgrims on the way to Rome, being nevertheless rejected by a deep-rooted sedentary conscience. The Edge moved along history. In the Middle Ages it crossed the centre of society, proceeding for example through social groups like beguines and beghards. The very edge between God and the devil was not clear. The wealth stored up by merchants, reprobable in itself, could be turned to a good purpose, if one died repenting and leaving all his richness to the church and charitable institutions. Lepers, though revolting, were living charity instruments. The Jews were Old Testament heirs, although they were Christ's murderers. The poor lived in conformity with the Gospel, but their very presence represented a permanent challenge for the official Church. During the Middle Ages the Christian ideology was open and, thorough a more general salvation project, strived to "redeem" the marginal ones. Only in the modern age was marginality really rejected to the periphery of the society, while the gray uncertain zones disappeared. Medieval society built up itself through successive integrations; the modern, royal state society defined itself by opposition [Schmitt, 1979:284-286; Mollat, 1987:V-XXXVIII; Gutton, 1977, 6-74].

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