

A GENERAL OUTLINE ON SOCIAL ACTION. APPLICATION TO SOCCER RULES

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we present the reader an outline to explain human collective action, whatever its content might be. The original outline, first developed in order to analyse Military Drill, is now being presented in a more current and advanced version, including its empirical verification. Due to its universal scope, its terminology is necessarily abstract. Therefore, we will attempt to facilitate reader comprehension of this outline by resorting to a specific, well-known and well-documented example of social action: soccer. To this end, we will apply step-by-step our outline in an analysis of soccer's segregation out of rugby and the subsequent process by which soccer came to be quickly and efficiently institutionalized in England throughout the last third of the 19th century.

KEY WORDS: *Social Action - Language – Soccer – Rules - ‘Must Concept’ – ‘Passing Game’ - Empirical Proof.*

¹ This article is dedicated to the memory of Carlos Echeandia Pascual (1957-1985), *Carlos E.*

(Translated from the original text in Spanish by Stanley E. Miller (MA, Spanish Literature) and Carlos Allones Pérez)

In these pages we want to develop a general outline which will serve to interpret collective human action wherever and whenever it is found. We humans have the capacity to act together as a group, and we seek a general theory able to show us how we manage to do so. The players of one soccer team on the field manoeuvre the ball in an attempt to score a goal against the opposing team while simultaneously attempting to avoid a goal being scored against them. Civil servants of a public department process written documents by circulating them through network computer terminals for further resolution. At the time of their children's birth, the father of a Hindu boy and the father of a Hindu girl arrange the babies' future marriage which will take place 16 years later when they reach the appropriate age of adolescence. Soldiers execute military drills as ordered by their Sergeant. Workers labour to advance production along an assembly line. Drivers obey traffic lights when driving through the city. The more expert ice skaters monopolize the centre rink for themselves thus limiting the novice skaters to the peripheral areas, etc.

We maintain that, in spite of the different content of all of these social activities, there exists a common form, *a universal procedure*, which makes them possible, which is present in all of them, and which we aspire to understand². We are sociologists and it does seem to us that there is no task more urgent and foundational to our discipline than that of formulating a universal Theory of Social Action. To be truly scientific, this Theory also must provide on its own a no less general and universal process for verification and measurement.

This is all we are attempting in this paper: to build, step by step before the reader's eyes, the simplest diagram possible in which we observe all the elements which, by necessity, are present in all group actions —and *only*

² The relationship of our outline to the classical authors of Sociology who have dealt with the Theory of Social Action -Simmel, Durkheim, Weber, G. H. Mead- is explicitly discussed in Allones Pérez (2005).

those elements. We will analyse the sufficiently necessary actions which the individuals of any human group must perform in order to function co-operatively.

2. At first glance, all social activities consist of an interweaving of physical actions among individuals who participate therein. I sometimes leave an empty gas tank at home on Thursday morning with a payment beneath it; when I return home in the evening, the delivery man has taken the money and left me a full tank. I find myself with a friend a little before 14:00 o'clock and I tell him to wait for me for a moment in this bar so I can go to the bank before it closes; then, we will have a beer. As Xavi advances the ball down the middle of the field, his teammates Iniesta and Messi accordingly adjust their positions and running. When the Dean sent me an application form as an *attachment*, I filled it out and subsequently forwarded it to the other professors. Everywhere there is a social action, we always see *mutually orientated* individual activities -as Max Weber would say (2019: 77-138).

Because they are corporal activities, they take place in the physical world, in a defined space and time, *in situ*; they are visible, they appear within our sight, and they can be *video-recorded*.

However, not every social activity which we carry out at given moment is of interest to a specific Sociology. For instance, only the interactions among drivers are of interest to the Sociology of Traffic -- however, not the conversations taking place within the vehicles. For the sociological study of an official department, the afternoon phone call made by a civil servant to his girlfriend is of no interest. For the sociological study of Barcelona's book of plays, Messi's tax problems are irrelevant to the team, unless they affect his playing performance. Those specific sociologies focus their interest on those individual, normative behaviours which carry out a routine

function within the collective effort which they are striving to understand, i.e., the normative role of each member -- that part of their activity which is *also* a means, an instrument, of the normative activity of the others.

Likewise, the Sociology which we are attempting to construct here, which is a General Sociology, will also focus exclusively on the individuals', interwoven, physical activities which are necessary and also sufficient to carry out *any* group action . . . and our only focus will be on these activities. Therefore, we can now indicate the first visible aspect which we have pointed out in every social action:

The interweaving of normative corporal actions

Another aspect of this visible, corporal part of every group action has to do with the tools which those involved in it manipulate: the vehicles operated by drivers, the computers of the office workers, the ball and boots of the soccer players, the skis of the skiers etc. All these tools have *fallen* into the hands of individuals in the historical course of their co-ordinated action, thus improving its efficiency. As we will come to understand farther ahead, in every group action there is an inevitable relationship between the normative, political adjustment among individuals and the technical manipulation by said individuals of the tools which make that action possible.

3. Also, in every group action there always shows up another type of activity -we are referring to conversations or verbal gestures which the individuals exchange among themselves. This activity deals with gestures, which is to say, actions which by themselves do not render any sort of mechanical output but simply consist of sentences both spoken and listened

which, though invisible, are susceptible to recording by an audio system, i.e., *audio-recorded*.

By means of these sentences, we the human adults are capable of transmitting mental images from one to another. Assume I say, for example, “This morning at the traffic light in front of the Post Office, a car ran over a dog without killing it. The small Chihuahua ended up running down the street squealing.” Upon hearing this complex sentence, each one of you, as Listener, will instantly produce a mental image sufficiently similar to that one which I, the Speaker, had in my mind just before uttering it.

In my search for an explanation of this extraordinary, unique quality of the human animal –a quality not shared by any other creature in nature- I have relied for many years on my studies of language with Professor Agustin Garcia Calvo, whose classes I had the good fortune to attend for a time. In his writings one can read that,

“The Speaker will instantly organize a sentence which conveys a mental image -the unique organization of this sentence will be reproduced instantly in the mind of the Listener at the completion of its vocalization so as to ensure a grammatically sufficient communication.” (Garcia Calvo 1989: 225)

As we all know by our incessant experience of different collective activities in which we participate the whole day through, our sentences are completely interwoven with our acts –were this not so, the latter could neither be accomplished nor even conceived (cf. Mead 2015). For example, though I had agreed with a friend to go to the cinema this evening, he just phoned me to cancel; consequently, we decided to go tomorrow. Likewise, if another speaks to me in public using very offensive terms, I will not contact him. Similarly, as we took shelter beneath the colonnades, the tourist asked me, “Does it always rain so much in Santiago?” etc.

Anyone who lives in a country without mastering its language appreciates the degree to which actions and sentences are intertwined. For the anthropologist who is studying a tribal society, the first task is to learn the native language in order to gain a sense of subtlety of all social actions.

Once again, it happens that we, as sociologists, must focus our attention exclusively on those sentences that accomplish a normative *function* in the course of the group action we are studying. For example, I have been given a doctor's slip not to return to work for several days. Similarly, so as to reduce risk, the trainer has asked us to advance the ball from behind. Likewise, my fiancée awaits my phone call every night at 23:00 etc.

Thus, we find here another ubiquitous element of our group action – without regard to the time or the place, no matter where or how it is produced:

The interweaving of normative verbal gestures

As we will see in this article, the speaking skill demonstrated by the adult Homo sapiens adult allows him to exchange sentences with automatic ease. His children inherently attempt to master this same skill on their own from their very first day. Furthermore, this impressive speaking skill is a necessary foundation – *nearly* sufficient in itself – to enable the Homo sapiens to deal with both the technical manipulations and the political adjustments required for its survival as a social species.

4. Let's zoom in on those activities and conversations which are components of group practice. Specifically, we should focus on a sort of activities which, because of their intention, distinguish themselves from all others. Side by side with normative behaviour in any group practice there is also produced a punitive behaviour: the group *watches and punishes* any

unexpected, deviant behaviour demonstrated by any member. The referee penalizes the soccer player who touches the ball with his hands just as he does the basketball player who touches it with his feet. If you are in England, you cannot drive on the right; if you are in Spain, you cannot drive on the left. If you are at a nudist beach, it is frowned upon to keep your bathing suit on; however, if you are at a conventional beach, you don't even consider removing it. If you are having rounds in a bar, you expect to pay when it's your turn; if you rob a bank and they catch you, you expect to spend several years in prison; if you are a businessman and you insist upon working with XIX century tools, you expect that your business will fail, etc.

Members of the group can exercise this repression spontaneously, or they can delegate *ad hoc* civil servants who will enforce it. It is the police, the judges, the district attorneys, the prison guards, and the psychiatrists, who are chosen by us, the electorate, by means of democratic procedures, so that in our name they can carry out those and other functions of repression.

Wherever and whenever there occurs a group action, we will also observe a repressive action on behalf of the group directed against the individuals who defy the expectations of the other members. The repressive action is coextensive with the group practice -no matter how relaxed or voluntary this might be. If the former were not to exist, the latter could not be possible: we would not be able to play soccer if we were to allow a player to carry the ball in his hands; we would not be able to drive without fines for traffic violations; we would not deposit our money in the bank if bank robbers were to go unpunished; we want to know what kind of beach we are taking our children to, etc.

Then, let's talk about the (collective) punishment of (individual) offense in order to point out that repressive aspect which by necessity accompanies all social action (cf. Durkheim 1982).

However, it is useful (for our goals) to be more exact in the definition of this repressive action. To this end, let us focus on the more formal realization of the parts of said action as produced in any *juridical process*. Here we first see the judge publicly defining the offense committed by the individual in an attempt to produce a totally factual, objective and impartial summary in order to enable a better evaluation of said offense. This linguistic adjudication of the offense –stated as coldly and rationally as possible- constitutes a necessary preliminary part of any repressive action by the group. However, this is not sufficient. Then, it is necessary to pronounce, and most importantly, to execute the sentence –which is to say, to impose upon the guilty party all the symbolic, social and physical sanction (the entire arsenal of punishment available to the group) in order *to avenge* (so Durkheim 1997 would tell us) the suffered offence: gossip, stigmatization, ostracism, monetary fine, incarceration, beatings, torture, etc.

The group is in every sense the owner of one's existence for having literally given it to the individual –which (if the group considers it necessary) it will not hesitate to deprive him thereof. Herein we find the sociological foundation by which the group may resort to the application of the death penalty.

So let us now highlight this aspect worthy of distinction in our general outline of social action:

The collective imposition of the penalty / the adjudication of the individual offense

In every case, the object of this repressive practice is a member of the group; the group holds a public procedure and then keeps a carefully written file of the application of said practice. Like all of the other activities until now analysed, this one is also susceptible to being recorded *in situ* by means of any audio-video system.

5. Now we must exit the visible world and penetrate the mind of the individual whose offense was publicly pointed out and punished by the group. To better understand this, let's suppose that I myself am the culpable individual, so that now we can discuss this issue in the perspective of the first-person singular. Let's consider the psychological footprint which the collective repression has left on me. Better said, we should delve into the ongoing intellectual elaboration –*the linguistic, ideational activity*– which I learn from such an imprint.

In this thought activity of linguistic ideation *which occurs in my mind*, we will analyse two parts, those which correspond respectively to the two parts which we have already distinguished in the juridical process of repression. Firstly, that rational adjudication of my behavior (be it expressed formally by the authorities or spontaneously by others) becomes the focus of my mental activity – in so much as I understand the sense of said expression at the moment of its completion. Secondly, I contemplate the sensations provoked in me as a reaction to the repressive actions applied by others in response to my previous behavior. Here, I compose with my own private words the expression of resentment which their reprisals have caused in me.

Let's indicate in our outline this inevitable, highly automatic mental activity – my personal interior dialogue which is produced *in menthe* at

every moment when I participate in any social action- even during my dreams according to Freud.

Let's indicate in said outline the incessant and internal dialogue in my mind. What do others say about me *and* what do I tell myself in regard to my feelings of resentment caused by their treatment of me for my past actions:

Ideations of [my feelings / their adjudications]

Clearly, this ideational activity is not only retrospective, but also especially prospective: the adult human being (that circumspect, worldly-wise and cunning fellow) is inescapably obliged to calculate the political consequences of his actions and to make decisions *in situ* about their course. When, for example, the opposing forward advances toward my net, do I knock him down or not? If I do so, it means a red card, but I thwart the goal. Suppose I like that boy a lot, but what if my boyfriend were to find out? If I don't show up for the exam, surely I'll fail; however, it doesn't matter since I have enough credits! I'm driving in the wrong direction, it would be better to turn around! Etcetera.

II

6. Now we need to consider social action from the *dynamic* point of view, which is to say, not to focus so much on its universally-constituted parts already discussed— but rather on the interrelationships of said parts through time. It is the problem of the inception and consolidation of *whatever* social practice throughout its historical time, from an initial situation in which it did not exist until the time when it becomes a social

routine or institution recognized as such by those who perform it day after day.

We are going to continue building our general outline of human sociability; however, because it is such an abstract subject, it will help us not to get lost conceptually if we refer to a very well-known, concrete example which will be easily recognizable to everyone.

In other writings we have made use of the study of close-order-Military Drill, due to its singularity and its simplicity. In fact, this article is simply an improvement in the method and in the theoretical results thereby obtained and concurrently published.³

Now, we want to apply here that method and those results to the study of **Soccer** –in particular, how it sprang forth historically as a consequence of its segregation from Rugby during the middle of the XIX century in England. Due to the fact that the appearance and quick institutionalization of the social practice of soccer in historical time is very well documented, it becomes particularly interesting to our sociological work. Thus, to support our abstract argumentation, we will consider through the length of this article the following quotation:

“When the “Football Association” was founded on the 26th of October, 1863, in London’s “Freemasons’ Tavern”, it decided that touching the ball with one’s hands, grabbing a player or pushing him with one’s hands or arms and kicking any player would be prohibited. In 1866, the existing off-side rule was modified to its present-day form; a rope was strung between the two vertical goal-posts to designate more precisely the goal area; the fair-catch would be prohibited. In 1871 a new rule made it legal for the

³ In particular, the reader will find in Allones Pérez (2019: 8-51) the rigorous and formal exposition of this sociological theory of action which is based on the study of Military Drill. Also, in Allones Pérez (2005) we do study the principal theoretical results, the possible proof and the empirical applications of said theory.

goal-keeper to use his hands. In 1873 the corner kick was adopted. Two years afterwards, the rope which connected the two vertical goal posts was replaced by a horizontal bar. In 1891, the penalty kick was adopted: the penalty kick was taken from a point directly in front of the exact centre of the goal posts from a distance of 11 meters...” (*Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada*; voz: Fútbol; Barcelona: Espasa-Calpe. 1920 ed.) (author’s translation)

I repeat, in order to facilitate the understanding of our general outline of social action, we will employ the case of soccer -which represents *only one of many possibilities* and is selected because it is well-known and well-documented. By its very nature, this outline is necessarily abstract. Consequently, as we progress through its analysis, it will be convenient and useful to refer to the concrete example of soccer.

7. Then let’s begin with relationships *in historical time* of all the structural parts which we have observed to be present in all group actions. We want to study the dynamic process of institutionalization of any social practice, observing the manner in which the application of said parts as well the interrelationships among them varies in time. In this regard, our outline will distinguish two phases in that process of institutionalization, two phases linked by an intermediate linguistic moment, which will turn out to be clearly foundational to the second phase.

In the historical beginning of every new, social practice, the relationship of political repression, the relationship between offense and penalty, must be applied *with great frequency*, over and over again, repeatedly, to each and every one of the individuals of the group without exception, since these members by themselves neither know their role in the collective action in which they are participating nor have they mastered the required skills:

The collective imposition of the penalty / the adjudication of the individual offense

with great frequency

[In the case of soccer, our interest focuses on an understanding of the manner in which it surges (historically speaking) segregating itself from rugby. For generations in the elite, English ‘public schools’, there was practiced a sport in which players of two rival teams faced off in an effort to carry a ball to the opponents’ goal, sometimes marked by posts. This basic, normative behaviour was shared in all of those schools, even though they proudly distinguished themselves as to what actions were allowed or prohibited in the players’ attempts to score or to thwart a goal. This being said, not only was kicking the ball permitted in all schools, but a player was also allowed to catch the ball and to run with the ball held in his hands while teammates protected him from the attacks (kicks, trips, holding, pushes, etc.) by players of the opposing team... It is in this last regard that different local traditions were in disagreement. Thus, for example, in a match played in Cambridge between Eton and Rugby - possibly in Parker’s Piece-, it has been documented that Eton’s supporters booed the Rugby players for kicking the ball carrier, but the Rugby players were not disposed to renounce kicking because in their opinion enduring the kicks was ‘a fine demonstration of virility’.

In the midst of all that diversity of norms it was observed (by the most perceptive) that to the degree by which the use of hands was restricted the use of feet become more prevalent. As a result, there occurred fewer *mêlées*. Consequently, there followed a spectacular and exciting fluidity leading to a natural and rapid dispersion of players throughout the

entire playing field which added to the viewing pleasure and engagement of the fans.

Clearly, from the beginning of the evolution of the human species, the hand of man has always accompanied said evolution while the foot was not adapted to seize the ball, nor any other object. The use of hands eliminated, it turned out to be no easy task (for the thereby, newly-affected players) to move the ball forward with the sole use of their feet. The English defined one type of forward movement of the ball with the term “dribbling”, which occurs when a single player advances the ball short distances by means of light touches of the feet – as though the ball were loosely clinging to the foot.⁴

So were the circumstances on October 26th, 1863, when the representatives of a variety of secondary schools met in London in order to try to establish a regulation which would favour the use of the feet and also avoid the necessity of negotiating and renegotiating the rules before each single match.

From the beginning, two concepts faced off: 1. the supporters of the “carrying game” who advocated the continued use of ones’ hands to advance the ball, and 2. the supporters of the “dribbling game” who wanted to restrict that practice as much as possible. When the latter, the “dribblers”, won the majority of the votes among those gathered in London, the most avid fans of rugby (who felt wounded to their core) stormed out of the meeting swearing among themselves to continue playing as they always had done.

⁴ This is no small matter, but rather an anthropological truth; as Spencer-Brown (1972: 109) has pointed out, the word ‘world’ originates “from wer = man; ald = age, old. The world may be taken to be the manifest proprieties of the all, its identity with the age of man being evident through the fact that *man is a primary animal with a hand* (‘manifest’ coming from manus = hand, festus = struck).” [our italics]

Besides, the prohibition of the use of hands necessarily requires that players restrain themselves from excessively obstructing the player who is attempting to control the ball by foot (a clumsy endeavour and an always difficult-to-master skill during those early years).

Consequently, concomitant with this prohibition of the use of hands –which was first and foundational for subsequent restrictions- other coextensive rules were born of necessity:

“When the “Football Association” was founded on the 26th of October, 1863, in London’s “Freemasons’ Tavern”, it decided that touching the ball with one’s hands, grabbing a player or pushing him with one’s hands or arms and kicking any player would be prohibited. (...)”

It is one thing to want to prohibit the use of hands, yet something very different to effectively impose such a restrictive norm. The elitist, private English schools paid little attention to the regulatory resolution proposed by those who pompously anointed themselves as “The Football Association”. The majority of private English schools soon returned proudly to their unique traditions, while ignoring what the former few had proposed. Nevertheless, in other social *milieu* far removed from that of private English schools the proposed prohibitive norm, i.e., no hands, came to be respected –however, not without true difficulties.

With the growing participation of blue-collar workers, the social clubs of the middle class of the city of Sheffield would come to dispute year after year the annual “foot-ball matches” played subject to the expressed

prohibition of touching the ball with ones' hands – a rule which was effectively applied by attentive referees.

In order to avoid infractions (not an easy feat) due to their spontaneous recurrence, the referees resorted to various expediciencies – in the beginning, for example, the player's hands were tied to his belt. As a result, the footballer would fall since he would be unable to maintain his balance without the free use of his arms. Then they tried (with greater success) to require that players wear white gloves or hold a coin in each hand so that there remain irrefutable proof of any infraction. Nevertheless, the infractions continued and lead to a frustrating interruption of play.

Because it is a team sport, the penalty assessed by the referee was not directed at a particular player who had touched the ball with his hands, but rather against *his* team—the penalized team would be forced to relinquish the ball which was then handed over to the opposing team thus causing the loss of initiative which the team had enjoyed until that moment. Therefore, the infractions of that player altered the normative activity, the smooth teamwork which is as demanding in soccer as it was in its mother sport, rugby. In one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent, the rule breaker was *automatically* punished by his teammates, by his coach and by the team's supporters. We will return to reconsider this aspect of the punishment in the future.]

8. As previously stablished, the offense/penalty relationship must of necessity be applied with great frequency at the beginning of the imposition of any new social practice, whatever that may be. In each case the individual sanctioned cannot help but to work thoroughly in his mind *-in a conscience way-* all the sentimental and intellectual imprints which such a sanction has produced within him. He will do this consciously and with

great attention trying to avoid further dysfunctional activities which would cause him to suffer additional and ever stricter sanctions:

Ideations of [my feelings f their adjudications]
conscious

These are two types of ideations interwoven in *my* mind. Simultaneously, there exist and interact two related ideations: *my* ideations of the linguistic fragments of others which point out the failures in my performance as well as *my* ideations of the feelings generated within me by the others when they react to my failures. Given that we are talking about a new activity for me—in reality new for all of us (those of the group) which we have not yet mastered—my deficiency is not due to a political will for disobedience but rather to my lack of technical skill. It's not that I do not wish to obey the *dictum* of the group, but rather that I can't manage to do so. My attention to the impartial, objective adjudication intensifies in regard to the matter of my technical deficiency because here there is something which I do not understand—here I must find the *quid*, the key which allows me to free myself both from the rejection of the group and from the fear of that pain which I would feel as a result of their rejection.

Between the punitive group action and its mental elaboration by the individual who suffers it, there exists a relationship of feedback which we are going to indicate with the symbol of *double logical implication*:

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although in this initial phase, the punitive action outweighs the individual ideation.

Due to reasons which we will need to consider presently, let's begin to diagram our proposed outline of human social action in this way:

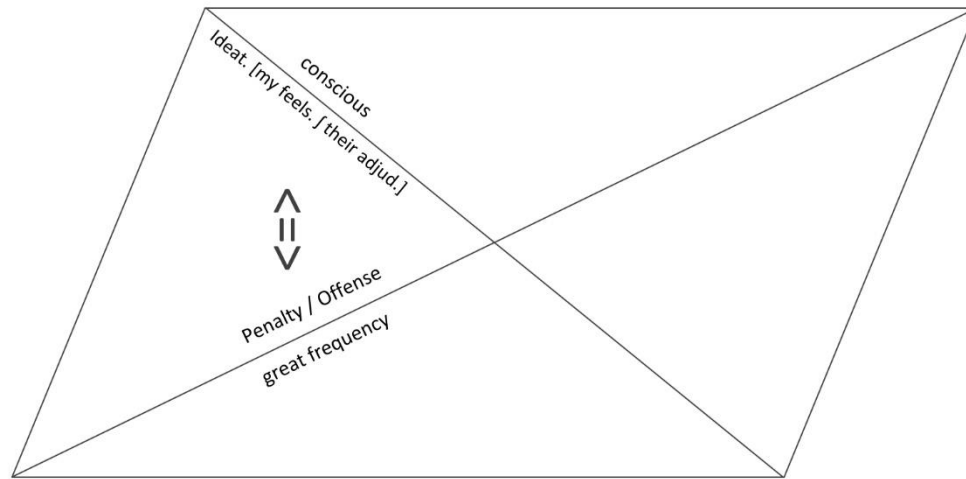


FIGURE 1

[In the case of pioneering soccer, the clumsy player, who was unable to control the ball with his feet and who unintentionally resorted to the use of his hands, caused the repeated loss of his team's initiative and thus interrupted the ever-improving level of play demonstrated by his teammates.

The aforementioned player will perceive two ideations in his mind: 1. On one hand, that of the critical, teammate comments which point out his proven lack of skill with his feet, and 2. The ideation caused within him by the effective retaliation by his own teammates, e.g., coldness, quarrels, scorn, isolation, humiliation, mocking, and dishonour. He will lose the confidence of his coach and the support of his fans.

His mind concentrates now on dropping the ball to his feet without losing control of it and not touching it in any way with his hands. It is not easy nowadays to imagine how complicated this was for soccer players during that breakthrough period of discovery and innovation. Any young kid who plays a scrimmage in the courtyard of his school these days moves the ball better than the most skilful, league player of 1860. To guide the ball with one's feet completely breaks the natural *cenesthesia* of any former rugby player (as it would with any human being) and distorts the sensations and coordination of the body's natural physiology. The arms and the hips had to subordinate themselves to the movements of the feet -feet dedicated to manoeuvring a free-wheeling ball beyond grasp, recalcitrant, unpredictable, impossible to safeguard against any adversarial attack, a ball good only for dribbling.

Not unlike the first-time driver who needs to look downward to coordinate the use of his *two* feet in operating his car's *three* pedals, I hold that those pioneering soccer players continually looked downward toward their legs in order to better coordinate control of the ball with their feet. The necessary coordinated movements of the arms and the hips in order to avoid falling as well as the disregard of other players (whether opponents or team mates) in an effort to maintain control of the ball caused the spectators also to concentrate their vision on those same implicated parts of the player's body. It was said that the soccer players reminded the spectators of the high stools at the counter of a bar!... Also the tall wooden legs of the butchers' blocks used by the butcher to tenderize the meat! The dimensions of the play field were unknown as was the unspecified number of players (albeit, eighteen, twenty-two or whatever) since such details had to be agreed upon before the start of each game. To the great amusement and joy of the spectators of the time – according to what the first football chroniclers tell us -- the players, weary from using only their

feet, helped themselves at times by using their hands or by giving the ball a strong kick sending it to the other end of the field and sped helter-skelter behind it with no notion of tactics nor strategy.

While play was interrupted by constant delays, soccer's power to entertain never disappointed the workmen of Sheffield who hurried by the thousands to watch it. They shared a perception that they were attending an authentic social breakthrough – that before their eyes there was developing a truly unique and futuristic invention. Due to their growing popularity, the press (itself more engaged and sport-oriented) paid greater and greater attention to the soccer matches.]

9. We are arriving at the *key moment* of our diagram, which, for us, is also the key moment of all social action. Each and every individual needs to experience this moment in order to establish himself (herself) as a competent member of the group. This moment, which we will describe, marks a turning point in the historical trajectory of every collective practice, and likewise marks a turning point in the biographical trajectory of each and every individual who participates therein. It deals with an intellectual and emotional instant; we can call it a *new-word moment*. What does it consist of?

As we have already explained in Point 5 of this paper, since each and every one of us is subject to group repression, we incessantly and *nearly* simultaneously formulate two distinct ideations: A. That of the linguistic expression (perhaps nothing more than a simple fragment spoken by the pertinent authority) which publicly signals my technical failure; and B. That of my fear of the reactions of the others toward me.

However, in this double ideational work, there is an instant when *a word spoken by another* transmits a concept which instantly verifies an intuition for me -a foresight which suddenly causes me to understand in one fell

swoop for the first time how I should manage to organize (once and for all) the labyrinthine sensations which until then I have been suffering. It is not that everything becomes totally clear, far from it, but for the first time I feel that I understand the key, i.e., the insight that I need to successfully deal with the social pressure which I must resolve.

In the cartoons, that moment of realization -that new-word moment- is habitually and effectively illustrated by a lightbulb turning on over the head of the character in question.

That *word spoken by another* has transmitted its conventional meaning to me, which is nothing more than a concept—which is to say *a piece of logic*, a method of reasoning abstracted from whatever concrete situation (including the original situation in which it was first understood). This unique, intellectual entity remains separate, and as such applicable to any concrete situation which might relate to it. Since this concept is an abstraction, it *transcends* the in-situ plain upon which we have diagrammed the concrete, physical and mental actions which we have observed in the performance of individuals and the group. This concept exists *in mente*, not *in situ*. Consequently, we must illustrate this transcendence in our diagram. I insist on this: this word spoken by another precipitates the instant clarification of this puzzle –a word commonly used among the members of the group, i.e., a concept incorporated into the group’s lexicon and *as such* completely vested with the moral authority of the group.

Instantly, I both understand the meaning of the word and perceive its intrinsic moral weight which implies a “*must*” concept, so to say, which, if followed, guarantees that I will know how to do the right thing (if I so choose) in accordance with group expectations.

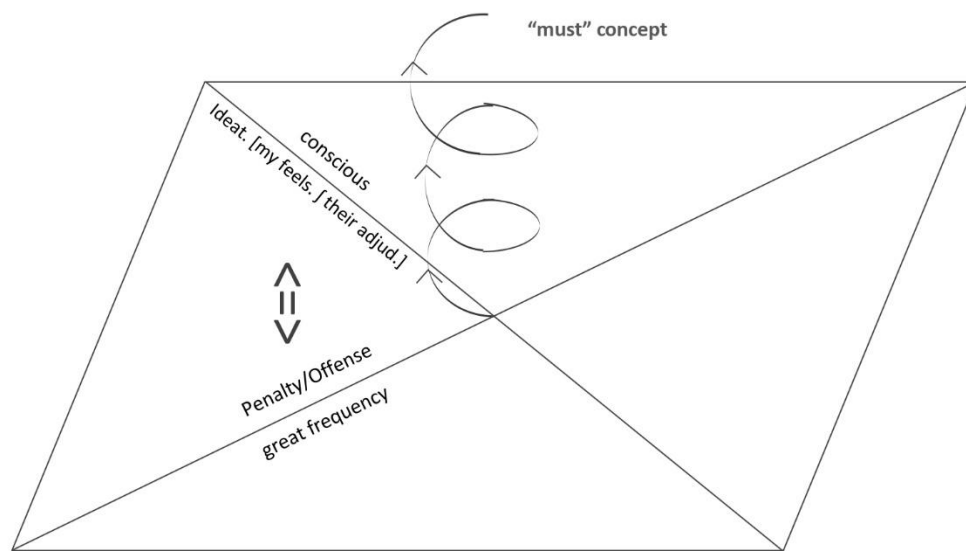


FIGURE 2

In the diagram, the genesis of the “*must*” *concept* is represented by means of arrows which rise following the spiral that emerges perpendicular from the plain where the “*in situ*” interactions occur. Such a mode of birth of the word, *per se*, will seal the function which the word must fulfil in the future when it might be instantaneously brought to mind by the individual whenever he needs to organize his “*in situ*” ideations.

[At this juncture, it is worth remembering that we left off our analysis of the history of soccer with regard to penalty rules as they affected every aspect of play, i.e., the use of hands, as well as, kicking, pushing and tripping. Were a punishment called against an individual player to hand the ball over to the opposing team and so cause fellow team mates to lose the game momentum, these teammates would end up feeling frustrated and resentful toward the rule breaker. As a consequence of these rules, the players strove more and more successfully to manoeuvre the ball as though it were glued to their feet, but little else. The fear of penalties limited the

frequency of infractions, however soccer of that pioneering epoch consisted practically of nothing more than a great forward toe-kick of the ball and the hot pursuit forward by other players who would kick it once again. This was the standard manner of play used by all teams.

According to our interpretive diagram of collective human action, the reoccurrence of habitual infractions by a player can be avoided only after his mind intuitively understands for the first time a specific word – a word conventionally used by the group – which suddenly clarifies the feelings of punishment that the player in question is suffering. Something very obvious and which blinds you with its simplicity. Something that causes you to exclaim: ‘Why didn’t I realize this before?’

So, what was *this* key word both in terms of the development of the individual player and the development of soccer as a sport? Why did this word serve uniquely to the exclusion of all others?

First let us consider this from the individual’s point of view. The individual must internalize this word; he must understand the endemic concept within the word. Also, he must immediately realize its moral strength in addition to its logic.

I myself remember when the first televisions reached my small town in 1963, more or less, to broadcast soccer matches live. The Real Madrid dominated the Spanish League in those years (as well as the European Cup!) to the degree that it was common to see the “white team” score goals employing short passes. That *passing* technique astonished our pre-adolescent minds.

By the age of 11 or 12, I remember one good day in the school yard when two friends of mine, Natalio and Masito, and I, began to pass the ball between ourselves with smartly coordinated movements of natural, intuitive spontaneity. The immediate and unforgettable sensation was one of great ease and advantage as we scored goals with little effort in

comparison to other players who continued to individually retain the ball excessively, often to the point of losing control of it.

That word, *passing*, raised our calibre of play to a new level of sociability which we, its new acolytes, clearly perceived due to its sense of logic and its moral authority. A true *translatio* to a new conceptual, moral *locus*: Before discovering the word ‘passing’, with its significant implications, my play had a merely individualistic orientation. At best, I would control the ball as much as possible and I would avoid committing infractions. As I constantly recalled this word and repeatedly put it into practice, my play began to acquire a more *collective*, normative orientation with the play of my teammates.

Secondly, the breakthrough of *passing* is historically well-known and well-documented:

“On Oct. 26, 1863, representatives from a group of clubs met at the Freemason’s Tavern in England to draw up the first official rules. The rules were accepted on Dec. 18, 1863.

Rule 6 stated that “when a player has kicked the ball, any one of the same side who is nearer to the opponent’s goal line is out of play” (offside!). The lifeblood of the early games was the skill of dribbling. *The forward pass was banned*. Rule 6 was changed in 1866 to permit advanced players to receive a pass, providing there were at least three opponents between themselves and the goal line.

There still was little difference in the way the game was played. In the 1870s, soccer pundit C.W. Alcock wrote about “the grand and essential principle of backing up.” This first recognized principle of play was understood to mean the following closely of a fellow player in case possession was lost. *There was no mention of passing*.

The first international match saw Scotland play England in Glasgow, where the English played a 1-2-7 and the Scots a 2-2-6. It was the Scots who realized the potential of the 1866 rule change and began to employ the short pass. Despite the large number of forwards in the game, the result was a 0-0 tie.

Players now had to think about their positional play due to the new weapon, *the pass*. By the 1883 Football Association Cup final, the English had developed the long passing game. Blackburn won the finale easily, using the long pass to change the point of attack from wing to wing.

By this time, new skills had been introduced to the game — the ability to hit a long ball and the skills necessary to receive, intercept or clear long passes. Heading, chest trapping, receiving on the run and volleying were skills now emphasized.” (Bluem, 2012: 68). (Our italics)

However, why was it so? Why did *passing* become the key element in the maturation of soccer? The reason is obvious: passing transformed soccer into *a team effort*. It incorporated the collective discipline basic to rugby into this nascent sport – a discipline which had not been achieved in the early evolution of soccer... an evolution which demanded greater skill on the part of the players in using their feet. It is *only* through the coordinated team efforts of *all players* to advance the ball and to deprive the opposing team of possession that they can effectively dominate play. The activity of each player has to become a means, an instrument, in the service of the activity of all teammates; this was the only way to stablish discipline in soccer, as has always been the case in rugby, soccer’s matrix.

Passing resulted in a spectacular refinement of the normative sense of soccer, i.e., it represented a step forward in the ongoing search for *its meaning* (Weber 2019: 79). This word, passing, is just a more advanced and more visionary way to refer to its so unique and feasible technique of play.

In fact, as we will see, generally speaking, the universal adoption of passing played the principal role in the historical development of soccer—not only in terms of team strategy, tactics and required player skills, but also in the very evolution of soccer’s rules. This Scottish invention, passing, truly represented a benchmark in our sport’s maturation. Since the ball could travel faster than could players, the teammates were able to set themselves up orderly throughout the entire field: some as backs (defenders), some as forwards (strikers), some as midfielders and some as wingers. The masters of passing became the owners of the midfield -it’s not by chance that these masters (this kind of players) would become the best coaches after their retirement from active play!]

10. From the adoption of this *new-word*, everything is going to change: now every individual is capable of *recalling* the new concept whenever the situation might require. One does so by recollecting the term which has been conveyed by idiomatic convention⁵.

That concept affords him a logical interpretation of the sensations which he perceives at every social moment in which he is participating. Now the individual can over and over again employ various methods to respond to personal sensations triggered by the practical challenges which he confronts, both in relation to the interaction with others as well as in regard to the technical manoeuvring of the tools.

⁵ “The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses” (Saussure 1959: 66)

In our diagram we point out with *descending* arrows the recollection of this “must” concept, which is painful during the first attempts but later automatic and instantaneous, as if we were to say... *at the speed of light!*⁶

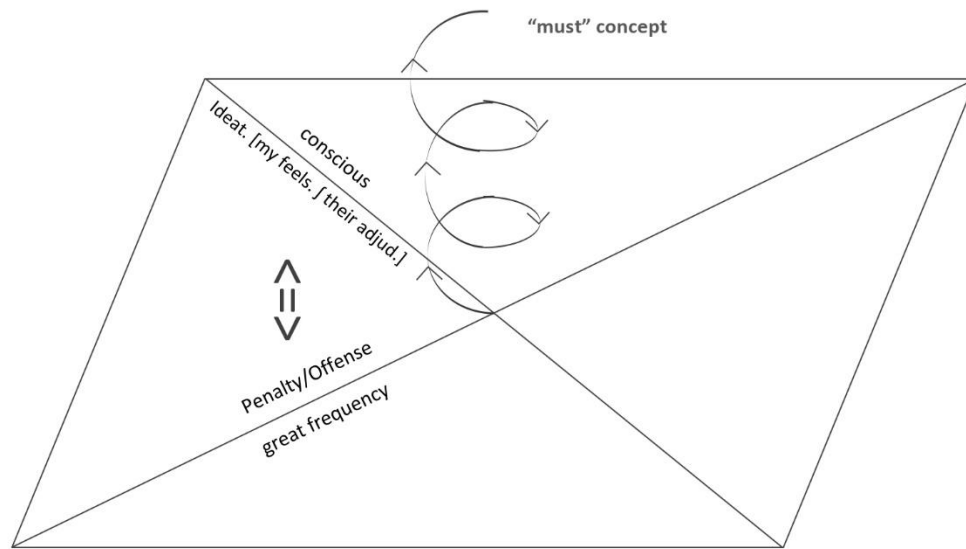


FIGURE 3

As opposed to errant performance seen previous to the advent of the “must-concept”, the individual now chooses not to stray to a behaviour which the group would both consider and penalize as dysfunctional, but rather to fine tune his play into a collective behaviour which the group will consider

⁶ Some classical authors, namely Epicurus and Lucretius, had already noticed on their own terms that the “must” concepts retain their separate entity by which new empirical sensations and new ideations can be resolved once and again *in situ*. These authors believed that the *idòla* were *effluviums* given off by the objects and which approach us with “unsurpassed speed” -in the modern vernacular: at the speed of light. That spiral wave we have drawn perpendicular to the *situational* plane moves through the void without friction. The testimony that our senses give us, i.e.: our sensations, are always reliable and true. Our sensations are not at fault when we, on our part, insert *idòla* which do not conform to said sensations. The sensations are not to blame if, on our part, we cause non-conforming *idòla* to collide with our sensations so generating error and deception due to our insertion rather than to the sensations *per se*. See Agustín García Calvo (1979)

The Christian faith will elaborate these *very* same concepts much later, in the sequence *Veni Creator Spiritus* -attributed to a Carolingian monk: Rabanus Maurus Magnentius (780-856).

positively normative. Now for the first time, the individual has the ability *to auto-correct* the sensations which he feels as a result of his own behaviour – since he possesses the key, i.e., the judgement to enable him to do the right thing as perceived in the eyes of the group. Now, his own mind governs the sensations resulting from his actions, unlike previously when the action of others imposed itself on his sensations and his thoughts.

Thus, when the individual needs that “must” concept, he brings it to mind by means of the word which designates said concept in the conventional language. This recollection cannot be accomplished in an isolated manner but rather through its incorporation with other concepts (other words) also demanded for the *in situ* resolution of the event in every instance and place. Our mind constantly constructs sentences in which words are syntactically grouped, i.e., grammatically organized in a single blow. This is all accomplished instantly with a subconscious, automatic expertise which requires -one would *almost* say- no prior thought. Since birth, the baby has been working, developing and fine tuning this ability so that by the age of two years he possesses the requisite skill.

The grammar is born in the individual as well as in the human species as a system of rigid rules – the most important being those which are universal, while many others remain exclusively particular to each idiom.⁷

⁷ Without doubt, the reader understands the possibilities of applying this outline both to the study of the acquisition of the maternal language by the infant and also to the study of the acquisition of language by the human being. Only that than applying our outline to historical time, i.e., the time of institutionalization of a collective practice, it is to be applied either in the realm of ontogenetic time during the maturation of an individual, or in the realm of phylogenetic time in which the constitution of our human gene diverges from that of the rest of primates.

In an already cited book (Allones Pérez 2019 [1999]), this outline was employed to elucidate the most essential aspects of both the ontogenetic and the phylogenetic processes –while far from exhausting the analytic possibilities therein.

Given that this is a purely formal outline -without reference to any specific content- it enjoys the advantage of limitless application possibilities -to any collective action, as long as it has been successfully institutionalized

Grammar, that system of strict rules designed to organize words in a manner that will facilitate *the ideational goal of the sentence*, guarantees that the sentence will not cause the individual to lose his logical coherence as he moves forward (as he *must* move forward) if he wishes to resolve all the unique incidents which confront him personally at every turn within the realm of coordinated, collective action.

So then, unlike concepts which are minted and stamped into their unique phonetic figure and then stored in the mind as ideal-words separate and distant from the action, the organization or ideation of each sentence is also created in the mind, however *in situ*, according to the momentary requirements for speech.

“The Speaker will instantly organize a sentence which conveys a mental image -the unique organization of this sentence will be reproduced instantly in the mind of the Listener at the completion of its vocalization so as to ensure a grammatically sufficient communication.

Every sentence is composed instantaneously, in a flash, extracted from the *toolbox* of grammatical structure immediately prior to its vocalization.

In the act of organizing the sentence, ideal-words and rules of syntax are chosen from said toolbox of language.

We maintain that these ideal-words and rules of syntax are building blocks in the organization of the sentence and are destined to serve as *terms* in the following vocalization thereof.” (García Calvo 1989: 225)^{8,9}

⁸ For the reader, having reached this point, it should be obvious that our Theory of Social Action is both fundamentally indebted to and dependent upon the grammatical theory of Professor Agustín García Calvo. Therefore, we resort to said grammatical theory in order to understand the role of language in all human sociability – this intervention of language which, *as the principal aspect of social action*, ought to be analysed by some theory, whatever that may be. In the Thesis for my Master’s Degree (a work guided many years ago by Professor Carlos Moya and subsequently read in June of 1983 at the Complutense University of Madrid), we studied the intervention of language in social action. To prove this thesis, it was necessary to rely on the language theory of Professor García Calvo – a theory which never failed to satisfactorily answer our sociological questions, however erratic they may have seemed at times.

See García Calvo (1979) and 2 volumes more published in following years (1983; 1999).

The communication of grammatically well-built sentences gives you the concomitant ability both to coordinate with others as well as to skilfully employ the tools necessary to accomplish your normative individual role within the common task in which you are engaged.

However, as George Herbert Mead (2015: 67) explained very well to us, “the meaning of what we say is always present to us when we speak”, i.e., through the expression of the sentence, I become even more aware of my own thought. That conscious thought is nothing more than the tip of the iceberg which conceals 8/9ths of its volume beneath the surface: that conscious thought refers to the momentary aspects of my interactions (with people) as well as those actions (with tools) which still await completion.

Nevertheless, those conscious aspects of social action are not the most interesting aspects for the sociologists. On the contrary, the linguistic contents of most interest to sociologists (the true objectives of their study) are those aspects of social action which become somewhat *subconscious* from early infancy, and which are subsequently carried out almost without thought.

Those linguistic contents have left behind the conscious phase of thought precisely because they have proven the worth of their normative functionality in innumerable conversations and interactions with other members of the group for whom these linguistic contents are likewise subconscious.

They are linguistic contents which are the basis of social action with which they are widely co-extensive and, as a result thereof, are brought to mind over and over in the course of daily life.

⁹ The grammar of Professor Garcia Calvo could certainly help to clarify some important theoretical questions raised by Lashley in his seminal 1951 lecture.

Finally now, we are able to complete in this manner our diagram of social action:

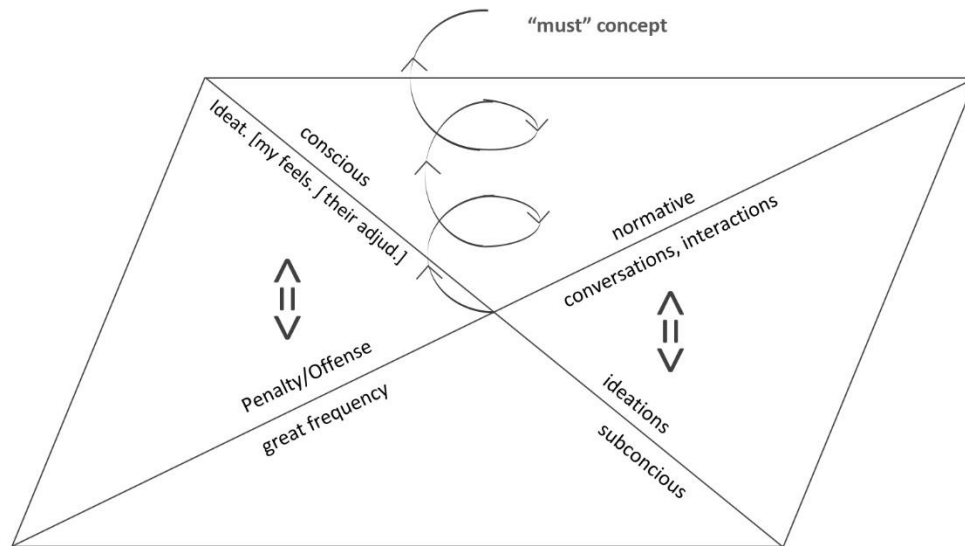


FIGURE 4

[Let's see now how that simultaneous ideation and several shared "must" concepts were produced in soccer as a consequence of the generalization of passing.

Before the advent of passing, the game of soccer consisted of two basic plays. The first play consisted of one powerful, forward kick which would send all the players of the attacking team in pursuit of the ball. The second play occurred when an offensive player in control of the ball would manage to fake out his opposing player and break through the defensive line in such a way that his teammates could quickly follow him and provide back up in case he were to lose the ball.

The rule makers of the Football Association considered the off-side rule (as it had been inherited from rugby and which prohibited any offensive player from preceding the ball) to be excessively strict for soccer.

Consequently, they made the rule less restrictive in 1866 by now allowing the most forward, offensive player to receive the ball from behind provided that 3 defensive players of the opposing team were located between their goal and the approaching offensive player:

“In 1866, the existing off-side rule was modified to its present-day form. A rope was strung between the two vertical goal-posts to designate more precisely the goal area. The fair-catch would be prohibited.”

This new rule, which allowed the short pass forward, would come more and more to define soccer play as it served over and over again as a tool in the mind of the player in possession of the ball. As a consequence, teammates would need to employ that same concept in order to comprehend expected movements and then to optimally position themselves to be ready to assist this teammate in the coming, anticipated plays –just as defensive players on the opposing team would need to employ that same concept to thwart his advance. On the playing field, each and every player simultaneously perceives two games: 1. a visible game of interwoven physical, corporal activities and 2. another, an invisible game of interwoven intellectual activities. The latter consists of an incessant ideational work which makes use of concepts which (though not perfectly equal) are “related to the behaviour of others” (Weber 2019: 79).

The players most disposed to move the ball forward and to shoot at goal became ‘forwards’ or ‘strikers’ while those with the aptitude for stealing the ball from their opponents became ‘backs’ or ‘defenders’. Other players, those with a strong sense of teamwork were more inclined to play a supporting role in midfield, ‘midfielders’. Their contribution to the team effort was found in their skill in receiving the ball from behind, passing it through the midfield lines and moving it ever forward. (These players would be a fertile quarry for future coaches). All teammates would soon

endeavour to build a sense of unified interaction and to enhance their performance skills, e.g., passing the ball across the field, passing through the opposing players, square passing, controlling the ball in the air, heading, full volleying, and shooting on goal... The Football Association, always with an eye to making their game more exciting and more spectacular, learned well how best to take advantage of these and similar juggling skills. As we explained previously, at every moment the player who controls the ball produces ideations as to how to manoeuvre the ball in view of the circumstances of play. Similarly, each and every one of his teammates shares many of the concepts brought to mind by such ideations - however, *not* all concepts are shared because many of them deal with the positioning of each individual player, as well as to the positioning of all the other players on the field (whether teammates or opponents). This interwoven fabric of mental ideations (which are practiced by teammates day after day and week after week in games against opposition teams) generates subconscious routines, automatic playing styles, habitual actions and even studied, strategic manoeuvres which are reemployed because of their simplicity and proven efficiency. Now, each and every player understands what he must do throughout the entire game. Consequently, these players newly accustomed to synchronizing their efforts will come to constitute an integrated, efficient *team* rather than a mere juxtaposition of individual players. Meanwhile, the motivation of each and every player on the defending team is to attempt to steal the ball in order to regain the offensive. Although the coach of the defending team has schooled his players in advance, in no case will those players gain a comparable insight into the attacking team's tactics nor into their strategic skills. In addition, the offensive ball-mover always tries to outwit the defender through feints and deceptions. The defender can recognize the intentions of his adversary only when the latter

strikes the ball, not before. There is a *prior* tenth of a second in the ideation of his decision that always gives the offensive player an advantage over the defender. In one-on-one, when the goal is within scoring range, the offensive player's advantage can prove unstoppable.

By this time, a crossbar replaced the horizontal rope which connected the two goal posts so as to better define the area of the goal. As the forwards became more and more precise and dangerous, they scored an abundance of goals so as to make each goal relatively less valuable —and consequently the matches less competitive, less exciting and less entertaining.

Therefore, there was found a heroic, audacious, and unforeseen remedy completely contrary to the already existing culture of soccer: One of the defensive players would be allowed to use his hands!

All the interwoven, ideational work gave an advantage to the forwards; however, the permission newly given to the goalkeeper to use his hands interrupted to their very core -like a bull in a China shop- the coexistent fundamentals of said ideations and in so doing gave the advantage to the defensive players. So much did the advantage swing to the side of the defence, that two years later the corner rule was modified in order to reduce the defences' excessive use of the too easy recourse of throwing the ball out of bounds at the base line: now, the offensive would be permitted to return the ball to play by means of a corner kick.

“In 1871 a new rule made it legal for the goal-keeper to use his hands. In 1873 the corner kick was adopted. Two years afterwards, the rope which connected the two vertical goal posts was replaced by a horizontal bar.”

With the corner-kick, the intent was to equalize the excessive advantage gained by the defense when the goalkeeper was granted the use of his

hands. Nevertheless, the offensive players continued to increase the pressure of their attack.]

III

11. In addition to *analytical* concepts, every scientific theory must develop adequate *operational* concepts, this is to say: concepts that point out factual data which are subject to measurement and whose behaviour that very theory itself might be capable of predicting (Blalock, 1968: 5-27).

In the case of the theoretical diagram which we have proposed and which we presume has universal validity, these operational concepts must likewise be universally valid; they should point out an aspect which will always be present in any given historically institutionalized social action and whose statistical (numerical) data might be theoretically predictable. (Allones Pérez 2004; 2005)

Our empirical principle of universal validity was previously stated –for other objectives- by Èmile Durkheim (1997: 57)

“Moreover, it is understandable that the reaction of punishment is not in every case uniform, since the emotions that determine it are not always the same. In fact they vary in intensity according to the strength of the feeling that has suffered injury, as well as according to the gravity of the offense it has sustained. A strong state of feeling reacts more than does a weak one, and two states of equal intensity react unequally according to the degree to which they have been violently attacked. Such variations must necessarily occur and are useful, moreover, for it is important that the strength invoked should be proportionate to the extent of the danger. If too weak, it would be insufficient; if too violent, it would represent a useless dissipation of energy. Since the gravity of the criminal act varies according to the same factors, *the proportionality everywhere observed between crime and punishment* is therefore established with a kind of mechanical spontaneity, without any

necessity to make elaborate computations in order to calculate it. What brings about a gradation in crimes is also what brings about a gradation in punishments; consequently, the two measures cannot fail to correspond, and such correspondence, since it is necessary, is at the same time constantly useful.” (*Our italics*)

Now, it is left to our theory to justify why one can predict (and confirm) in any institutionalized social action that universal “proportionality everywhere observed between crime and punishment”—as before mentioned by Durkheim.

12. Let’s go first to that proportionality between offense and punishment (penalty) as we calculate such to be in our personal relationships, when the group, as an institution, decides *not* to intervene.¹⁰

In order to understand the proportionality between offense and punishment, we must understand that which is most in play before all is the *visceral identity* of the implicated individuals as well as that of their group. That identity, as we have seen, is the product of the ideational work of the individual participants in the collective action. In every instance, there is produced in the minds of these individuals an intertwining of ideations which are necessarily individualized within the mind of each participant. These ideations are reciprocally referenced and evoke the same “must” concepts – some more common than others – but which in any case are dependent on their respective positions within the same, shared social *locus*. Then as a result of routine repetition, both the personal and the

¹⁰ Within the content considered normative by the group, all behaviours and conflicts that arise between individuals fall within its jurisdiction; however, the group (spontaneously or by virtue of its formal authority) may decide that some of these conflicts do not merit the group’s institutional intervention but rather allows resolution by the individuals themselves.

group identities are born signed, sealed and delivered as said ideations become more and more subconscious, visceral and less questioned. These ideations likewise become automatic in the minds of those who construct them.¹¹

Well OK, when the individual who is about to commit the offense conceives and carries it out, it is necessary that he *reverses* completely both the other individual as well as collective ideations. That is to say, it is necessary for him to dismantle all the ideations of others; he needs to manipulate those ideations in order to get a result which is neither normative nor conventionally expected—and, in so doing, put in question many of those “must” concepts which shape said ideations.¹²

As members of the group, we all have within our reach the power to analytically review common ideational work. Not only does each individual have within his ability the capacity to foresee the consequences which his offensive actions will generate –in terms of responsive, repressive reactions on behalf of others- but said individual also has the similar capacity to measure and to apply (*using the same scale of measurement, in reverse*) his own repressive reactions in response to the criminal actions of others.

¹¹ Because of that, in soccer a good number of the ball contacts by hand are considered unintentional because many (however, not all) truly are unintentional, and obviously it never occurs to anyone playing soccer to carry the ball in his hands -except for the goalkeeper, of course.

¹² Those subjective passions which animate the human being (whatever the personal and historical circumstances) have been judged subtly by traditional Christianity to be capital sins (pride, envy, lust, anger, laziness, gluttony, avarice) which engender many passions “such as anxiety, anger, ambition, envy, jealousy, love, enthusiasm, pride, vengefulness, piety, dedication and desires of every sort”. (Weber 2019: 81)

In the human being those passions shape normative behaviour as much as offensive behaviour, but only the latter are cause for punishment.

Keeping in mind that various members will be affected by the offensive action and as we measure and apply *our input* in regard to possible repressive actions, it will happen that some will coordinate more or less spontaneously to determine the repressive action which, as we know, is always of *collective* nature.

Basically, one seeks a repressive action that will make appropriate restitution sufficient to make whole the aggrieved individuals for the personal and material damages caused by the offensive action –whenever the case is possible.

But above all, since it is the identity of each individual person as well as that of the entire group which is in play, those directly affected by said offensive behaviour will seek redress for the perceived *moral outrage* which emanates from their sense that all their routine, ideational work has been treacherously mocked and manipulated.

It should not surprise us that -generally speaking- in the penalty reaction one might observe spontaneous passions which are not proportional—but rather more similar to those which provoked the offense - since the rational capacity to measure the proportionality of the penal reaction is lost from sight when it is these *same* aggrieved members who viscerally take justice into their own hands.

No, for any valid proportionality to prevail, it must originate from another source.

13. However, in all offensive behaviour, as we have seen, there is of necessity a moral challenge to the ‘must’ concepts which are endemic to the group practice in question. For this very reason, the group -- as

represented by the authorities thereof -- soon feels that they must intervene in defence of their collective interests.

A dispute among individuals is one thing, for which it is the group's responsibility to impart justice for all parties. On another higher level, the *additional* intervention by a public prosecutor seeks something else: 1. to compensate the group by making amends for damages to community assets and for damages to its representatives, and 2. above all, to punish the delinquent individual for the infringement on the "must" concepts inherent to the group's historical survival.

Of course, the group's authority (more or less formalized) has no recourse other than to intervene when the very viability of the accepted social practice itself is endangered due to individual aberrant behaviour which makes impossible the expected compliance to said practice, e.g., when a soldier loses step during marching formation, when a motorist drives in the wrong lane, when an employee fails to earn his salary, when a defensive player controls the ball with his hands or when someone commits murder or robbery.

Why must there be punishment on behalf of the group? Is it the material damages caused by such individual infractions or is it the relevance of the moral challenge to the "must" concepts which sustain the morality of the group? It is clear that the group as such does not feel itself threatened by an individual's sporadic infraction which might be certainly harmful - however, in fact irrelevant to the success of the group. That which the group cannot endure (from the point of view of its *existential* continuity) is that the challenges to its moral identity --as evidenced by such sporadic infraction-- might go unpunished.

Therefore, it is essential that the group provide a precise clarification of the causes of said infraction and, above all, the individual's *intent* responsible

for this behaviour. In the calculation of the corresponding penalty, it is most important that it serves as an exemplary punishment *to validate the morality* of the other members of the group.

Interestingly, we see a fundamental difference between the resolutions of conflicts made by the involved individuals themselves as opposed to those resolutions made by authorized group intervention. Simply stated, the group acts *in extenso* with documented memory of specific offences and corresponding penalties applied through the length and width of its geographical domain from the time of its historical inception.¹³

Consequently, it is through this experience (which is historically *documented in extenso*) that penalties are constantly refined so as to add a sense of proportionality when applied to the most frequent offences... More proportionality in what sense? Clearly, more proportionality in guaranteeing the historical continuity of the group practice, which is also the best safeguard of the group's moral identity as well as the morale of its members. *In this*, proportionality is born.

Then, the group is able to search through statistics in order to identify the most frequent offenses and their *most functional*, corresponding punishments:

Offenses	Punishments
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¹³ To say this more technically, with Durkheim's own terms: in all individual incarnations of the social fact under consideration (Durkheim 1982: 54-55). This is the cornerstone for the delegation of the penalty function into the hands of the tribal *elders* in illiterate societies.

From a sociological point of view, we see the historical origin of the Codes, of the Norms, of the Laws and Rules of every type as a simple elevation of mere statistics to the level of legal principles.

The Law is born everywhere elevating to the norm of behavior the relationship between offense and punishment – *that* relationship which appears to be the statistically most functional in whatever specific, collective activity. As a consequence, judges who are conscious of the inherently conservative nature of the Law, affirm that genesis since they realize that the best safeguard for said collective action is precisely the literal, systematic, and regular application of that written law.¹⁴

We are thus able to interpret the universal proportionality between offense and punishment as indicated by Durkheim (1997) through the application of the analytical concepts developed in our theoretical work. This theoretical outline would be worth very little, scientifically speaking, if it were not able *to provide* adequate operational concepts capable of precise measurement and prediction in regard to the data of the specific, real-world facts as chosen by the outline itself.

¹⁴ That is why the Spanish National Penal Code, for instance, in its 1870 edition, stated in Article I: “The only punishable crimes shall be those explicitly so designated by the Law itself”. In Article II (in accordance with Article I), it was ratified that, “In the case that a tribunal might have knowledge of some act which it may consider worthy of repression -- though it may not be found punishable currently by Law -- the Tribunal will refrain from proceeding against said act and will point out to the Government those reasons which will elucidate the need for penal action”.

One hundred twenty-five years later, these two Articles were incorporated into the new, Spanish Penal Code as Article I.1. and Article II.4.

Our empirical principle claims universal validity -- as does the theoretical outline which generated it – and is thus applicable to any social practice conditional upon the successful institutionalization of said practice within any past, present or future human society.

[In regard to soccer, let's focus on the precision demonstrated by the rule makers at the moment of determining the maximum sanction. As corner kicks would cause numerous forward players to rapidly enter the zone near to the goal, defensemen would respond similarly by filling this small area with players. In these *mêlées*, the referees would scarcely be able to see the very frequent infractions which eludes penalty with equal frequency. Besides, the defender preferred to commit any foul – even one which would result in a free kick penalty on the goal rather than to allow the opponent a direct shot which would be nearly impossible to stop. Referees were tricked. Thus, it was that the rule makers reacted with an *in extenso* evaluation of the maximum possible sanction for the fouls which were intentionally committed (and *this* intention is the decisive factor) to avoid a sure goal. Since the infraction was committed in order to impede a goal, the penalty had to be proportionate to the intention of said infraction -that's to say, it had to be worth *almost* a goal for the aggrieved team (while not actually being a goal itself). Finally:

“In 1891, the penalty kick was adopted: the penalty kick was taken from a point directly in front of the exact centre of the goal posts from a distance of 11 meters...”

The Football Association determined what should be the appropriate maximum penalty to be applied to the corresponding maximum infraction.

It managed to do this with such functionality and efficacy that the formula remained the same nowadays!

Certainly, it would not be possible to alter this specifically defined penalty point without upsetting *in extenso* the game of soccer as we play it].

14. However, there is a class of transgressions of a high-risk nature born of incendiary ideas within the group and capable of igniting fire in the minds of men. We mean *collective* infractions which run contra to group opinion. They arise when either an individual or several members of the group *invent* a logic different from that which had until then subconsciously governed the group practice. We are referring to a new logic which engenders *some novel “must” concepts* which lend themselves to easy adoption by group members and which can serve to render invalid both the group’s accepted, generally institutionalized practices as well as its specific applications. Also, these novel “must” concepts serve either for a disqualification of the authorities’ moral behaviour or for a criticism of the said authorities’ technical performance. Such decisions amount to a full-blown attack on the very heart of the group's visceral identity as well as upon that of its members, who immediately feel the peril which these actions pose for the group’s very historical continuity as well as for the individual’s biographical survival.

The customary collective action of the group, as accepted until the present, finds itself in fact threatened if such *revolutionary* opinion becomes generalized among the members of the group. As we have seen, all ideational work will become subject to a conscious revision which will do no less than to disorientate the daily routine of the group in a profoundly *destabilizing* way. It is not surprising, however, that such a generalization might occur and that many people, for whatever reasons, might adopt that

new logic which challenges the perceived, ongoing repression by the group –there are motives for many group members to join in this new logic. What motivates many group members to adopt to this new logic? In the first place, this novel logic claims to offer a rationality superior to that presently in force. Or perhaps, this new logic aspires to present itself as the defender of *supposed* traditions. The new logic may also serve to satisfy one’s pride or moral vanity. Commonly, it offers a new scapegoat to be hated and attacked with impunity (*libido dominandi*). It may appeal to those with ambition to seek a more advantageous social position. Additionally, a more seductive, utopian hopefulness may be inspired by the new logic...

Whatever the motives might be (those more subconscious being the more effective) to propagate the new group logic, there remains one above all, *this one*: the larger the masses, the more will join. (cf. Noelle-Neumann 1984 and Allones Pérez 2021).

Thus is born a new sub-group which will quite soon (with its own, unique content) necessarily enhance the normative and repressive scheme pertinent to universal, collective, human behavior here being studied. Within this sub-group of pioneers or *true believers* (cf. Hoffer 2002), there is the seed of a new social action with which the aforementioned can act as *political commissaries*, i.e., as the future, penal authorities.

Influenced by their historical experience, the group’s authorities soon feel alarmed and, to the degree possible, seek a solution for such a bitter prospect. The most effective strategy *to silence* the pioneers who propose such a political challenge is to cut off that challenge at its roots before an ideological struggle takes off. All procedural tactics will be employed: moral disqualification, personal defamation, mockery, electoral humiliation, imprisonment, deprivation of property, criminal prosecution in all its degrees -including execution... Above all, success depends on the

invention of concepts capable of pointing out any logical flaws in the revolutionary "must" concepts so as to counter the latter at the ideological level. . . Anything goes, any symbolic or political violence is acceptable provided that it silences the dissenting voices which question the extant dogmas of the group. Whatever their results may be, both the ideological and the political struggles are served. In any case, the group will never be the same again as a new stage opens in its historical evolution.

[From the very beginning, rugby has sought to conceptually counteract soccer which has gained popularity day by day since its inception. A fable about the supposed origin of rugby comes to the aid of its supporters:

"Although the football rules had not yet been written down at Rugby, the school itself had an ironclad rule affecting all games: they had to cease with the tolling of the five o'clock bell. One day in 1823, a kicking game was in progress when the bell began to ring. At that moment, a young man named William Webb Ellis caught the ball. Perhaps he'd been waiting all along for just this moment; perhaps he wasn't quite up on the unwritten rules; perhaps he just panicked. Whatever his reason, instead of making the ball like a good fellow for one last free kick, the young gentleman took off like a frightened rabbit and, to the horror of all, RAN lickety-split across the goal!... Some of his teammates said later they thought he was stealing the ball.

(...) Today his name is immortalized at Rugby School by a plaque dedicated to 'William Webb Ellis, who with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the Rugby game'." (PFRA Research).¹⁵

However, since there is no valid documentation that such an event occurred, this fable lives on as nothing more than illusionary

¹⁵ The Rugby World Cup was renamed in 1987 and has henceforth been recognized as the William Webb Ellis Cup.

thinking... This myth suggests that soccer gave birth to rugby as opposed to rugby giving birth to soccer thus inverting the documented historical facts and winning immediate popularity among rugby fans ... Why so? It is a *myth* that portrays rugby as an innovation, a wilful *choice* and a logical point of departure from soccer – thus leaving the appearance that soccer was the *inferior* sport to be subsequently overshadowed by rugby. The myth serves to defend the visceral identity of rugby as it existed for centuries and to invite soccer fans *to return their allegiance to rugby* and so challenge soccer's popular success – a success which jeopardizes rugby's very identity and historical course. The myth, which has served in the past, continues even today as a powerful tool in the ideological struggle between rugby and soccer to captivate the imagination of the young!]

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