

# Bourgeoisie in the Modern World: Social Polarization or Social Balance?

by

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## Abstract

Bourgeoisie is a rather disappeared concept, from the last decade of 20th century, and without real participation in the measurable social groups' distribution, in 21st century. What's going on? Is there something like that? Is there any capitalism without capitalists or stock holders? Nobody suggests such an idea, but we can watch an absolute silence for the bourgeoisie as a social class or stratum. Some recent theoretical approaches produce analyses either for a hybrid upper class either for new elites or for broaden unities which "prevail" in society. Nevertheless, all the clues show an interesting situation, with extremely few people been here as entrepreneurs, as employers with enough personnel for the accumulation of capital and probably as rich people. The polarization is obvious in the contemporary society, worldwide, according to the criteria of the classical theories. At the same period, the recent theories shift their focus on a new social class (with a known "old" nomination), namely the "middle class". This article is going, to examine the notions, the theoretical approaches and the measurable realities, with three targets: a) The definition of bourgeoisie, b) the evolution of bourgeoisie during 21st century, and c) the intensity of social polarization in modern society.

**Keywords:** *bourgeoisie, social classes or strata, social polarization*

## Introduction: The indices of a charming absence

It is relatively easy to identify capitalists, as liberal and radical theories tend to converge, on the qualitative terms of social positions, while differences of theory are, at worst case, the result of alternative terminology. It is more difficult to define the “bourgeois” (and the bourgeoisie) because the original concept, which still creates indirect discourse and obligate to basically ideological references, confuses their social situation with the “co-existence” of several social groups in cities, from the medieval era to the integrated capitalist phase (Weber, 2009: 315). The “bourgeoisie” is thus a difficult concept, while the capitalist class is a more self-evident social category. Even more, it is a part of the intense theoretical challenges (like an underground noise) the direct association of the “bourgeoisie” with the capitalist class.

Something strange happens, also, in the era of the creation of relatively wider managerial strata, in which certain categories enjoy prestige, high and some of them very high remuneration (in the form of a salary). These strata, according to some conceptions, could have been part of the bourgeoisie or the upper class (Burnham, 1941). After this estimation, a strange and seemingly incoherent theoretical rollercoaster began.

At first, the reality of some or few well-paid salaried people clouded the picture for wage labor as a whole. When a period of time passed and it became clear that the managers were relatively few (in relation to the groups of employees in general) and their proportions in employment were limited (Wright-Mills, 1969: 64), an even larger discussion began. The well-known theories of social mobility made and make a real struggle to show that capitalist society enables members of the lower classes and especially of the middle classes to redeem, in the fields of material interests and prestige, the positive expresses of relative or absolute professional success (Sorokin, 1959: 23-32, 99, 103-106), namely joining a position near to the bourgeoisie, without actually being capitalists, such as top managers or the broader middle management groups (supervisors, consultants, high salaried clerks, etc.). One had only to have the right qualifications, the appropriate effort for productivity, and the same person could rise up the social ladder (Davis & Moore, 1945), very close to a bourgeois or to something like the bourgeoisie and a member of the bourgeoisie.

The period in which the conditions of production have changed and the Fordism-Taylorism model was transformed, then the restructuring

of the sizes of the real managerial groups became clear and this fact was accompanied by the shrinking of their social power (Lytras, 2016: 69-74, 143-150). In the following phases, with the crystallization of the process, the “multidimensional character of capital” (Bourdieu, 1985) was invented and mostly adopted (with a hasty “reading” of an essentially neo-Weberian understanding of the types of power).

New and subjectively considered compositions (Savage et al., 2013), for the effects of the economic (meaning the income, the savings, and the valuation of the owned house), the “social” and the “cultural capital”, create new “elites” (in an arbitrary composition with the old ones), laterally reconstruct the upper classes, in societies in which the classes are illegible and almost “useless” “theoretical sets” (meaning by the last reference, that in theory, they are of very low utility or the classes are estimated to be outside reality). A series of scientific careers have been built, or are attempted to be built, essentially on the concealment and not on the emergence of the bourgeoisie and, within it, the purest concept, which regards the capitalists. Why is this happening?

A short answer (also serves us as a working hypothesis) is that capitalists today are extraordinarily powerful, but also, unrealistically, few in relation to the number of people inhabiting the planet (Lytras, 2020: 49-50). Their very minimal representation in population and employment (with the possibility that the “normal people” will never meet them) suggests that it is an intellectual difficulty to acknowledge their authentic existence (so much so, that many almost feel like there is an oblique acknowledgment of revival of nobility).

How did these few powerful people acquire their immeasurable wealth? A short answer is that “most” of these few obtained the basis of their wealth from inheritance and other economic results based on affinity. There is a fraction of this wealthy and small minority which has taken advantage of some combination of personal skills, luck, speculative investments by third parties in their own business ventures, and the process of business restructuring (i.e., mergers, strategic alliances, or internal restructurings with capital increase etc.).<sup>1</sup>

What are capitalists in terms of employment? The answer is easy and simple: This infinitesimal minority consists, in the vast majority of its members, of employers, in all sectors of production (Smith, 1887: 50-51). There

are clearly certain categories, even more limited, which earn money without being, immediately, members of the employers' groups. It is, however, a rather rare phenomenon.

A part of the capitalists comes from (or formally communicates with) the upper management echelons of large or very large enterprises. These groups gained an access to the capital or to the assets of the businesses (Dumenil & Levy, 2011). They connect with capitalists' properties because they base their income primarily on the returns of that capital rather than on their nominal status or the range of remuneration from the managerial work itself (namely, their salary).

In cases where the typically displayed managerial salaries appear speculative, two main alternative events occur: The first is the possibility that the owners of the property are presented as managers. The second possibility represents the fact that the huge salaries are concentrated combinations of real managerial wages and share payments of the returns (the yields or the direct profits) of capital (in some financial years), precisely because the top managers contributed to its extraordinary profitability. In both cases it is the possession or the relation with the performance of capital that determines their position, but is not the formal communication with their apparent dependent labor and wage.

How are capitalist profits created? The estimation is too easy and can, without much effort for the clear thinking, if we step on both the fundamental liberal economic thought and Marxism. Human labor creates the returns of capital, namely the profits of capitalists, of any special form and any sector of production (Smith, 1887: 48-49, 50-51). More precisely, wage laborers create all the capitalists' profits, completely, absolutely, and unequivocally. In the fundamental liberal thought, wage workers, with the result of their labor, replace and therefore return to the stock holders, the total value of the means of subsistence, of the means of production, of the raw materials and of every material or immaterial dimension of investment, while together they create the total profits. In Marxist perception (Marx, 1969: 20-21), one part of human labor is paid labor, while another part of human labor is unpaid labor, and from this unpaid labor comes the totality of the capitalists' profit (Marx). In Marxist analysis there is indeed a relative restraint on the appropriation of surplus value (the value of unpaid labor) by capitalists. They appropriate only the industrial or the commercial profit,

while interest and ground-rent (that is, the two other parts of the composition included in surplus value) are considered to be potentially paid to the banker (or “usurer”) and to the landlord.

In a “neutral” formulation of both the abovementioned approaches, all the wealth appropriated, used and owned by the few rich capitalists comes from the value of the labor of all people, who work as wage earners. It is interesting that, for the fundamental theoretical understandings (liberal and radical), all this wealth is acquired by exclusively legal means, and it is not, in any case, the result of illegal, delinquent or deviant actions. The latter does not declares that these actions do not exist. It declares, however, that the production, appropriation, and possession of great wealth (by the processes shortly described) by capitalists is, basically, carried out in a lawful manner and by legitimate means. The process thus expresses a perfectly legal mechanism, which simultaneously and relentlessly creates wealth for a minority and poverty for a vast majority of people. The poverty is the unavoidable result of industrious labor for a portion of population and is not the result of unemployment of the workers (or the result of the underemployment of human labor, generally).

Bourgeoisie: what does it mean in theory?

A. Smith for Bourgeoisie

Table 1. Bourgeoisie According to A. Smith’s Political Economy

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie	Criteria
A. Smith	Stock Holders [with Incomes from Profits]	Fundamental Incomes or a Synthesis of Incomes

According to A. Smith’s analysis (Smith, 1887: 50-51), we can distinguish two potential groups to be recognized as alternative categories of the upper class, namely the landlords with income derived from ground-rents and the capitalists with income derived from profits. The landlords are those groups of the very few who have rights over the land. Their rights derive from the period of the disintegration of feudalism (and the subsequent period of transformations) and their returns are increased, particularly, by the process of enclosures.<sup>2</sup>

The capitalists (the stock holders) are the second class, identified and highlighted by A. Smith. They are entrepreneurs, acting as employers. Their income comes from the profits of capital. They are, at the time of writing, the leading agents of capitalist production, and their action in the market economy portends the rapid and innovative expansion of personal and social wealth.

They play also the role of traders, but their commercial status derives from their producer status. They do not follow the older model of the middleman (whether he gave orders or he was a customer or generally a trader) between the producer and the consumer. They are traders because they are producers and, because of this communication (they independently trade their products of their production) with transactions, they contribute to the systematic feedback of the markets with new commodities (for which they remobilize the production, hire workers and mobilize other agents of market), with more transactions and these entail the continuous increase of national wealth (Ibid: 438).

The profits are the incomes of capitalists, but they do not, exactly, create them. Capitalists are, firstly and foremost, owners of accumulated capital. Capital utilization requires the transformation of the capitalist into an employer. Capitalists hire “hardworking” workers as wage earners. Initially (in advance), they pay workers their wages, for the period of their commitment. Together they pre-pay the cost of the means of production (tools and later more systematically machines), the cost of raw materials and other necessary things for production (land, buildings, patents, etc.). They expect that the value of the products, which they will sell in the market, will be greater than the total advance of their expenses (for wages, tools, raw materials, investments in land and or buildings, etc.). The positive difference, between expenses and income of the employer action of the capitalists, creates their profits (Ibid: 48-49).<sup>3</sup>

Capitalists are, for A. Smith, the businessmen-employers, who operate as producers-traders of material and immaterial goods, and draw their profits, exclusively, from the value created by wage-workers (over their wages and other prepaid production costs). They are the ones who have the initiative in the production of wealth because, without this initiative and the necessary human labor, they could not utilize their capital and achieve its profitable increase. A. Smith recognizes the great economic and social inequalities,

under the described circumstances. He writes: “Wherever there is great property, there is great inequality. For one very rich man, there must be at least five hundred poor, and the affluence of the few supposes the indigence of the many” (Smith, 1922: 203).<sup>4</sup>

### *Bourgeoisie according classical Marxism*

**Table 2.** *Bourgeoisie According to Classical Marxism*

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie	Criteria
Classical Marxism	Capitalists Owners of the means of profits [with Incomes from Surplus-Value (Profits)] Ruling Class	Exploitation [Collective Production of Surplus-Value (from wage-earners) and Individual Appropriation (from the Capitalists)]

In the phase of integrated capitalism (namely at the last period of the industrial revolution), for classical Marxism, entrepreneurs are mainly the capitalists (owners of the means of production) who hold large capitals, use and exploit large masses of wage-laborers as a collective force under a continuously broadening division of labor and the larger mechanization of production (Marx, 2000). This is the core of the corpus of entrepreneurship, with the complimentary categories of bankers, brokers and merchants, who have tight relations with the industrial capital.

The incomes of capitalists come straightly from profits, which are been produced as the surplus-labor of wage earners. This approach comes from a critical revision of the A. Smith’s initial analysis. On this issue, K. Marx focuses on the opposite class interests, within the capitalist system.

K. Marx emphasizes on the creation of surplus-labor by wage-workers, so of the unpaid work, which is reflected in a new mental construction, namely to the surplus-value. He notes that “the *value or price of the labouring power* takes the semblance of the *price or value of labour itself*, although, strictly speaking, value and price of labour are senseless terms” and “although one part only of the workman’s daily labour is *paid*, while the other part is *unpaid*, and while that unpaid or surplus labour constitutes exactly the fund out of which *surplus value* or *profit* is formed, it seems as if the aggregate labour was paid labour” (Marx, 1969: 20-21). The surplus-value is the direct indication of exploitation.

So, the surplus-value is an integral part of the value and, therefore, the exchange price of commodities, from which the capitalist profit is becoming visible. Nevertheless, he suggests that the capitalists do not appropriate the entire surplus-value, but only a part of it. Surplus-value represents the sum of the ground-rent, the interest and the industrial or commercial profit. The industrial profit is determined, when the sum of the ground rent and the interest is removed from surplus-value (ibid: 21-22). Without any doubt in Marxism, the (collective) production and the (individual) appropriation of surplus value declares firmly the inverse relationship between profit and wage (Marx, 2000: 286).

The capitalists are the members of the upper and dominant class of the capitalist system (Marx & Engels, 2000: 246-247, 250). As a dominant class they govern the capitalist state, which looks like a dictatorship of a minority. Classical Marxism supposes that the state functions somehow as the political party of the capitalist class, as a whole (ibid: 247). The capitalists are therefore owners of capital (or stock holders), owners of the means (on a large scale) of production, entrepreneurs-employers, exploiters (Marx, 2000: 293-294), and members of a dominant class.

### *Bourgeoisie according M. Weber and W. Sombart*

**Table 3.** *Bourgeoisie for M. Weber and W. Sombart*

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie	Criteria
M. Weber	<i>Entrepreneurs</i> <i>[Owners of</i> <i>Enterprises for-Profit</i> (industrialists, merchants, landowners-businessmen, ship-owners bankers, brokers, professionals with high qualifications and rank]) or <i>Top Managers</i>	Positive or Negative Privilege of doing business
W. Sombart	<i>New Type of Bourgeois -</i> <i>Entrepreneurs</i> <i>[Owners - Employers</i> <i>of Large Enterprises]</i>	Agents of Capitalist Spirit



M. Weber declares that with the notion of bourgeoisie “finally, in the class term, we understand those strata, which are drawn together in contrast with the bureaucracy or the proletariat and any other outside their circle as ‘persons of property and education’, entrepreneurs, recipients of funded incomes, and in general all the persons of academic culture, a certain class standard of living, and a certain social prestige” (Weber, 2009: 315).<sup>5</sup> Then in *Economy and Society* M. Weber makes a notable description which is referred to the structure of classes. This description meets either the positive or the negative exercise of the privilege of doing business. In the upper class and privileged groups are the industrialists, the merchants, the landowners-businessmen, the ship-owners, the bankers, the brokers, the professionals with high qualifications arising from education and the employees based on monopoly of a particular skill. The lower and underprivileged class includes skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. The interim class of this classification is sorted to farmers, artisans, some independent professionals and some employees (Weber, 1978, Vol. I: 303-305).

The entrepreneurs of M. Weber are the owners of every large profitable enterprise. His emphasis on securities’ market gives to the observers the real sense of the concrete status. The large enterprise as an impersonal institution flourishes in the environment of free labor market, in which the workers are pushed by the whip of hunger and are competed to each other, to be hired for a wage. Therefore the entrepreneurs are mainly the individuals or the groups of owners of such a kind of enterprise, who are employers of a large mass of workers (Weber, 2009: 275-278). There are of course the merchants, the brokers, the landowners, as groups of the rest upper class. The high qualified wage workers are rather the representatives of top management in large enterprises. The farmers, the artisans, and the independent professionals are the representatives of small employers or own-account workers are present in his analysis.

W. Sombart suggests that capitalism is the economy of the acquisition and profitability (Sombart, 1998: 20). The organization of capitalism is considered that has been constructed as a product of a random evolutionary procedure during the pre-capitalist period of societies (ibid: 19). W. Sombart attaches great importance to the subjective and particular the spiritual factors for the formation of capitalist system. The entrepreneur and the capitalist spirit gave birth to capitalism (ibid: 348-350). The author, of course,

accepts that the progress of capitalism shapes the capitalist spirit itself, too (ibid: 350). W. Sombart surely creates an analysis which has analogies with approaches of M. Weber's. There are definitely two critical differences. W. Sombart estimates for the issue of the formation of capitalist spirit and thinks that the general spirit of religiosity had grown by Catholicism and recognizes the very positive contribution of Jews to the capitalist reality (Sombart, 2001). In contrary, M. Weber (Weber, 2009: 360) suggests that Jews haven't had any real involvement in the formation of rational capitalism.

The new type of bourgeois (Sombart, 1998: 167-172) is the modern economic human and represents characteristics of the modulated capitalism. The capitalist is speedy and resourceful, therefore a entrepreneur, who seeks with passion to increase his wealth. He admires quantitative assessment through measurable methods. The major goals of the bourgeois are to care much for his inventions, originality, smaller innovations and the changes in fashion. The motivation to put obstacles to his competitors is linked to the logic of personal hegemony and the faith that technological innovation could subjugate the natural forces (ibid: 180-183). There is a passionate desire for the expansion of sales, the access to new markets and to the new masses of consumers. He likes much and promotes the pretentious marketing techniques such as advertising. The new type of bourgeois builds up, continuously new tactics of exclusion and destruction of its competitors. The ruthless speculation prevails absolutely in economic life (ibid: 186-189). The main bourgeois' qualities of industrious energy, as the trend to saving, the honesty and solvency differ from the previous and obvious virtues and they become integral parts of the functioning of business and finance, especially for large enterprises. The attitude of entrepreneurs, except for the small and medium, is rather dissociated, in daily life, from the standards and the liabilities of the business organization (ibid, 190-193).

According to W. Sombart' approach the entrepreneurs of his time are the owners of large enterprises, which are very well organized with the instrument of a strong and relatively autonomous bureaucracy (ibid: 363-364). Nevertheless, there are the small or medium entrepreneurs as residues of stronger past figures, but not as representatives of the dominant figure within the modern "bourgeoisie".

*Bourgeoisie and elite according Th. Veblen and V. Pareto*

**Table 4.** *Bourgeoisie and elite according Th. Veblen and V. Pareto*

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie/elite	Criteria
Th. Veblen	<i>Leisure Class-Dominant Class</i> During Capitalism: <i>Industrialist-Capitalist</i>	Private Property and Exemption from Productive Em- ployment
V. Pareto	[Political Power] <i>Elites</i> 1) "Foxes" (democrats)  2) "Lions" (conservatives-autocrats)  -----  <i>Economic Elites</i> 1) Speculators-Entrepreneurs  2) "Rentiers"-Possessors of Property	Residues  1) (Residue of the) Instinct of Com- binations 2) (Residue of the) Persistence of Aggregation  -----  1) (Residue of the) Instinct of Com- binations 2) (Residue of the) Persistence of Aggregation

The leisure class, according Th. Veblen (1982) is the dominant class of every society. The main characteristic is its exemption from productive employment, and this exemption is the certification and economic expression of their higher rank (Veblen, 1982: 27). This exemption does not mean the absolute laziness, but is accompanied by activities, which do not have a direct productive content. Analogous activities are governance, war, participating in religious rites, and sports (ibid: 28), with conspicuous consumption, conservatism (as it protects its social interests), propensity for gambling (with all possible games), and the devout observances (ibid: 197-205, 281-288). Property in its turn creates the framework for the development of competition, for the acquisition of greater wealth, which concerns the possession and use of goods. The struggle and competition for property is attributed to the envious discrimination that accompanies the acquisition of wealth, but not from the requirement to meet needs. Property is like a trophy. Trophy holders stand out from the rest of the community regardless of the actual value of the trophy. The consolidation of individual property contributes to a qualitative change and the accumulation of wealth or property becomes an indicator of power and success. The possession of wealth turns into a praiseworthy event and brings honor and recognition to its possessor. Success is

assured by the conspicuous consumption and the envious comparison with others. Attestation is evidenced by the demonstration of wealth (ibid: 50-56).

According Th. Veblen, the industrialist-capitalist fully reproduces the characteristics of the leisure class of the societies of the past. The reproduction of the archetype of barbarism and predatoriness can also be seen in this type of ruling class. A very similar characteristic to the old leisure class, for the new type's culture is the reproduction of competition, which is only intended to emphasize special abilities and social differences, with those who do not show corresponding achievements. The industrialist-capitalist, recognized by Th. Veblen, as a crafty (than a clever) man and the basis of his power is more money power and less the occupation in the industry itself. He adds for the (contemporary in the age of writing) industrialist-capitalist, that the professions of the leisure class in modern industry keep alive some of the predatory inclinations (ibid: 214, 222-224).

The renewal of the industrial-capitalist version of the leisure classes is ensured by people who have similar predispositions and are driven to similar manifestations of social behavior. The leisure class fills its ranks (at the end of the 19th century) with those who have succeeded financially and are distinguished by certain abilities to express the predatory characteristics. The process of joining the leisure class takes place as long as newcomers succeed in monetary pursuits. Money pursuits, roughly, function as fields of predatory testing in order to join the upper class the most suitable people, for its works and characteristics (ibid: 225).

The upper class according to V. Pareto includes two groups, the governmental elite and the non-governmental elite. The elite, a minority of society, is destined to exercise power, exclusively. The rotation of elites in governance, namely their circulation, is characteristic of power systems (Pareto, 2003: 1445-1447). The alternation is essentially determined by the characteristics of the two elites. The two elites are identified by V. Pareto, based on residual analysis. The first elite (it corresponds to the foxes of N. Machiavelli) is characterized by the residue of the instinct of combinations. They are flexible, nimble (and rather cunning), and they create new opportunities to the people. They push for the economic expansion and progress, but often their actions tend towards deception. The negative aspects of their action include corruption and for this reason ultimately explain their inability to govern, which leads to the loss of power. The second elite (it

corresponds to N. Machiavelli's lions) is the group, which is characterized by the residue of persistence of aggregates. It is defined by conservatism, the tendency to preserve tradition and customs, honesty, but also authoritarianism, with the using of violent means to enforce its choices. The absolute way of exercising power, the lack of flexibility and the use of violent means delegitimizes the rule of the second elite and brings the first elite back to power (ibid: 1449-1450, 1561-1567, 1602-1606, 1608-1611).

The two economic elites are the speculators or those who could be more broadly characterized as entrepreneurs and the "rentiers" who are possessors of property and income earners. Speculators-entrepreneurs are distinguished from the rest by the residues of combinations (they are somehow the foxes of the economic activities). "Rentiers" are the possessors of property (land, real estate, bank savings etc.) and income earners. They are those who aim to preserve what they have acquired and to make stable investments. They are characterized by the residue of the persistence of aggregates (they are therefore the lions of the economy). Both categories play a special role in the dynamics of economic equilibrium. Speculators are prone to risk, making innovations, using cunning and sometimes dishonest means, which, however, contribute to the expansion of wealth and to a certain distribution to people who take advantage of these opportunities. "Rentiers", relying on fixed investments in real estate, land or savings, have conservative and inflexible attitude in their economic action. However, their continued dominance in economic activity would lead to the unilateral concentration of wealth. The fact that the two categories dominate alternately provides the possibility for the balance between expansion and stability (ibid: 1588-1590).

The Pareto's approach probably determinate both the abovementioned categories as the synonymous to the economic upper class, as they are a transformed and contradictory set (or as a unity with contradictions) of the modern capitalist class and the "residues" (or the fossils) of the old aristocracy (if they are actually a distinguished group).

### *Bourgeoisie as elite, according C. Wright Mills*

The "power elite" (the term of the C. Wright Mills' title of the book), in my opinion, is a euphemistic designation, with mental loans from V. Pareto's approach on the upper class (Mills, 1956). It is a euphemistic designation, because it does not retain any of the components of that V. Pareto's elite. The

“power elite” does not have any biological, instinctual, non-logical, feudal or aristocratic origin. In the power elite of C. Wright Mills, “the circulation” of the elites (governmental and non-governmental) of V. Pareto’s analysis is not observed. There is an evolution and individual reconstitution of the groups that make up the power elite. The intelligent description, despite the filtered discourse detours and intellectual complications, leaves no doubt that the three main actors of the power elite are not equally powerful.

**Table 5 .The power elite**

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie as an elite	Criteria
C. Wright Mills	<p><i>Power Elite</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The very Rich Entrepreneurs, together with the Managers of large enterprises</li> <li>2) The Politicians</li> <li>3) The Higher Military Officers</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-They are a social unity</li> <li>-They take and impose on society the crucial centralized decisions (the major economic decisions, the decisions on national and international issues and the decisions on war or peace)</li> <li>-They have a common social background and common interests</li> </ul>

The actors are the very rich, together with the managers of large enterprises, the politicians and their staffs and finally the top US military officials (Mills, 1956: 7). If we give the proper importance to what is specifically said by C. Wright Mills, the managers do not have, in essence, different interests from the owners and they basically have the same social origin from the business groups and the very rich (ibid: 120-129). The same is the case with US political staff (until 1956), who very widely originate from or communicate, immediately, with the very rich and their businesses (ibid: 231-235). It is not believable, after the above observations, that the military personnel (ibid: 198-224) and their highly necessary participation in crucial decisions could make them autonomous from the agents of economic power (who aim at state contracts and financial benefits from international involvements) and political power (while it is clearly indicated that they are not alone, but, relatively, autonomous).

In C. Wright Mills’ opinion, elite dominates in the contemporary American society. The groups of power elite have the means of power. They take and impose on society the crucial centralized decisions, on all major issues (the major economic decisions, the decisions on national and inter-

national issues and the decisions on war or peace). For C. Wright Mills the three categories are really and all together a single unity. That means the persons are conscious members of the power elite. They possess a similar psychology, which, at the same time, expresses a sense of superiority and a detachment from the masses. They know and recognize each other, as they follow similar (not necessarily identical) courses of personal development and advancement in professional, economic and political life (interconnection of families, participation in the church, inclusion in schools and universities, etc.). They follow a similar or even common way of social life (formation of social networks, associations and events of a similar nature). They communicate and consciously co-decide, whenever necessary. They have a full sense of the need for cooperation, coordination and mutual support. Otherwise, they cannot realize either their individual interests or their common goals (ibid: 269-297).

The participants in the power elite have the ability to manage the mass media, which in the American case are private, and to impose, at their will or according to their choices, their views to the masses, namely to the middle class, and to the lower classes. The latter, as they are unable to assess the validity and the essence of the messages, basically, consume information uncritically and passively accept the choices of the power elite (ibid: 71-93, 298-324). They reproduce and consume mass culture, but also preserve the conservatism. Conservatism is supposed to preserve social values, as well as a sense of community unity (ibid: 325-342). At the same time, the hypocritical conservatism coexists with inherent corruption in the organization of the social system (ibid: 343-361), which is unavoidable (with intertwining interests, opaque lobbying, bribery of public officials and “white collar” crimes).

### *Bourgeoisie as a class amalgamation, according Dumenil and Levy*

G. Dumenil and D. Levy (2011) write and publish their book, after the crisis of 2007-2008. They record the events, during the intervening thirty years or so, in world capitalism. They look in particular at developments in large and very large firms and try to systematize shifts in their returns. In this way they realize, that a greater part, compared to the past, of the financial returns and profits come from the transactions on the international stock markets. In similar actions, the new type of top executives of companies, who in particular have skills in managing financial transactions, are activat-

ed. On this basis, the authors consider, a significant change is taking place in the correlations of social forces and therefore in the class structure, the correlations of classes and the character of class divisions.

**Table 6.** *Bourgeoisie as a Hybrid Class*

Theory or Analyst	Bourgeoisie	Criteria
G. Dumenil and D. Levy	Hybrid Class -Amalgamation of Capitalists and Top Managers	-Amalgamation of Ownership and Managerial Control of Capital  -Synthesis of Profits, Salaries, and Securities' Yields

Their analysis finds a critical variation in the composition and functioning of management teams. Middle management teams are downgraded, in terms of their role and financially. Top managers are empowered as they manage the corporate assets, especially those in the form of securities (Dumenil and Levy, 2011: 84-85). Top managers are paid very high sums, which are combinations of high salaries and returns on shares from the funds under management of large or very large for-profit companies. The financial situation of the capitalist class and top managers is improving (ibid: 46-52), until the recent financial crisis (2007-2008).

G. Dumenil and D. Levy foresee the amalgamation of top managers and the capitalist class, in a new hybrid class. Salaried managers earn their income from both wages and capital gains, which have been distributed (to these managers) and are now partly owned by them. The members of the capitalist families, in addition to and apart from their wide returns, which includes the exploitation of their substantial portfolio yields, also take incomes from their participation in the highest (typically, salaried) managerial hierarchies (ibid: 85-87).

According to the assessment of the present analysis, the new hybrid upper class signifies the incorporation of top managerial positions into the capitalist class. This finding could mean both the acquisition of significant capital by the top managers and therefore their upward social mobility in the capitalist class or the (re)activation of members of the capitalist class in a day-to-day business operation, beyond the ongoing participation (from



the past) in the ownership and the general strategic planning. An analogous interpretation rationalizes both the renewal of the capitalist class and the return of the already established capitalist groups, to the very practical management of business function. Even if in the past they appeared, symbolically, as a “leisure class”, today they are an integral part of the day-to-day leadership of very large enterprises.

*The disappearing of bourgeoisie, according Savage et al.*

**Table 7.** *The absence of Bourgeoisie*

Theory or Analyst	An “Elite” without Bourgeoisie	Criteria
Savage et al.	An “Elite” as an Upper Class without a Class of Capitalists (But with overrepresentation of the chief executive officers, IT and telecommunications directors, functional managers and directors, barristers and judges, financial managers, dental practitioners, and advertising and public relations directors)	-Official definition of occupations (ONS, NS-SEC) - P. Bourdieu’s approach for economic, “cultural”, and “social” capital -G. Standing’s analysis for “precarariat”

The M. Savage’s (together with his research team), research (of 2011) has published in 2013. Underlying this empirical research, conducted online by questionnaire, is a synthesis of previous analyzes and intellectual constructs (Goldthorpe, 1982; Erikson and Goldthorpe, 2010; Bourdieu, 1986; Standing, 2011). The research team recognizes seven classes (Savage et al., 2013: 230): 1) The elite, 2) the established middle class, 3) the technical middle class, 4) the new affluent workers, 5) the traditional working class, 6) the emergent service workers, 7) the precariat (according G. Standing). There is, in shadow, an eighth class, namely the synthesis of unemployed people and the people never worked (this research doesn’t focus on the certain group).

The model of occupational (NS-SEC) categories of the Office for National Statistics of the UK (ONS) gives the basic idea, to the research group, for the classification and the number of social groups, in the aforementioned effort. It’s just that M. Savage (and his research team) has renamed the categories in what I think is a completely untested and theoretically floating manner. Especially the “elite” includes the (code of ONS: L1) Employers in large enterprises (code of ONS: L1),<sup>6</sup> the Higher managerial and administrative

occupations (code: L2), and the Higher professional occupations (code: L3). This inclusion is rather deceptive, because the relative article (the publication of the research) delivers to us the information that part of the so called “elite” includes (as overrepresented categories) the chief executive officers, IT and telecommunications directors, functional managers and directors, barristers and judges, financial managers, dental practitioners, and advertising and public relations directors. This information is impressive. This analysis has an inappropriate content for the bourgeoisie itself or for any kind of “elite” (from the past, the present and the future society).

I am not going to add any comment on the focus of the research and especially on the criteria, which derive from the analysis of P. Bourdieu (1986).<sup>7</sup> From the written criticisms on this published article, I glean the C. Mills’ approach: “My conclusion is that for the reasons I outline here, and for others that space limitations prevent me from mentioning, the GBCS is a fiasco. It is so theoretically and methodologically flawed that it can contribute little of value to our understanding of the structure of systematic social inequality in the UK” (Mills, 2014: 443). I don’t adopt exactly the C. Mills’ opinion, but I keep a deep and intense skepticism for the aforementioned research.

### *Theoretical estimation for bourgeoisie*

In bourgeoisie participate the rich employers (and their decedents/relatives) of large enterprises, who play collectively (either formally or informally) the role of the upper and the ruling class. With an exceptional manner, A. Smith, classical Marxism, M. Weber, Th. Veblen, W. Sombart, V. Pareto, and C. Wright Mills, definitely, confirm that the members of bourgeoisie, namely the capitalists or the stock holders are holders of capital (as well as means of production) and employers. The differentiations for all these approaches regard to the multiple terminologies of the same social group or the different methods of analysis. The T. Bottomore’s analysis confirms the basic characteristics of bourgeoisie as a rich and ruling class (Bottomore, 1993: 28, 119). Under some preconditions the same conceptualization regards the approach of G. Dumenil and D. Levy, too. In the analysis of M. Savage et al. the social situation looks ambiguous. In that approach there isn’t any clear social group for bourgeoisie. The multitude of ambiguous classes is the prelude of the liquidated social structure (if there is any structure).

Similar absence is found in the table of classes in the official analysis on the distribution of incomes for USA (2010) and the analyses for other areas of the globe (Kharas, 2010). We suppose that the abovementioned absence is the result of a very distant from, or of a poor estimation for the pure theoretical debate. Possibly, there are other undeclared theoretical strategies or untold ideological reasons.

### **The contemporary bourgeoisie: How does it look in the reality?**

#### *The basic nature of bourgeoisie: Employers-Entrepreneurs*

In brief, bourgeoisie, mainly, is included in employment's<sup>8</sup> category of (entrepreneurs- employers).<sup>9</sup> It is of course a small fraction of the aforementioned category, because the vast majority of the groups of employers are entrepreneurs of very small enterprises (with 1-9 employees) or of small enterprises (with 10-19 employees).

The real trend for the employers (in small and big sized enterprises) is the continuous reduction of their percentages. The analogies in selected advantaged countries are low (2% to 6%), during the two previous decades of the 21st century (Table 8).

**Table 8.** *Employers in Selected Countries, During the 21st Century. Analogy of Total Employment (%)*

Country/Year	2006	2010	2014	2018
Australia	7.19	6.83	6.29	5.82
France	4.47	4.46	4.25	4.23
Germany	4.88	4.86	4.63	4.25
Japan		2.23 (2012)	2.13	1.92
Russia	1.22	1.27	1.33	1.35 (2017)
UK	2.92	2.64	2.54	2.06

Source: ILO (2019).

The basic corpus of bourgeoisie, according to classical and some contemporary theories, namely the employers (at least a part of them), are members of an absolute small social group and are going to be fewer. That's why the

bourgeoisie have been disappeared (from the table of the measurable classes) by some of the very recent theories (probably the overwhelmed by this reality). The employers look like as a group of aristocracy, namely of an “elite”. If this situation is real, then we have to go on with a reconceptualization of capitalism itself.

### *The “real field” of bourgeoisie: The enterprises with personnel*

The data, the numbers, and the percentages of employers and the enterprises (with personnel) are not compatible and therefore are not the objects of a direct comparison. Nevertheless, we can make estimation on both the indications. The vast majority of enterprises and therefore a major fraction of the total number and percentage of employers (according the percentages of the Table 8) in employment are employers of very small sized enterprises (with 1-9 employees). Therefore the vast majority are economically rather weak enterprises. In the certain category are included the 88.4% in France (2017), the 61.72% in Germany (2017), the 91.87% in Greece (2017), the 78.4% in UK (2017), the 66.99% in USA (2015) and the 74.62% in Japan (2016) of the total number of enterprises with personnel. The small enterprises (with 10-19 employees) are the 5.45% in France (2017), the 17.81% in Germany (2017), the 4.29% in Greece (2017), the 9.41% in UK (2017), the 13.41% in USA (2015), and the 10.4% in Japan (2016) of the total number of enterprises with personnel (Table 9).

**Table 9.** *Enterprises with Personnel (%), According OECD (2017 or the latest year)*

Country/ Number of Employees	1-9	10-19	20 and over	[250 and over]
France	88.40	5.45	6.15	[0.70]
Germany	61.72	17.81	20.47	[2.36]
Greece	91.87	4.29	3.84	[0.23]
Japan (2016)	74.62	10.40	14.98	[0.93]
UK	78.40	9.41	12.19	[0.91]
USA (2015)	66.99	13.41	19.60	[1.66]

Source: OECD (2020).

The sphere of very small enterprises (with 1-9 employees), definitely, is not the basic economic and social space of bourgeoisie. Probably or mainly, this group represents the social space of the “petty bourgeoisie”,<sup>10</sup> but surely

it isn't the space of bourgeoisie itself. An analogous estimation could be done for the group of the slightly bigger enterprises, namely the "small enterprises (with 10-19 employees)". A small fraction of them (we can suppose that they are the "bigger" of the "small enterprises": i.e. those with 16-19 employees) touches the lower strata (within enterprises) of bourgeoisie, but is not the real core of bourgeoisie itself.

*The "realm" of bourgeoisie: The larger and the real big enterprises*

We could find the real core and the numeral majority of bourgeoisie within the categories of enterprises with 20 or more employees. They are of course much stronger in comparison with the abovementioned categories, but represent extremely small percentage of the total number of enterprises (attention: this percentage represents an even extremely-smaller analogy of employers within employment in total). How many are they? In a sum they are the 6.15% in France (2017), the 20.47% in Germany (2017), the 3.84% in Greece (2017), the 12.19% in UK (2017), the 19.6% in USA (2015), and the 14.98% in Japan (2016) of the total but essentially small corpus of enterprises (Table 9).

Nevertheless, the real economic and broader power of entrepreneurship there is only in an even smaller fraction (of the aforementioned group) of enterprises with personnel, namely those with 250 or more employees. In this entrepreneurial sphere, there is the smaller (the extremely minimal) fraction of enterprises. They are the 0.7% in France (2017), the 2.36% in Germany (2017), the 0.23% in Greece (2017), the 0.91% in UK (2017), the 1.66% in USA (2015), and the 0.93% in Japan (2016) of the total but essentially small corpus of enterprises (Table 9). They represent definitely a percentage near "nothing" of the near "too small" (for France, Germany, Greece, and even USA) analogy or near "nothing" of the near "nothing" (for UK and Japan) analogy of employers in total employment (according ILO).

The "too small" (or near to "nothing") analogy of the representatives of (the top strata of) bourgeoisie have exposed and are exposing extremely large and provocative amounts of wealth. They manage immense capitals, incomes and probably profits every year. The indicative comparison with the GDP and the public expenses of some selected states, during the second decade of 21st century, shows the real inequality in the economic and social

world and especially (and more impressive) for the advanced countries (See, Table 10).

Under the recent circumstances, some of the most lucrative enterprises (mostly, banks and financial enterprises) have or manage immense in value assets (even a number of trillions US \$), every year, but they seem to receive relatively low (of course, in billions US \$) revenues and probably profits. Some of the most known enterprises of commerce, industry, and modern technology, receive much larger revenues and profits (in comparison to the aforementioned banks and financial enterprises), but they seem to possess lower amounts (in billions US \$) by their owned assets. These enterprises are economically stronger, than many countries of the modern world, during the 21st century.

It is interesting, that these larger enterprises have or manage immense wealth, but they employ rather modest number of employees (i.e. wage-earners). Therefore, their contribution to employment is lower or much lower than their revenues or assets under their management. If we make the indicative (but “softer”) comparison of the number of their employees with the public employment of nation-states, then the public employment is incomparable larger, even when the annual revenues of certain enterprises and the annual public expenses (in the public budgets) of significant modern nation-states are compatible (as amounts).<sup>11</sup> The sureness and the relative slogans for the strong impact of the large enterprises’ development to the increase of employment have not any real confirmation. We can confirm the much better contribution of the very small, the small and the medium sized enterprises as a whole entrepreneurial space, but these smaller enterprises live continuously the extremely great economic pressure and the day-to-day threat for the “exodus” (drawing out) from the market. The economic threat comes definitely from the above mentioned gigantic enterprises. Of course, there isn’t any equality either among unequal people either among unequal economic institutions or among unequal enterprises. In these “places” there isn’t any comparison.

It is obvious, that several of the above mentioned gigantic and extremely wealthy (private) enterprises are controlled (or are owned), for many decades, by the same families.<sup>12</sup> In those enterprises, the arguments for the economic and social mobility are canceled. The privileges of heritage and affinity prevail. Of course there are possibilities of some opportunities

and few newcomers in the entrepreneurial procedures, but there isn't any sureness that these aren't only exceptions.

**Table 10.** *Selected Enterprises (an indicative presentation) and Economic Power (for Selected Countries)*

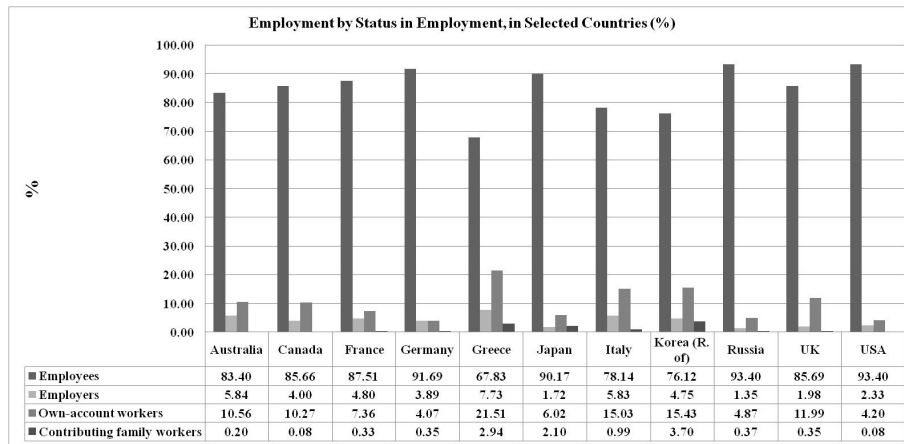
Enterprises	Revenue	Assets [Total] or Assets Under Management	Country	GDP	Public Expenditures
BlackRock, Inc. <sup>13</sup>	14,539 bill. US\$ (2019)	[Assets] 159,573 bill. US\$ (2019) [Value of Management] 7,43 trill. US\$ (2019)	China (P.R.)	11,391.619 trill. US\$ (2015)	2,708 trill. US\$ (2016)
JPMorgan Chase & Co. <sup>14</sup>	115,627 bill. US\$ (2019)	2,687 trill. US\$ (2019)	UK	2,649.890 trill. US\$ (2016)	1,097 trill. US\$ (2016)
Citigroup <sup>15</sup>	75,1 bill. US\$ (2019)	1,978.8 trill. US\$ (2019)	Italy	1,825.820 trill. US\$ (2015)	889,8 bill. US\$ (2016)
Berkshire Hathaway Inc. <sup>16</sup>	247,837 δσ. US\$ (2018)	707,794 δσ. US\$ (2018)	Switzerland	659,850 δσ. US\$ (2015)	213,4 δσ. US\$ (2016)
Walmart Inc. <sup>17</sup>	523,964 δσ. US\$ (2020)	236,494 δσ. US\$ (2020)	Sweden	511,397 δσ. US\$ (2015)	250,2 δσ. US\$ (2016)
Toyota Motor Cor- poration <sup>18</sup>	275,4 bill. US\$ (2020)	492,7 bill. US\$ (2020)	Poland	477,058 bill. US\$ (2015)	86,56 bill. US\$ (2016)
Royal Dutch <sup>19</sup> Shell PLC	344,9 bill. US\$ (2019)	404,3 bill. US\$ (2019)	Belgium	455.336 bill. US\$ (2015)	245 bill. US\$ (2016)
Exxon Mobil <sup>20</sup> Cor- poration	279,3 bill. US\$ (2018)	346,2 bill. US\$ (2018)	Austria	377.157 bill. US\$ (2015)	192,6 bill. US\$ (2016)
Amazon.com, Inc. <sup>21</sup>	280,522 bill. US\$ (2019)	225,248 bill. US\$ (2019)	Singapore	296,835 bill. US\$ (2015)	44,83 bill. US\$ (2016)
Microsoft Corpora- tion <sup>22</sup>	143 bill. US\$ (2020)	301,311 bill. US\$ (2020)	New Zealand	173,256 bill. US\$ (2015)	67,01 bill. US\$ (2016)

**Sources:** ILO (2018, 2019); IMF (2017); Central Intelligence Agency (USA); references for the enterprises (in the endnotes).

The top capitalists of modern capitalism look provocatively like the old aristocrats. In my opinion the real prevailing capitalists are found in a difficult contradiction with the principles and the declared values of capitalism itself. Practically, the great masses of people are excluded from the legal right of free choice in market, namely of the entrepreneurship itself, and the human right of welfare.

## Social Polarization

Graph 1



Source: ILO (2022).

Social polarization is an undeniable fact. The above Graph 1 certifies that the disappearing of the bourgeoisie (or of the capitalist class) in modern class analyses is fully understandable. It is an exceptional minority. Somewhere were too few and became fewer. In other countries the employers are very near (as a percentage) to “nothing” as analogy within the (statuses of) employment. We have to think that the vast majority of employment includes mainly the employees,<sup>23</sup> namely the wage earners. With the exception of the public employment, the employers (-entrepreneurs) give work to the majority of wage earners.<sup>24</sup> In this vast majority are included both the great mass of working class (either manual or mental workers) and the much smaller group of the members of the new middle strata (or class), who are a minority of (middle managers and supervisors) employees. As parts of



the minorities, within employment, participate the own-account workers<sup>25</sup> (less than 16% in the most cases, with an exception)<sup>26</sup> and the contributing family workers<sup>27</sup> (less than 3%, with an exception).

The aftermath of the above indications makes easier the gleaning of the following findings and estimations: 1) The core of the upper and ruling class, namely the bourgeoisie is and is going to be extremely small group (Lytras, 2022), but represents unbelievable personal (or small groups') wealth (Lytras, 2020: 49-51). 2) The employment's and social space of traditional middle class (or petty bourgeoisie) shows the pessimistic orbit of a minority (ibid: 56-58). 3) The agents of wage labor, namely the employees, are the vast majority of employment and society (ibid: 122-124). The members (wage-earners) of the new middle strata (middle managers, supervisors etc.) are a minority of the wage laborers (Lytras, 2019). Social polarization, with the special focus on employment's data, is obvious and wide (Lytras 2020, 17-21). We could predict a trend for a wider social polarization in the near future. Definitely, the social polarization is confirmed, by all the available data, in this article. Social balance is probably an aim, but is not finding here and now.

## Conclusion

Bourgeoisie (or capitalist class) is a social class of capitalist society, more precisely the upper and therefore the ruling class of the contemporary advanced societies, in 21st century. It is confirmed in classical and contemporary theory, beyond the differentiations of the nominations (or the terminologies), of the methods of approach, and of the technical tools of researches. The reality is clear and transparent in the data of international organizations (ILO, OECD etc.). Bourgeoisie is a small minority of the advanced societies, but is extremely wealthy, in the 21st century. They are the representatives of a small group or fraction of the owners (or partners) of the larger enterprises with personnel. They control the economic world and seem to have bigger power than the most modern advanced nation-states. The economic, social and political equilibrium is dubious and surely not well balanced. The members of bourgeoisie were too few (during the 20th century) and they are fewer nowadays. There are surveys and/or researches (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2010; Kharas, 2010, Standing, 2011; Savage

et al., 2013) with concealments of the reality (either for bourgeoisie either for the other classes or for the formation of class structure). In several fields, they have a very “flexible” theoretical approach, some ambiguous (or/and arbitrary) conceptualizations, a doubtful analytical basis (via the synthesis of incompatible features and elements), several problematic results (i.e. overrepresentation several professional categories in single “classes”, two middle classes or a gigantic middle class, three lower classes or an ambiguous working class etc.) and negativity for the image of the obvious class structure, in modern society. Therefore, there are elaborations, without the proper focus on the analysis of employment by status (employees, employers, own-account workers, contributing family members etc.) in employment, which ignore the reality of the extremely small minority of employers (within this group there is the small fraction, namely the bourgeoisie itself) and of the vast majority of employees (the wage-earners). So, they have neither a clear reception of the theoretical debate, nor the proper management of the available empirical data. An unspoken ideological reason is a possible explanation. A new approach of analysis and a more accurate evaluation of the facts are necessary.

## Notes

1. There are several factors, which definite the origins and the ownership of capital. Affinity and inheritance are crucial factors for the initial accumulation of capital (see, “List of wealthiest families”, Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_wealthiest\\_families](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wealthiest_families); Wolfe, 2000). We could observe in these data (see in the next pages of this article for several others), that either the members of the same family participate in the small group of the extremely rich people either in several of the larger private enterprises the members of the same family are the owners or the members of the same family control for decades (or more) the gigantic enterprises of our era.
2. The landlords represent the class of rulers, who come from the past but still play an important role at the time of writing of the *Wealth of Nations*. It must not be forgotten that the ...*Wealth of Nations*... was written and published in a transitional age (1776), when capitalist enterprises tended to change and as the Industrial Revolution took its first immature steps (the steam engine had not yet been applied). But they are not alone, in 1776, and things will change

noticeably from the end of the eighteenth century.

3. “As soon as stock has accumulated in the hands of particular persons, some of them naturally employ it, by setting industrious people, whom they will supply with materials and subsistence, in order to make a profit, by the sale of their work, or by what their labour adds to the value of the materials”.... “The value which workmen add to the materials, therefore, resolves itself in this case into two parts, of which the one pays their wages and the other the profits of their employers upon the whole stock of materials and wages, which he advanced” (Smith, 1887: 48-49).
4. Then he demands the protection of the rich people: “The affluence of the rich excites the indignation of the poor, who are often both driven by want, and prompted by envy, to invade his possessions. It is only under the shelter of the civil magistrate that the owner of that valuable property, which is acquired by the labour of many years, or perhaps of many successive generations, can sleep a single night in security. He is at all times surrounded by unknown enemies, whom, though he never provoked, he can never appease, and from whose injustice he can be protected only by the powerful arm of the civil magistrate continually held up to chastise it. The acquisition of valuable and extensive property, therefore, necessarily requires the establishment of civil government. Where there is no property, or at least none that exceeds the value of two or three days labour, civil government is not so necessary. Civil government supposes a certain subordination. But as the necessity of civil government gradually grows up with the acquisition of valuable property, so the principal causes which naturally introduce subordination gradually grow up with the growth of that valuable property” (Smith, 1922: 203).
5. The M. Weber’s widen reference is the following: “As thus defined the class citizen” (*‘bürgertum’*, which means: the *bourgeoisie*) “is not unitary; there are greater citizens and lesser citizens. Entrepreneurs and hand workers belong to the class. Second,” (*bourgeoisie*) “signifies the membership in the state, with its connotation as holder of certain political rights”. “Finally ...” (*bourgeoisie*), “in the class term, we understand those strata, which are drawn together in contrast with the bureaucracy or the proletariat and any other outside their circle as ‘persons of property and education’, entrepreneurs, recipients of funded incomes, and in general all the persons of academic culture, a certain class standard of living, and a certain social prestige” (Weber, *ibid*: 315).
6. In the classification of ONS (2020), the Employers of small establishments (code: L8) and the Own-account workers (code: L9) are included in (code: L7) Intermediate occupations. They follow the previous group of Lower professional

and higher technical occupations (code: L4), which includes the Lower managerial and administrative occupations (code: L5), and the Higher supervisory occupations (code: L6).

7. I have several objections on the different kinds of “capital,” according P. Bourdieu. The basic regards the nature of the “social capital” and the “cultural capital”. My opinion is that their content regards the relative resources, but these aren’t capital or stock of any kind, during the capitalist era. If the abovementioned resources take place in any kind of money transactions, then their value is, definitely, an exchange value (an expression of capital, namely the only capital). We don’t need any new term for the replacement of the established terms. The invention of new nominal expressions doesn’t eliminate the facts and the economic or social realities.
8. The classification recognizes the follow statuses and their official mark numbers: 1. Employees; 2. Employers; 3. Own-account workers; 4. Members of producers’ cooperatives; 5. Contributing family workers; 6. Workers not classifiable by status. See, ILO (1993).
9. “Employers are those workers who, working on their own account or with one or a few partners, hold the type of job defined as a ‘self-employment job’, and, in this capacity, on a continuous basis (including the reference period) have engaged one or more persons to work for them in their business as ‘employee(s)’. The meaning of ‘engage on a continuous basis’ is to be determined by national circumstances, in a way which is consistent with the definition of ‘employees with stable contracts’. The partners may or may not be members of the same family or household.” See, ILO, *ibid*.
10. We could assume, indirectly, that in A. Smith’s analysis (Smith, 1887: 50-51) the middle class regards the farmers and the craftsmen (as the agents of a synthesis of incomes, namely the wages and the profits). The same theoretical basis uses critically K. Marx (Marx, 1863: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1863/theories-surplus-value/add1.htm#s12d>; Marx, 1981: 455-458) and the result of his elaboration concludes both farmers and craftsmen in the petty bourgeoisie (“class” or “strata”). It is not exactly clear if in that social group are members both of the own-account workers and, equally, of the small employers. The same ambiguity is understandable in the R. Luxemburg’s analysis [Luxemburg, 1988: 80-82; Luxemburg, 1999: Part One, Chapter 2 (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1900/reform-revolution/ch02.htm>)]. According to V.I. Lenin’s (Lenin, 1964<sup>4</sup>: 344-355, 356-360) elaboration, the social buffer for both the petty bourgeoisie and the real bourgeoisie itself is described by the diffusion of the directive ability (or power) from the labor, the ability to reproduce the

individual capital without the execution of the direct labor by the entrepreneur (and/or of the contributing family members), and all the above preconditions are realities, when an employer uses enough wage-earners (i.e., 15-30 persons). Nevertheless, the debate is open among Marxists of our era. The most known indication there is in E.O. Wright's analysis. E.O. Wright reinvented once again the petty bourgeoisie (Wright, 1985: 48-51, 150-151) as exclusively own-account workers (i.e. without any wage-earner, with some doubts for the clear approach). The small employers (with 1-9 wage-earners, with some more doubts for the clear approach) are members of one of the "contradictory class locations" (he recognizes three). They are not members of petty bourgeoisie, but they are not full-fledged capitalists, too. I have concrete objections to this analysis for serious theoretical and empirical reasons (Lytras, 2020: 44-45). I choose to say, that the employers with 1-9 wage-earners and especially the employers with 1-6 wage-earners (I estimate that they are the majority or vast majority of employers in any country) have probably the characteristics of petty bourgeoisie (they really work side by side with their wage-earners, use typically or actually contributing family members, and slightly reproduce their small capitals). Of course, their function makes no special distance from exploitation, as a capitalistic procedure.

11. We are going to give some impressive paradigms of employment, in well-known enterprises: The Walmart Inc. (Revenue, 2020: 523,964 billion US\$) has had 2,3 million employees (2022), globally; the Amazon.com, Inc. (Revenue, 2019: 280,522 bill. US\$) has had 1,3 mill. employees (2022); the Target ("Target Corporation", Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Target\\_Corporation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Target_Corporation)) Corporation (Revenue, 2019: 75,356 bill. US\$) has had 409.000 employees (2020); the Berkshire Hathaway Inc. (Revenue, 2018: 247,837 bill. US\$) has had 372.000 employees (2021); the Toyota Motor Corporation (Revenue, 2020: 247,837 bill. US\$) has had 372.000 employees (2021); the Siemens AG (Revenue, 2021: 247,837 bill. €) has had 303.000 employees (2021); the JPMorgan Chase & Co. (Revenue, 2019: 115,627 bill. US\$) has had 288.474 employees (2022); the Royal Dutch Shell PLC (Revenue, 2019: 344,9 bill. US\$) has had 86.000 employees (2022). See the information of enterprises, in Table 3.3.1 and the relative references. Some indications of advanced nation-states are the following: Australia (Public Expenditures, 2016: 446,4 billion US\$) has had 11,973 million people (2016) as total employment and the 18.97% (approximately, 2,271 mill. people) is the percentage of public employment (2016); Sweden (Public Expenditures, 2016: 250,2 bill. US\$) has had 4,772 mill. people (2014) as total employment and the 29.13% (approximately, 1,390 mill. people) is the percentage of public employment (2014); the Netherlands (Public Expenditures, 2016: 337,6 bill.

US\$) have had 8,615 mill. people (2017) as total employment and the 12.19% (approximately, 1,050 mill. people) of them is the percentage of public employment (2017); Denmark (Public Expenditures, 2016: 164,5 bill. US\$) has had 2,772 mill. people (2017) as total employment and the 31.05% (approximately, 860.706 people) is the percentage of public employment (2017); Norway (Public Expenditures, 2016: 188,8 bill. US\$) has had 2,658 mill. people (2017) as total employment and the 30.30% (approximately, 805.374 people) is the percentage of public employment (2017). USA (2015) have had, by far, the wider public employment (16.50% or approximately 24,5 million people) in number. The nation-state is the most significant single employer (during the 21st century) of modern capitalism. See, 1) for public expenditures: Central Intelligence Agency (USA), *The World Factbook*; 2) for the general level of employment and the public employment: ILO (2018, 2019); 3) for analytical data for public expenditures, see Lytras (ed.) 2017: pp. 180-201.

12. It is an indicative information, that Ford family possesses only the 2% of the total shares (of Ford Motor Company), but controls the 40% of the relative votes ("Ford Motor Company", Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ford\\_Motor\\_Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ford_Motor_Company)). Another crucial information is that (the members of) Siemens family is the major owner of Siemens A.G., but possesses only the 6,9% of the total number of shares ("Siemens", Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siemens>). Families like the aforementioned are included in the lists of the wealthiest families, worldwide ("List of wealthiest families", Wikipedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_wealthiest\\_families](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wealthiest_families)).
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  25. "Own-account workers are those workers who, working on their own account or with one or more partners, hold the type of job defined as 'a self-employment job', and have not engaged on a continuous basis any 'employees' to work for them during the reference period. It should be noted that during the reference period the members of this group may have engaged 'employees', provided that this is on a non-continuous basis. The partners may or may not be members of the same family or household" (ILO, 1993, *ibid*).
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