

## ANALYSIS OF THREE DIFFERENT SPANISH TRANSLATIONS OF KARL MARX'S DAS KAPITAL (1867): JUAN. B. JUSTO (1898), WENCESLAO ROCES (1946), PEDRO SCARON (1975)

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this paper is to analyse the differences between the different Spanish translations of Karl Marx masterwork DAS KAPITAL (1867). There are plenty of translations of Das Kapital into Spanish, but in this paper the analysis is focused in 3 of them: Juan Bautista Justo (1898), Wenceslao Roces (1946) and Pedro Scaron's (1975) translations. The choice of these three translations was not hazardous; J. B. Justo's is the first genuine translation from the German edition of DAS KAPITAL into Spanish; W. Roces' is the most spread one and P. Scaron's is considered the best of all of them.*

*This paper is organized in 4 main parts. The first one contains a brief biography of B. Justo and W. Roces, and due to the impossibility of founding P. Scaron's biography, we included a summarised description of P. Scaron translation team and the context when the translation took place. The second part consists of a thorough comparison analysis of the first chapter of the Volume I ('Commodities') of the 3 different translations of DAS KAPITAL. In this part it is outlined the differences in style and vocabulary and accuracy or discrepancy to the original Marx's edition. In the third part, you will find P. Scaron analysis and critique of the translations until his own translations of DAS KAPITAL. Finally, the fourth part includes a conclusion with my own critique and analysis of the 3 translations. In this last part lies the peculiarity of my work: until now there were critiques of the Spanish editions of DAS KAPITAL, but until now there was no one that have done a complete and serious analysis of Scaron's translation.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx published the first edition of his main work, *Das Kapital, Kritik der politischen Oekonomie*, in 1867. Later on, between June 1872 and May 1873 he published in instalments a second edition and at the end of the same year, the third one in a complete volume. These were the edition published in his life time. After his death Frederik Engels published two more editions (that are . This book is one of the most important book in the History of Economic Thought. Marx's masterwork became a milestone because of its revolutionary ideas as well as the complex and masterful critique to the economic theory of those times. But, actually, the

excellence of *Das Kapital* lies in the fact that the essence of its analysis and critique remains valid nowadays.

After realizing about the importance of this text, we become interested in how it was spread around the Spanish language countries. We found out that there are more than ten different editions of Marx's *Kapital*. The purpose of this paper is in the end, to identify if the different Spanish translations in existence transmit properly Marx's thought; and if it can be determined a best translation of all of them. We quickly realized that our aim was very ambitious and we decided to focus our analysis in only three translations. The choice was not an easy one and of course, it was not done by chance. We decided to look for the first translation, the most popular and the best according to the general critique. Following this order we chose the Spanish translations done by Juan Bautista Justo, Wenceslao Roces and Pedro Scaron.

We organized this work in four parts. As our aim was to compare and analyse the different translations we considered not only appropriate but also necessary to know some details of the translators. That is the purpose of the first part of the paper. This part included biographical data of two translators, Juan B. Justo and Wenceslao Roces. It is presented some details (nationality, studies, work experience, etc.) of their lives. Unfortunately, we could not find any personal detail about Pedro Scaron. We deduce that the lack of information about him could be because his political activity. He was part of the communist movements in Argentina during the last dictatorship and we must take into account the consequences of this illegal were that those days were full of censure and repression in Argentina. But Scaron was not the only one with an active political life; Justo and Roces had an intensive implication in socialist and communist movements. All this information aims to help in the analysis of the differences and similarities between the translations and in last instance to determine if the privet details of each translator influence in their works.

After the first part comes the most important one, which contains the compare analysis between the three translations. Due to the complexity and extension of Marx's *Kapital* we have to enclose our analysis to the Chapter one exclusively. So, we exposed in this part some examples of the differences and similarities between the three editions and at the end of the each example we included an explanation about the discrepancies. The examples consist of a copy of some extracts from the original text of the three translation and a copy of Marx's fourth German edition. This allowed us to compare the translations between them and to the original German text as well. We expected to find all kinds of differences: in the style, in the vocabulary, accuracy or discrepancy to the original Marx's edition, etc. And all our expectations were fulfilled indeed more than we thought from the beginning.

Before going further, it is important to stand out that in general it is not an easy task to translate any writing from German to Spanish. There are important grammatical differences as well as in the syntax and vocabulary. It is particularly difficult to translate the words which has a German origin. The technical vocabulary is very problematic because many times it does not have a similarity neither with English nor with Spanish. The use of a dictionary sometimes becomes useless because it is very common in German to unit two words together and it is possible not to find those words in any dictionary. The substantives are declined in German while in Spanish they are not, the construction of the plural nouns is extremely difficult, the order of the words in the sentences is very important and has its complexity. In addition to the mentioned difficulties we have to keep in mind that in Justo and Roces' days, the translation from German to Spanish was even more difficult. It was not easy to reach a perfect knowledge of the languages. These two translators have an special merit because the effort was bigger than in the case of Scaron's translation in the '70; especially Justo, which was the first one to face the challenge of translating *Das Kapital* from German to Spanish.

This is not the first time that someone does a research of the different Spanish translation of *Das Kapital*. Pedro Scaron included his analysis at the begging of his edition with the title "Advertencia del Traductor"

(Translator's Advice). We considered that it was enriching to include his critique in this paper. We did not based our analysis on Scaron's one, on the contrary, it was our starting point; we tried to go furthermore. PS had done a perfect work collecting all the information regarding all the Spanish versions. His critique is well explained and has strong basis and the purpose of all his effort was an ambitious project: to elaborate a critical edition of Marx's *Kapital*. A thorough analysis of all the former editions of *Das Kapital*, not only in Spanish but also in German was compulsory for PS. So, in this third part, we explained what exactly a critical edition is for the Argentinian researcher and the result of all his work. PS and our project have something very important in common: the latest purpose of helping to understand all Marx's thought presented in *Das Kapital*.

All our initials expectations were beaten as the results of the analysis were concise and defined. In the last part of the paper, we explained in detail all the conclusions of our analysis. We found important differences between the style of each translation and we could prove that the personal details of JBJ, WR and PS influence in their books. To our surprise, lots of similarities were found between WR and PS' works and the one that differs the most with respect to the others was Rocés' edition. We also found differences caused by geographical differences in the Spanish language because of the different nationalities of the translators. It was also checked that there were some important mistakes in the translations. It would be sensible to attribute this errors and erratas in ignorance of the language or problems with the understanding of Marx's thoughts. We already have mentioned the complexity of the language and Marx's ideas, these could be the main reasons of the errors.

We are pleased with this work as we could prove that a translation depends on the social-economic context of each translator. The economic and social background, the study and work experience, etc. influence in the perception of each translator and this finally results in: different editions of *Das Kapital* are a response to its historical period.

## 2. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF TRANSLATORS:

### 3.1. Juan Bautista Justo (JBJ)

He was born on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1865 in Buenos Aires (Argentina). He was a brilliant student at the Faculty of Medicine in UBA (University of Buenos Aires) and in order to finance his studies he worked as a journalist in the newspaper '*La Prensa*', where he had the first contact with politics. He graduated as a doctor with honours in 1892, because of his excellent dissertation about 'Arterial surgical aneurysm' he received a gold medal prize in a public ceremony. After his graduation we went to Europe to improve his medicine knowledge and apart from this he started to develop his interest in socialist ideas. Back from his travel around Europe he worked as a surgeon in the '*Hospital de Crónicos*' and from 1890 he started to write in the socialist newspaper '*El Obrero*'. When he was 27 years old he won a position as a professor in surgery in the Faculty of Medicine (UBA).

Although he was an excellent surgeon he did not feel complete with his profession, some years later he wrote: "*There was a time in my life that I used to go out of the hospital every morning, after spending half of the journey with the sick and disabled people, victims of misery, fatigue, exploitation and alcohol. And after all the pride of the architect that works with the flesh of the worker whose raw material is the human being was gone I started to ask myself if my fight against the illness and death that absorbed all my energies was*

*the best and most intelligently human I was able to do*"<sup>1</sup>. So, In April 1894 he founded with Augusto Kühn and Estaban Jiménez the newspaper '*La Vanguardia*', for this purpose he had to sell his car. The initial socialist newspaper some years later turned into a daily newspaper and a very important mean of communication and cultural diffusion.

The same year of the newspaper foundation, he joined the *Partido Obrero (Working party)*. Gradually, JBJ was getting involved more deeply into the political life until he finally founded with E. Jiménez, A. Kühn and I. Salomó the *Partido Socialista (Socialist Party)*. As the president of the Socialist party he was in charge of the culture and advertisement of the party's ideas and the socialist conference in Copenhagen and Berne.

In 1985 he travelled to USA and Europe again to investigate about the industrial capitalism and he started the translation of the first Volume of Karl Marx's *Capital*. He was the first person who translate *DAS KAPITAL* (DK) from its original language, German, to Spanish. The version of DK translated by him was the 2<sup>nd</sup> German edition (published when Karl Marx was still alive). JBJ's edition does not include any prologue by the translator because he pointed out that "*It is not my opinion what the people who are going to buy this book, are looking for*". There were two other editions of the same translation, the second one was published in 1918 and the third one in 1947. This last edition contains an index of ideas, order alphabetically and by order of development done by Esteban R. Ronanina.

JBJ had an intensive career as a socialist politician, doing conferences, writing his own theories about socialism and fighting against the found in the provincial elections. Finally, he was elected in 1912 as a congressman and he hold this position until 1924 when he was elected as a Senator of the Federal Capital (Buenos Aires). He was in charge of the Investigator Commission of Trusts and he took part in debate which ended finally in the University Reform of 1918. Because his political implications he was expelled from the University of Buenos Aires where he was working as a professor. JBJ proposed projects of laws about social issues, against game addiction and alcoholism and to eliminate the lack of literacy.

As a writer, JBJ was focused in the political and social essay. His main work was '*Teoría y práctica de la Historia (1909)*', but it was not the only one. He had an active writing activity not only in his own newspaper but also in several national press. His others works were: '*Teoría científica de la historia*' (1898), '*El socialismo argentino*' (1910), '*La intransigencia política*' (1921), '*Socialismo e imperialismo*', '*La internacional socialista*', '*El programa socialista en el campo*', '*La moneda*' (1937) y '*La cooperación libre*' (1938). Some of this works were published after his death.

One year before dying he made one dream real, he inaugurated the '*Casa del Pueblo*' with a public library, a big hall for conferences and some classrooms for night classes for workers. On 8<sup>th</sup> January, 1928 he died from a cardiac syncope during his holiday with his family in '*Los cardales*' (Buenos Aires). To pay tribute to JBJ the Argentinian government called an Avenue in Buenos Aires and a train station in the same city with his name.

### 3.2. Wenceslao Roces Suárez (WR)

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<sup>1</sup> ROGELIO DEMARCHI, "*Juan B. Justo: Biografía y Bibliografía – La brújula socialista*". Página 12, 18th Agosto 2002 (Buenos Aires).

He was born on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1897 in Soto de Sobrescobio, Province of Oviedo (Spain). He studied law in the Faculty of Law in *University of Oviedo*. He graduated with honours in 1919. He studied the PHD in the Faculty of Law in the *Central University of Madrid*, he received a special prize for his thesis '*El caso fortuito en el Derecho de obligaciones*'. His excellent qualifications allowed him to obtain a grant from the '*Junta de Ampliación de Estudios*' to go to Germany to continue studying in the *University of Freiburg*. There he worked with Rudolf Stammler in '*multiple lucrative issues related to the lack of possibility to fulfill obligations*'<sup>2</sup>.

He returned to Spain in 1922 and won the position of Professor of '*Institutions of Roman Law*' in the *University of Salamanca*. When Primo de Ribera accessed to the government by the military coup, he was suspended from his position as a Professor in the University. The reason was that he wrote in 1924 an article for the Argentinian newspaper '*La Razón*' against the exile of Miguel de Unamuno, who was a close friend of WR, imposed by Primo de Ribera's government.

WR was inclined towards Marxism ideology and he became a critique and analyst of some legal works about scientific critique. He was in charge of the translations of the main important writings of Rudolf Stammler, E. Bloch, G.W. F. Hegel and several Marxism authors: K. Marx, F. Engels, V. Lenin, I. Stalin, R. Luxemburgo, etc. When the dictatorship Alfonso XIII ended, Rocés started his career in the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) in Madrid. Also he took part in the '*Union de Escritores y Artistas Proletarios*' and in the institution of '*Socorro Rojo Internacional*'. In that period he also published the translation of '*El Manifiesto Comunista*' by Karl Marx.

WR was involved in the revolution of 1934 which took place in Asturias. After the defeat. He was obliged to exile in URSS, where he improve his Russian and started the project of translating Marx' masterwork DAS KAPITAL. He finished the first translation in 1935 and was published by *Cenit* Editorial.

He returned to Spain in 1936 when the elections for the II Republic tool place. During the Spanish Civil war he occupied the charge of deputy secretary of the Ministry of Public Institution and Beaux Arts. He was in charge of the robbery of the Archaeological National Museu's Collection of gold coins and the transfer out of Spain of some important pictures of Prado Museum. Finally, after the Francisco Franco dictatorship was established, he took up exile in South America, first in Chile, then in Cuba and finally in Mexico. He worked in the University of La Habana and Santiago de Chile. According to José Martín Juárez, "*His work as a Professor in South American lands was of great importance, he educated several generations of historians and philosophers in the critique and thorough analysis of the sources, making a deep lecture of Marxism writings and adding the most updated interpretations of this ideology*"<sup>3</sup>.

In 1942, he started to work in the publisher *Fondo de Cultura Económica* where we published in 1946 his second translation of DAS KAPITAL, Volume I, II and III. According to his prologue of the translator, he based his translation of the volume I in the fourth German edition of DAS KAPITAL (1980); the Volume II in Engels' second edition (1893) and the Volume III in the first edition 1894 done by Engels. Therefore he based his translations on editions that were published after Marx's death by F. Engels. He added at the end of each

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<sup>2</sup> Diccionario de catedráticos Españoles de Derecho (1847-1943). Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

<sup>3</sup> MARTÍN JUAREZ, José, 1992. Diccionario de catedráticos Españoles de Derecho (1847-1943). Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

volume an appendix with a collection of documentation, letters, other Marx works, reference index, table of equivalences of measurements units, etc., in order to help the reader to understand Marx' masterpieces.

W. Roces received special awards from several South American Universities: *Profesor Emérito de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México UNAM (1969)*, *Prize of UNAM de Docencia en Humanidades (1985)*, *Orden Ágila Azteca (1980)* and *Doctor honoris causa* by the UNAM and the University Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo.

He died in Mexico on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1992 from a heart attack. His body lies in the Pantheon Gardens of Mexico (Federal District).

### 3.3. Background and context of P. Scaron's (PS) and his translation team

Unfortunately, the search of Pedro Scaron biography was not successful. It was impossible to find any data from his life, studies, etc. We know that he was an Argentinian researcher and he was part of the communist movement in Argentina during the last dictatorship<sup>4</sup>. We believe that this is the reason why no detail of his life was found. The only information we could collect about his work was an analysis of his translation of *DAS KAPITAL – Ed. Siglo XXI. P. Scaron 1975*, done by María Teresa Rodríguez and some PS's writings. The analysis of T. Rodríguez gives us important information about the process of Scaron's work, the temporal context and background when the project of making a '*critical edition*' of Marx's *DAS KAPITAL* took place. First of all, PS called his translation the first '*critical edition*' of Marx's *Kapital*. In order to explain this meaning we have to analyse the original Marx's writing. There is not only one original text of *DAS KAPITAL* Volume I, indeed PS considered that there are 3 original editions of this first volume:

1. The first German edition, published in 1867 by Karl Marx
2. The second German edition, published in instalments from June 1872 to May 1873 and in final volume in June 1873
3. The first French edition, published in instalments from August 1872 to November 1875. This edition was corrected under Marx' supervision and it is important because he added some comments and explanations which help the understanding of his masterwork.

Then, there are 3 more editions that are important because they have significant changes, but they are not considered genuine original editions because they were published after Marx's death by Engels:

1. The third German edition, 1883
2. The English edition, 1887
3. The fourth German edition, 1890

The editions mentioned above had been taken into account by PS because "*the editions looked after by Engels can not be taken as the definitive text of 'The capital' (there is not such a definitive text), but as valuable and authorized effort to establish the body of what might have been a new edition of the first volume prepared by Marx*"<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> The last dictatorship in Argentina took place during 1976-1985. It was called "Proceso de reorganización nacional" ('Reorganizational National Process').

<sup>5</sup> Marx, Karl "El capital: crítica de la economía política", vol. I. Ed. Siglo XXI, 1975. Pedro Scaron – "Advertencia del traductor" PP. IX

PS were obliged to 'rebuild' one final edition from all of them that were in existence. PS read all these editions compared each one. He realized that all the editions were different. The editorial team of *Siglo XXI* understood that each one of that 6 editions represented 'a stage in the dialectical evolution of *The Capital*'<sup>6</sup>. All this research trying to find the original text of DAS KAPITAL results in a 'critical edition' which contains the following texts:

- 1) PS' translation is based on the second German edition (1873). This edition was the 'body' of the book. The notes of this second edition were considered as notes of the author.
- 2) PS added the Chapter I ('*Die Ware*') and the appendix of 'the form of the value' ('*Die Wertform*') and Marx' s underlinings of the first German edition of the volume I (1867), at the end of his book (precisely at the end of PS' volume III of the book I).
- 3) The notes extracted from the Engel's editions (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>) were included as 'sub notes' (separated from the original text with a line along the whole page) with the initials FE and marked between square brackets.
- 4) He included, as an exception, some variants (which were not considered in Engels 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> editions) extracted from the French edition "Marx, Karl '*Le capital*' lib. I Roy's translation, Paris 1969.
- 5) PS translated all the foot notes done by Marx and Engels in original language (English, French, Italian, etc.) directly from the original language to Spanish.
- 6) In the case of the quotes that Marx introduced in the main text (not in foot notes at the end of the page), normally they were in German (not in the original language). So, PS decided to translate from the original language if Marx's translations matched up with the original. If Marx's translations did not match up with the original, PS translated from Marx' German translation.
- 7) In the case of the short expression and literary quotes that Marx introduced in the main text, PS introduce them in the original language (as Marx did) and added in brackets the translation into Spanish.
- 8) In the beginning of the first book he included an "Advice of the translator" in which he point out all the information mentioned above.
- 9) Finally, he added "explicative notes" and bibliographical notes at the end of each volume.

There can be no doubt that PS' research and analysis result in a complex and unique version of DAS KAPITAL. The nomenclature of 'critical edition' is fairly assigned.

About PS' translation team, M. T. Rodríguez explained that all the members: Pedro Scaron, (translator and editor in charge of the work), Diana Castro, Miguel Murmis, León Manes and José María Aricó (collaborators) had the same social and intellectual background. All of them were intellectual militants of communist parties, so they have a 'shared cultural experience'<sup>7</sup>. Apart from that, all the members were in

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<sup>6</sup> M. Teresa Rodríguez. "Las formas de la traducción y de la edición al interior del campo cultural de la nueva izquierda argentina de los '70. El caso de la edición "crítica" de EL CAPITAL de Karl Marx en la versión de SIGLO XXI de Argentina", La Plata 2012

<sup>7</sup> (Aricó 2005: 30), M. Teresa Rodríguez. "Las formas de la traducción y de la edición al interior del campo cultural...", La Plata 2012

charge of translation and edition of several Marxism texts<sup>8</sup>. The main problem this team had to face was the fact that the majority of communist militants read Marxism texts but never the original one (as they considered that JBJ, WR and *Cartago's* editions were not original version of DAS KAPITAL). All the people of the '70 were used to reading interpretations of Marx's thoughts done by Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, etc. Therefore, this critique suggested by PS' team was not very welcome between the orthodox Marxists on the seventieth, who took this critique as a "heresy"<sup>9</sup>.

In conclusion, The aim of PS critical edition was to make the Marxism militant a critical reader and from this critical reader a revolutionary.

### 3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 3 DIFFERENT SPANISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE CHAPTER I (VOL. I) OF KARL MARX'S DAS KAPITAL

First of all, a short explanation about the choice of the translations for the comparative analysis must be given. The choice of these three translations of the first volume of DAS KAPITAL was not hazardous:

1. **'El capital: crítica de la economía política'**, Ed. Cao y De Val, Madrid 1989, Translator Juan B. Justo: is the first genuine translation from the German edition of DAS KAPITAL into Spanish
2. **'El capital: crítica de la economía política'**, Ed. Fondo de Cultura económica (FC), Mexico 1946, Translator W. Rocés: is the most spread Spanish edition.
3. **'El capital: crítica de la economía política'**, Ed. Siglo XXI, Argentina 1975, Translator P. Scaron: is generally considered the best of all of them.

Differences of all kind were found between the three translations: in style, in vocabulary, accuracy or discrepancy to the original Marx's edition (KM)<sup>10</sup>, etc. We will start pointing out the less important discrepancies, which do not affect to the interpretation and understanding of Marx's thoughts, and finally we will identify the most important differences between the translations:

- **JBJ – Page 22**

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<sup>8</sup> (Burgos 2004: 125-149), M. Teresa Rodríguez. "Las formas de la traducción y de la edición al interior del campo cultural...", La Plata 2012

<sup>9</sup> M. Teresa Rodríguez. "Las formas de la traducción y de la edición al interior del campo cultural de la nueva izquierda argentina de los '70. El caso de la edición "crítica" de EL CAPITAL de Karl Marx en la versión de SIGLO XXI de Argentina", La Plata 2012

<sup>10</sup> As all the 3 translations of the Chapter I (Die Ware) were based on the same German edition (Third edition, F. Engels 1883), when we write "original Marx's edition" we are referring to this version.

docena de relojes, una vara de tela, una tonelada de hierro, etc. Los valores de uso de las mercancías son el objeto de un estudio especial: la técnica mercantil<sup>2</sup>. El valor de uso se realiza sólo en el uso ó con-

- WR – Page 4

ro, etc. Los valores de uso suministran los materiales para una disciplina especial: la del conocimiento pericial de las mercancías.<sup>5</sup> El valor

- PS – Page 44

tonelada de hierro, etc. Los valores de uso de las mercancías proporcionan la materia para una disciplina especial, la merceología.<sup>5</sup> El valor de uso se efectiviza única-

- KM<sup>11</sup> – Page 39

Leinwand, Tonne Eisen usw. Die Gebrauchswerte der Waren liefern das Material einer eignen Disziplin, der Warenkunde.<sup>42</sup> Der Gebrauchswert

The expressions: “técnica mercantil”, “conocimiento pericial de las mercancías” and “merceología” are very different. The most accurate to the German Word “Warenkunde” is “merceología” that it is the Spanish word for the science which study the origin, composition and functionality of the goods<sup>12</sup>. The most different to the correct meaning is “técnica mercantil”, because this expression means more that the study of the goods, it means “*commercial technique*”. The expression “conocimiento pericial de las mercancías” could be considered correct. There are ones who can say that it is better to translate one word “Warenkunde” with also one word if it exists in Spanish, but it is important to take into account that “merceología” is not a very common word in Spanish. Everyone can easily understand “conocimiento pericial de las mercancías” and probably not all the people know the meaning of “merceología”

- JBJ – Page 23

trigo es considerada igual á cierta cantidad de hierro, por ejemplo: 1 cuartilla de trigo = x kilogramos de hierro. ¿Qué significa esta

- WR – Page 5

equivalga a una cantidad cualquiera de hierro, v. gr.: 1 quarter de trigo = x quintales de hierro. ¿Qué nos dice esta igualdad? Que en los

- PS – Page 45/46

cualquiera de hierro, por ejemplo: 1 quarter de trigo = a quintales de hierro. ¿Qué denota esta ecuación? Que existe

- KM – Page 40

wird, z.B. 1 Quarter Weizen = a Ztr. Eisen. Was besagt diese Gleichung?

JBj is the only one that translate the measurement unit “Ztr.” into a “kilogramos” (*Kilograms* in English). This last unit is more generally and commonly used in Argentina and in Spanish country. Really this difference does not change anything in Marx’s explanation, but when Marx start explaining calculations it is better to be familiar with the measurements units.

<sup>11</sup> Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Third German edition 1883, F. Engels

<sup>12</sup> Definition of “merceología” in Wikipedia.org

- JBJ – Page 27

II.—DOBLE CARÁCTER DEL TRABAJO REPRESENTADO EN LAS MERCANCÍAS.

- WR – Page 8

2. Doble carácter del trabajo representado por las mercancías

- PS – Page 51

2. Dualidad del trabajo representado en las mercancías

- KM – Page 45

2. Doppelcharakter der in den Waren dargestellten Arbeit

PS is the only one who translated the word “Doppelcharakter” in a different way. JBJ and WR did a literary translation and PS used a more formal work in Spanish. All of the 2 possibilities are correct and really do not affect to the understanding.

- JBJ – Page 27

Tomemos dos mercancías, un vestido y diez metros de tela, y supongamos que el primero tiene doble valor que la segunda, de manera que si 10 metros de tela =  $x$ , el vestido =  $2x$ .

- WR – Page 9

Tomemos dos mercancías, v. gr.: una levita y 10 varas de lienzo. Y digamos que la primera tiene el doble de valor que la segunda; es decir, que si 10 varas de lienzo =  $v$ , 1 levita =  $2v$ .

- PS – Page 51

Tomemos dos mercancías, por ejemplo una chaqueta y 10 varas de lienzo. La primera vale el doble que la segunda, de modo que si 10 varas de lienzo =  $V$ , la chaqueta =  $2V$ .

- KM – Page 46

Nehmen wir zwei Waren, etwa einen Rock und 10 Ellen Leinwand. Der erstere habe den zweifachen Wert der letzteren, so daß, wenn 10 Ellen Leinwand =  $W$ , der Rock =  $2W$ .

WR and PS have in common the translation of the word “Leinwand”, for both of them the Spanish word is “lienzo”. JBJ instead, translate that word as “tela”, which is a more common and ordinary word. None of them did the same translation for the word “Rock”: for JBJ it is “vestido” (*dress*), for WR it is “levita” (*frock coat*) and for PS it is “chaqueta” (*Jacket/coat*), in the English edition it is translated as “coat”. All of them could be acceptable, but again the more accurate to the German word “Rock” seems to be “chaqueta” because there is a specific German word for “levita” = Gehrock and for “vestido” = Kleid.

- JBJ – Page 27

indispensable para la división social del trabajo. En la antigua comunidad de la India, el trabajo estaba socialmente dividido, sin que sus productos fueran mercancías. Un ejemplo más inmediato: en

- **WR – Page 9**

social del trabajo. Así, por ejemplo, la comunidad de la India antigua, supone una división social del trabajo, a pesar de lo cual los *productos* no se convierten allí en *mercancías*. O, para poner otro ejemplo más

- **PS – Page 52**

del trabajo. En la comunidad paleoíndica el trabajo está dividido socialmente, sin que por ello sus *productos* se transformen en *mercancías*. O bien, para poner un ejemplo

- **KM – Page 46**

Existenzbedingung gesellschaftlicher Arbeitsteilung. In der altindischen Gemeinde ist die Arbeit gesellschaftlich geteilt, ohne daß die Produkte zu Waren werden. Oder, ein näher liegendes Beispiel, in jeder Fabrik ist die

JBJ and WR's translation for the word "altindischen Gemeinde" are very similar and has exactly the same meaning. But the expression used by PS is very different "paleoíndico", although it has practically the same meaning it is not a normal and common word now a days and less in Marx's period of time, so this translation is less accurate than JBJ and WR's.

- **JBJ – Page 32**

La objetividad del valor de las mercancías se distingue de la viuda Hurlig en que no se sabe dónde encontrarla. En directo contraste con la grosera objetividad sensible del cuerpo de las mercancías, no hay ni un átomo de materia en la objetividad de su valor.

- **WR – Page 14**

La objetivación de valor de las mercancías se distingue de Wittib Hurlig, la amiga de Falstaff, en que no se sabe por dónde cogerla. Cabalmente al revés de lo que ocurre con la materialidad de las mercancías corpóreas, visibles y tangibles, en su valor objetivado no entra ni un átomo de materia natural. Ya podemos tomar una mercancía y darle

- **PS – Page 58**

La objetividad de las mercancías en cuanto valores se diferencia de mistress Quickly en que no se sabe por dónde agarrarla.<sup>[31]</sup> En contradicción directa con la objetividad sensorialmente grosera del cuerpo de las mercancías, ni un solo átomo de sustancia natural forma parte de su objetividad en cuanto valores. De ahí que por más

- **KM – Page 52**

Die Wertgegenständlichkeit der Waren unterscheidet sich dadurch von der Wittib Hurtig, daß man nicht weiß, wo sie zu haben ist.<sup>58</sup> Im graden Gegenteil zur sinnlich groben Gegenständlichkeit der Warenkörper geht kein Atom Naturstoff in ihre Wertgegenständlichkeit ein. Man mag

In this paragraph we found 3 differences. The first one is in the translation of “Wittib Hurtig”. JBJ translated this name as “viuda Hurtig” (half in Spanish and half in German); WR left the same German word “Wittib Hurtig”; and PS wrote the original name of Shakespeare’s character “mistress Quickly”. JBJ’s translation may be consider a wrong one, it is not acceptable to translate only a half part of an expression. The second discrepancy is in the omission done by WR of the adjective “grogen”, it does not affect to the general understanding but this omission changed a little bit the style of Marx’s explanation. And the last difference is the expression “wo sie zu haben ist”, JBJ did a wrong translation “no se sabe dónde econtrarla”, meanwhile WR and PS did a better one but between them they have a small difference due to the different nationalities of the translators. As PS is Argentinian he used the verb “agarrarla” and WR who is Spanish used the verb “cogerla”.

- JBJ – Page 35

Al decir: como valores, todas las mercancías son simples pulpas de trabajo humano, nuestro análisis las reduce á la abstracción va-

- WR – Page 17

Al decir que las mercancías, consideradas como valores, no son más que cristalizaciones de trabajo humano, nuestro análisis las reduce

- PS – Page 62

Si decimos que las mercancías, en cuanto valores, no son más que mera gelatina de trabajo humano, nuestro análisis las reduce a la abstracción del valor, pero no les

- KM – Page 55

Sagen wir: als Werte sind die Waren bloÙe Gallerten menschlicher Arbeit, so reduziert unsre Analyse dieselben auf die Wertabstraktion, gibt ihnen aber keine von ihren Naturalformen verschiedene Wertform. Anders im

There is an important difference in the style used by each author in the translation of “bloÙe Gallerten”. JBJ used the expression “simples pulpas” (*simple pulp*), WR used “no son más que cristalizaciones” and PS used “mera gelatina”. The more literary translation is PS’s one, but the expression of WR is very formal and gives the explanation a better register to Marx’s translation.

Until now we have analyzed small discrepancies that really does not affect to the comprehension of *Das Kapital*. From now on, we will outline the most outstanding differences between the three translations: differences that make the interpretation of Marx’s ideas more difficult, omission of expressions, big deviation in relation to the German original edition, mistakes in the translations, etc.

- JBJ – Page 21

ser útil de diferentes modos. Descubrir estos diferentes modos de utilizar las cosas es obra de la Historia<sup>3</sup>. Lo es también la invención

- WR – Page 3

y puede emplearse, por tanto, en los más diversos aspectos. El descubrimiento de estos diversos aspectos y, por tanto, de las diferentes modalidades de uso de las cosas, constituye un hecho histórico.<sup>3</sup> Otro

- PS – Page 44

ende, ser útil en diversos aspectos. El descubrimiento de esos diversos aspectos y, en consecuencia, de los múltiples modos de usar las cosas, constituye un hecho histórico.<sup>3</sup>

- KM – Page 38

verschiedenen Seiten nützlich sein. Diese verschiedenen Seiten und daher die mannigfachen Gebrauchsweisen der Dinge zu entdecken ist geschichtliche Tat.<sup>40</sup> So die Findung gesellschaftlicher Maße für die

The first important difference is the mistake done by JBJ in the third paragraph of page 21. He translated the expression “geschichtliche Tat” as “es obra de la Historia”, in English it could be “is a work of the History”. WR and PS did a correct and perfect translation “constituye un hecho histórico” (*it is a History fact*).

- JBJ – Page 22

Una mercancía particular, una cuartilla de trigo, por ejemplo, se cambia con  $x$  betún, ó con  $y$  seda, ó con  $z$  oro, etc.; en una palabra, se cambia con otras mercancías en las proporciones más variadas. El trigo tiene, pues, no uno solo, sino diversos valores de cambio. Pero como  $x$  betún es, lo mismo que  $y$  seda y  $z$  oro, etc., el valor de cambio de una cuartilla de trigo,  $x$  betún,  $y$  seda,  $z$  oro, etc., tienen que poder reemplazarse y ser valores de cambio iguales entre sí. De donde resulta: 1.°, que los valores de cambio de una mercancía expresan una igualdad, y 2.°, que el valor de cambio en general sólo puede ser el modo de expresión, la forma de aparición de un contenido distinto de él.

- WR – Page 4

Una determinada mercancía, un *quarter* de trigo por ejemplo, se cambia en las *más diversas proporciones* por otras mercancías *v. gr.:* por  $x$  betún, por  $y$  seda, por  $z$  oro, etc. Pero, como  $x$  betún,  $y$  seda,  $z$  oro, etc. representan el valor de cambio de un *quarter* de trigo,  $x$  betún,  $y$  seda,  $z$  oro, etc. tienen que ser necesariamente valores de cambio permutables los unos por los otros o iguales entre sí. De donde se sigue: primero, que los diversos valores de cambio de la misma mercancía expresan todos ellos algo igual; segundo, que el valor de cambio no es ni puede ser más que la *expresión* de un contenido diferenciable de él, su “forma de manifestarse”.

- PS – Page 45

Una mercancía individual, por ejemplo un *quarter*<sup>a</sup> de trigo, se intercambia por otros artículos en las *proporciones más diversas*. No obstante su valor de cambio se mantiene inalterado, ya sea que se exprese en *x* betún, *y* seda, *z* oro, etc. Debe, por tanto, poseer un contenido diferenciable de estos diversos *modos de expresión*.<sup>b</sup>

- KM – Page 40

Eine gewisse Ware, ein Quarter Weizen z.B. tauscht, sich mit *x* Stiefelwichse oder mit *y* Seide oder mit *z* Gold usw., kurz mit andern Waren in den verschiedensten Proportionen. Mannigfache Tauschwerte also hat der Weizen statt eines einzigen. Aber da *x* Stiefelwichse, ebenso *y* Seide, ebenso *z* Gold usw. der Tauschwert von einem Quarter Weizen ist, müssen *x* Stiefelwichse, *y* Seide, *z* Gold usw. durch einander ersetzbare oder einander gleich große Tauschwerte sein. Es folgt daher erstens: Die gültigen Tauschwerte derselben Ware drücken ein Gleiches aus. Zweitens aber: Der Tauschwert kann überhaupt nur die Ausdrucksweise, die Erscheinungsform eines von ihm unterscheidbaren Gehalts sein.

This is a big discrepancy between JBJ-WR and PS. If we compare the PS's paragraph it is shorter than JBJ and WR's. But it has an explanation: meanwhile JBJ and WR are based in the third German edition of Das Kapital (1883), PS based his translation of Chapter I in the second German edition (1873). He explained this difference in a foot note at the end of page 45:

<sup>b</sup> El texto de este párrafo es como sigue en la 3ª y 4ª ediciones: "Determinada mercancía, por ejemplo un *quarter* de trigo, se cambia por *x* betún o por *y* seda o por *z* oro, etc., en suma, por otras mercancías, en las *proporciones más diversas*. El trigo, pues, tiene múltiples valores de cambio, en vez de uno solo. Pero como *x* tiene el valor de cambio de un *quarter* de trigo, forzosamente *x* betún, *y* seda, *z* oro, etcétera, tienen que ser valores de cambio sustituibles entre sí o de igual magnitud. De donde se desprende, primero, que los valores de cambio vigentes de la misma mercancía expresan un algo que es igual. Pero, segundo, que el valor de cambio únicamente puede ser el *modo de expresión*, o «forma de manifestarse», de un contenido diferenciable de él".

- JBJ – Page 24

diversas formas concretas de esos trabajos; ya no se distinguen, todos se reducen a trabajo humano igual, a trabajo humano abstracto.

- WR – Page 6

cretas de estos trabajos, que dejarán de distinguirse unos de otros para reducirse todos ellos al mismo trabajo humano, al trabajo humano abstracto.

- PS – Page 47

concretas de esos trabajos; éstos dejan de distinguirse, reduciéndose en su totalidad a trabajo humano indiferenciado, a trabajo abstractamente humano.

- **KM – Page 42**

konkreten Formen dieser Arbeiten, sie unterscheiden sich nicht länger, sondern sind allzusamt reduziert auf gleiche menschliche Arbeit, abstrakt menschliche Arbeit.

In this case the big difference belongs to PS. Meanwhile JBJ and WR agreed with the translation of the expression “abstract menschliche Arbeit” to “trabajo humano abstracto”, PS did the following one: “trabajo abstractamente humano”, which is really not the same in meaning as the former one. The English translation of these to expressions could be: “abstract human work” and “abstractly human work”. PS wrote an adverb instead of an adjective and this change the meaning a little bit.

- **JBJ – Page 24**

Esas cosas sólo dicen que en su producción se ha gastado fuerza humana de trabajo, se ha amontonado trabajo humano. Como cristales de esta substancia social que les es común, ellas son valores.

- **WR – Page 6**

para nada a la forma en que esta fuerza se emplee. Estos objetos sólo nos dicen que en su producción se ha invertido fuerza humana de trabajo, se ha acumulado trabajo humano. Pues bien, considerados como cristalización de esta substancia social común a todos ellos, estos objetos son valores, valores-mercancías.

- **PS – Page 47**

misma. Esas cosas tan sólo nos hacen presente que en su producción se empleó fuerza humana de trabajo, se acumuló trabajo humano. En cuanto cristalizaciones de esa substancia social común a ellas, son valores.<sup>a</sup>

- **KM – Page 42**

ihrer Verausgabung. Diese Dinge stellen nur noch dar, daß in ihrer Produktion menschliche Arbeitskraft verausgabt, menschliche Arbeit aufgehäuft ist. Als Kristalle dieser ihnen gemeinschaftlichen gesellschaftlichen Substanz sind sie Werte - Warenwerte.

Herewith we have an example of different translations with very similar word but with a big difference in connotation. JBJ used “ha gastado” (*has spent*), WR used “ha invertido” (*has invested*) and PS used “se empleó” (*was used*). Three verbs for the German verb “verausgabt” with little differences in the meaning. Following Marx’s thought JBJ seems to be the more suitable translation. We can also analyze another example of the special foot notes that PS added when he decided to base the translation in the third edition instead of the second one. According to PS, it was in the third German edition when Engels added the word “mercantiles” after the word “valores” in the last part of the paragraph. Find below the copy of PS’ foot note.

<sup>a</sup> En la 3ª y 4ª ediciones se agrega: “valores mercantiles”.

- **JBJ – Page 27**

mos caracteres que como generador de valores de uso. Yo he sido el primero en demostrar críticamente esta doble naturaleza del trabajo contenido en la mercancía <sup>1</sup>. Como la comprensión de la Economía

- **WR – Page 9**

caracteres que el trabajo creador de valores de uso. Nadie, hasta ahora, había puesto de relieve críticamente este doble carácter del trabajo representado por la mercancía.<sup>13</sup> Y como este punto es el eje en torno al

- PS – Page 51

uso. He sido el primero en exponer críticamente esa naturaleza bifacética del trabajo contenido en la mercancía.<sup>12</sup>

- KM – Page 45

die ihr als Erzeugerin von Gebrauchswerten zukommen. Diese zwieschlächtige Natur der in der Ware enthaltenen Arbeit ist zuerst von mir kritisch nachgewiesen worden.<sup>52</sup> Da dieser Punkt der Springpunkt ist,

In this case we have that the more close to Marx's expression "...ist zuerst von mir kritisch nachgewiesen worden" is WR translation, although it is necessary to point out that it is not a literary translation. WR used the third person instead of the first as JBJ and PS preferred. This formality respect the connotation of the original expression. PS and WR's translation gives Marx's expression a feature of arrogance.

- JBJ – Page 29

mente como trabajo de sastre ó como trabajo de tejedor. Este cambio de forma del trabajo no se hace sin desperdicio, pero tiene que hacerse. Prescindiendo del carácter determinado y útil del trabajo,

- WR – Page 11

las fluctuaciones que experimente la demanda de trabajo. Es posible que estos cambios de forma del trabajo no se operen sin resistencia, pero tienen que operarse, necesariamente.

- PS – Page 54

forma de trabajo de sastrería o como trabajo textil. Este cambio de forma del trabajo posiblemente no se efectúe sin que se produzcan fricciones, pero se opera necesariamente. Si se prescinde del carácter determinado de la activi-

- KM – Page 49

Schneiderei oder in der Form von Weberei zugeführt wird. Dieser Formwechsel der Arbeit mag nicht ohne Friktion abgehn, aber er muß gehn. Sieht man ab von der Bestimmtheit der produktiven Tätigkeit und

We have in this example three different ways of translating "nicht ohne Friktion abgehn". Meanwhile WR and PS's translation are a little bit different (but they have practically the same meaning) JBJ wrote "no se hace sin desperdicio" and this expression is far from the German expression. The more literary translation is PS's one, in English it could be "...probably will not be carried out without frictions", and JBJ's translation into English could be "...is not done without scraps/waste". The difference in meaning in the two words "frictions" and "waste" is considerable.

- JBJ – Page 46

pág. 39.) S. Bailey, autor de ese escrito anónimo, que en su tiempo hizo mucho ruido en Inglaterra, se figura haber destruido todo concepto determinado del va-

- **WR – Page 29**

etc. of Opinions”, Londres, 1825, p. 39). S. Bailey, autor de esta obra anónima, que en su tiempo levantó una gran polvareda en Inglaterra, creo haber descubierto todas las determinaciones conceptuales del valor con apuntar a las diversas y abiga-

- **PS – Page**

1825, p. 39.) Samuel Bailey, autor de esta obra anónima, que en su época provocó gran revuelo en Inglaterra, se imagina haber destruido, mediante esa referencia a las múltiples y diversas expre-

- **PS – Page XXIII<sup>13</sup>**

Dietz 68: Bailey [...] wähnt [...] vernichtet zu haben

We found also differences in the translation of the foot notes. In this case WR did not translate properly the expression “wähnt vernichtet zu haben”, because instead of translating the verb “vernichtet” to “destruido” (*destroyed*), he used the verb “descubierto” (*discovered*). In this case, PS and JBJ agreed with the translation of this expression because both of them has the same meaning although JBJ used the verb “figurar” (*figure*) and PS used the verb “imaginar” (*imagine*) for the German verb “wähnt”.

- **JBJ – Page 51**

tautología que no expresa valor ni magnitud del valor. Para expresar el valor relativo del equivalente general hay que invertir la forma C. Él no posee forma alguna de valor relativo común con otras

- **WR – Page 34**

magnitud de valor. Para *expresar el valor relativo del equivalente general*, no tenemos más remedio que volver los ojos a la forma III. El

- **PS – Page 84**

de valor. Para *expresar el valor relativo del equivalente general*, antes bien, hemos de invertir la forma III. Dicho

- **KM – Page 75**

Tautologie, worin weder Wert noch Wertgröße ausgedrückt ist. Um den relativen Wert des allgemeinen Äquivalents auszudrücken, müssen wir vielmehr die Form III umkehren. Es besitzt keine mit den andren Waren

We have another example of a big differences that can be considered fairly an error made by WR. His translation: “no temenos más remedio que volver los ojos a la forma III” has the meaning of “he have to look over again to the form III” and really the Marx’s expression “müssen wir vielmehr die Form III umkehren” means that “we have to reverse the form III”. Therefore, once more PS and JBJ were more accurate in their translation than RW.

- **JBJ – Page 52**

D. — *Forma moneda.*

<sup>13</sup> Due to the impossibility to find the original foot note of Das Kapital 1883, we cite the extract included in “Advertencia del Traductor” in PS’ edition (1975)

- **WR – Page 35**

**D. FORMA DINERO**

- **PS – Page 85**

**D. FORMA DE DINERO**

- **KM – Page 76**

**D) Geldform**

This discrepancy between JBJ and the other 2 translations remains in all Chapter I of the first volume of *Das Kapital*. JBJ is constant in the translation of “geldform” into “Forma moneda”. But the difference in meaning between “dinero” (*money*) and “moneda” (*currency*) is meaningful. Meanwhile ‘money’ it is a more general concept and includes in itself the notion of ‘currency’, it is incorrect to use this to concepts on the other way round. Once more WR and PS did a more proper translation than JBJ. A possible reason will be explained in the last part of the paper.

#### **4. SYNOPSIS OF PEDRO SCARON’S CRITIQUE TO ALL THE SPANISH TRANSLATIONS**

Pedro Scaron included in his first edition of “El capital: crítica de la economía política” a Translator’s Advice, in which he explained not only the organization and the content of his publication but also a critique of all the Spanish translation of *Das Kapital*. Particularly, he was focused on 3 editions: Wenceslao Roces (Ed.: FC, 1946), Floreal Mazía (Ed.: Cartago, 1973) and EDAF (Madrid, 1967).

For PS it was important to do a literary translation, the most similar to the original one, and to commit some stylistic sacrifices. PS point out that the translation of *Das Kapital* specially because not only the exceptional and density of the contents but also Marx was a complete writer: used freely wide literary language and applied meticulously scientific terms, while he also included German idiomatic expressions and quotidian language. He follow F. Engels’ recommendation regarding translations “a technical term must always be translated in one and every time the same expression in other language”<sup>14</sup>. As in Spanish the constantly repetitions of terms and words are less acceptable than in German, PS tried to introduce synonyms and little changes in some expressions.

Another relevant aspect for PS as the responsible person of the edition and translation was to resist the temptation to be more Marxism than Marx himself. It must be taken into account that PS had to translated Marx’s masterwork in a time that the Marxism was worldwide known and spread. In 1975 it was quiet easy to read Marx works and all the literature about him and his ideology. Following another suggestion from Engels “German expressions of new creation needs new creation English expressions as”<sup>15</sup>, PS tried to introduced some expression of his own creation and avoid using the established and well-known Marxist terminology (used by the former translators). Find below a table with the comparison between PS’ terminology with the one used by JBJ and WR:

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<sup>14</sup> Marx, Karl. *El capital: crítica de la economía política, vol. I*. Ed. Siglo XXI, 1975. Pedro Scaron – “Advertencia del traductor” PP. IX – F, Engels “Wie man Marx nicht übersetzen soll” in Marx-Engels, Werke, t. XXI, 1962, p. 230.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem. P. XVIII

**Karl Marx**  
Mehrarbeit  
Mehrprodukt  
Mehrwert  
Entfremdung

**Pedro Scaron**  
Plustrabajo  
Plusproducto  
Plusvalor  
Enajenación

**Wenceslao Roces**  
Trabajo excedente  
Producto excedente  
Plusvalía  
Alienación

**Juan B. Justo**  
Sobre trabajo  
Producto neto  
Supervalía  
Alienación

Then he explained a brief history of the Spanish translations of *Das Kapital*. The first Spanish edition was in charge of the lawyer Pablo Correa y Zafrilla. It was published in the newspaper *La Vanguardia* (Madrid, 1886). This translation was based in the French edition done by Joseph Roy (1872-1875). There is an expert who analysed Correa's edition thoroughly, further information can be found in *La primera traducción castellana de El Capital*<sup>16</sup>. In 1886, Antonio Arienza published the Spanish version of the synthesis made by Gabriel Deville. Until all the versions of *Das Kapital* are translation of the translation. Neither Correa nor Arienza translated the book from the original language: German. According to PS, *fortunately neither of them were reviewed by Karl Marx or Engels, otherwise we may be condemned to any of them, like the French readers who seem to be prisoners to Roy's edition*<sup>17</sup>.

It was in 1898 when it was published the first Spanish edition translated directly from the original language. From PS point of view, from JBJ's version does not stand out for the excellence in the style but it is a very literary one (faithful to the original in German) and the strength applied by JBJ whenever he had to face the difficulty of being the first one who translate directly from German. Although JBJ was a high-educated man with wide culture and knowledge, he paid the price of being the pioneer in his arduous tasks. Some of JBJ's technical terms are not used now a days, to give few examples: '*sobre trabajo*', '*supervalía*', etc.

PS considered that his homonym Justo had done a great achievement because he was the first one to face the challenge of editing *Das Kapital* from the German version into Spanish *the main merit of the Argentinian translator was to clean the road which other people would walk through easily*<sup>18</sup>.

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition belongs to Manuel Pedroso (Madrid, *Aguilar*. 1931). PS said that this edition was *unfairly forgotten and it seemed to be inferior to JBJ's translation, but better than Roces' one*<sup>19</sup>. The first translation in charge of the Austrian Wenceslao Roces was published by Ed. *Cenit*, Madrid, 1935. From 1946 on it was reedited and reprinted profusely by the Ed. *Fondo de Cultura Económica*. As it was mentioned before, this version was the most spread around the Spanish readers and the most popular for more than one generation Spanish and Latinoamerican researcher, Marxist militants and bookish. According to PS the key of WR's success relapses in *the elegant and warm Rocé's Spanish style, who wrote in not few parts*

<sup>16</sup> Ribas, Pedro, *La primera traducción castellana de El Capital*. Cuadernos hispanoamericanos, Nº 420, Junio de 1985.

<sup>17</sup> Marx, Karl "El capital: crítica de la economía política", vol. I. Ed. Siglo XXI, 1975 (...). P XX

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. XX

<sup>19</sup> As it will be mentioned below, PS is very critical regarding WR's edition. This is the first negative review of a large group.

*with freshness and inspiration as he were the author instead of the translator*<sup>20</sup>.

PS identified some minor errors and errata along WR's first book, some of them were mentioned before (in part 4. *Comparative analysis of the 3 different Spanish translations...*). Others examples of this mistakes found by PS are:

- 1) Destapasen (*reveal*) → instead of Destacasen (*stand out*). P. 35
- 2) Sustancia (*substance*) → instead of Suvsistencia (*survival*). P 247
- 3) Propiedad (*property*) → instead of Propietario (*owner*). P. 268
- 4) Productos (*products*) → instead of Productores (*producers*). P. 289
- 5) Telar (*loom*) → instead of Tejar (*brickworks*). P. 403
- 6) Abtenerse (refrain from) → instead of Abstraer (abstract). P. 458
- 7) Aguja (needle) → instead of Clavo (nail). PP. 315, 389, 411, 459, etc.<sup>21</sup>
- 8) Constructores de bobinas (coils builder) → instead of Constructores de buques (shipbuilders). P. 569<sup>22</sup>

PS considered in his critique that all this mistakes are due to “an incorrect or partial” review of the editor. Apart from those minor errors mentioned above, there are important and serious mistakes, e.g.:

1. “Zunahme” (increase) it was translated to “disminución” or “descenso” (decrease/descent). P. 595, 523, 533, 534, etc.
2. “nimmt [...] ab” (reduce) it was translated to “aumente” (increase). P. 544
3. “Abgenommen” (diminished) it was translated to “aumentado” (rising). P. 584
4. In the same page of WR's edition (p. 60), for the same German word “Geldwert” it was written four times “valor del dinero” (value of money/monetary value) and another four times “valor del oro” (gold value)
5. WR sometimes wrote an affirmation instead of a negation. PP. 102, 187, 306, 316, 466, etc.

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<sup>20</sup> Marx, Karl “El capital: crítica de la economía política”, vol. I. Ed. Siglo XXI, 1975. Pedro Scaron – “Advertencia del traductor”. P. XXI

<sup>21</sup> In the German edition the original Word is “Nagel”. (Marx, Karl. ‘Das Kapital, Kritik der politischen Oekonomie’. 4. Aufl. Hamburg 1890 (F. Engels’ edition). P. 423, 426, 548, 877, etc.

<sup>22</sup> In the German edition the original Word is “Schiffsbauer”. (Marx, Karl. ‘Das Kapital, Kritik der politischen Oekonomie’. 4. Aufl. Hamburg 1890 (F. Engels’ edition). P. 755

PS ended his critique telling us that WR's edition is very untidy, full of minor errors and some important and relevant ones. Besides he found out some omissions of paragraphs and expressions, and some extra ones that were not in the original text of Marx. Scaron accused Rocés to make an interpretation of Marx's thoughts instead of a translation, which sometimes are very interesting and helps the reader, but from PS' point of view, they are not admitted as WR did not identify which are contributions of his own and which are not. PS admitted that it is praiseworthy the style applied by Rocés (he proved that it is possible to explain classic economic and historic texts with style and beat the common plain style), and his contribution in the diffusion of Marx's ideas. However, he suggested that readers should read this edition very carefully.

At the end of his "Translator's advice", he did a similar analysis of the last 2 Spanish translator of *Das Kapital*: EDAF 1967 and Cartago 1973. As this editions are not analysed in this paper, we only stand an aspects of PS' critique. He considered that both translation are an involution because they are based on the French edition translated by J. Roy (1872-1875), instead of base it on any of the German editions.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE SPANISH TRANSLATIONS: JBJ, WR AND PS

This paper started with a presentation of all the translators, their lives, career and main works. The purpose of that was to observe if any of the privet details of each translator influence in their works. To our surprise there were identified more similarities between JBJ and PS' translations than between PS and WR ones. This was not expected as there are more than 75 years between them. Two possible explanations can be stood out: both of them has the same nationality, Argentinian and both tried to do (and they reached it) a translations that give preference to be as accurate to the original as possible. Must be taken into account that JBJ was a doctor, his studies are based on scientific principles and this could give us a clue to find out his intentions of accuracy to the original version. In the case of PS, it was his own choice not to give any special style to Marx's *Kapital*, we must keep in mind his idea of the "critical edition" and what exactly this means for him. They tried not to apply any kind of style to their work.

However, it is almost impossible not to interfere and give the translation an own signature. Some words used by PS are normally used in Argentina but not in Spain or other Spanish speaking countries; e.g.: "agarrarla" (PS. P. 58) instead of "cogerla" (WR. P. 14). Not everything are similarities between the two Argentinian translations, there are also important differences. Meanwhile JBJ applied common and plain language, it could be affirmed that PS was more formal and did not used a simple and ordinary vocabulary. The reason could be found in the fact that they belong to very different generations. JBJ and PS were people immerse in Argentinian political life, but this political environment was completely different at the end of S. XIX and in the '70. The diffusion of Marx's ideas in JBJ's times was less than in PS's years. The latest counts with an enormous background and literature about Marxist ideology. Besides the readers to which they write are very different. The educational level of the labour classes, intellectual people and the politicians were not the same. In 1880 not all the workers went to school or had access to any sort of formal education. To give an example of the kind of readers (workers, intellectuals, politician, etc.) who would read JBJ's translation, we have the following extract of a letter that Raymond Wilmart sent to his friend and colleague Karl Marx in May, 1873 from Buenos Aires (Argentina)<sup>23</sup>:

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<sup>23</sup> Tarcus, Horacio. "Marx en la Argentina. Sus primeros lectores obreros, intelectuales y científicos". Ed. Siglo XXI.

Hasta ahora no se me ha dicho nada de El Capital y yo creo que ninguno terminó la lectura, pues nadie se toma el trabajo de pensar en este país. Para remediarlo, yo trataría de dar a las ideas y las teorías que allí están expresadas, una forma compatible con el aprendizaje oral, lo que no es muy fácil.

The English translation of this extract is *“Until now I was not told anything about The Capital and I do not think that anyone finish reading it, as nobody make the effort of thinking in this country. To fix it, I would try to make the ideas and theories expressed in the book compatible with an oral learning; what is not a very easy task”*.

The people of the '70 were used to reading interpretations of Marx's thoughts from lot of sources: all Marx's bibliography was widely extended, they were able also to read other interpretations, like Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, etc. writings. The education system was completely different. With Public free education in all the levels, Marx's potential reader could reach University education.

The main and most important aspect to point out about WR's translation is the particular style of his edition. As it was mentioned before, this aspect was strongly criticise by Pedro Scaron in his analysis of the different Spanish translations. But we will discuss this point later, first of all and to continue our first point (how the background of each translation can affects to their work), Rocés nationality, personality, work experience, professional career, his life in general, did influence in his edition. We can apply the same deduction with WR's nationality as we did with PS, he used words that are more commonly employed in Spain and Mexico than in other Latin-American countries (even we can mentioned the same example of the word “cogerla”).

As we describe in his biography, he was an important and recognised lawyer in Spain and he occupied the charge of deputy secretary of the Ministry of Public Institution and Beaux Arts. So, his professional career was far from scientific knowledge and it was more related to beauty. Is exactly in this feature where we can find a reason for the strong style found in his translation. The vocabulary that the lawyer are used to using is very formal and not a plain one. They use a particular lyrical what is not the same as in other sciences. Rocés was close to beauty as he was the deputy secretary of Ministry of Beaux Arts. To understand how arts and beauty was so important to him, he took part of the move of some painting of Prado Museum out of Spain.

There can be no doubt that WR had a wide and extensive knowledge of German language. That makes us deduce that it was his own will to apply a remarkable style in his edition. As we saw, not all the translators have the same principles, Scaron's idea of a correct translator is the opposite: it must respect the original text, not to add or modify any kind of style. It is generally agreed that WR had exceeded the limits for adding own features and flourish. Everyone repeats PS' sentence *“who wrote in not few parts with the freshness and inspiration as he were the author instead of the translator”*. Why did he prefer to scarify accuracy for a style? Why did he consider that Marx's masterwork has to be translated and explained at the same time and not only a mere transcription from one language to another? We only can guess what Rocés had in mind, one answer could be that he thought that *Das Kapital* as a masterpiece has its own beauty. With his rhetorical writing WR tried to add more beauty to the contents of the book. Indeed, he reached this objective, because even Scaron admitted that Rocés' effort was praiseworthy and it is widely known that Marx combine in all his writings with literary language, meticulously scientific terms, common language, idiomatic expression (not only in German), Latin terms, etc. Furthermore, if we compare the privet life of all the

translators, WR had surprisingly few points in common with Marx<sup>24</sup>. Both studied Law, were condemned to the exile and received the repudiation to their thoughts from their native countries. This can explain why Rocés consider that he can explain Marx's idea with his lyrical and flourished style.

The economic science of the last decades tries, not with few efforts, not to do quality and irrations<sup>25</sup> analysis of the social and economic reality. The newest economic theories are based in mathematical models, econometrics and statistics. Everyone is interested in becoming closer to natural science, not to include any moral or political thoughts. This general thought in social science are the basis of the hard critiques to WR's translation. An absolute objective analysis, study, research, translations, etc. is impossible. The ones who defend the objectiveness in science finally end to be the less rational, justifying his theories appealing to invisible power and forces. Therefore, it could be qualified unfair the critique made by PS and after him that RW's edition is the worse one and citing PS's own words, it is an '*inferior*' edition if we compare it with Manuel Pedroso's translation; or M. T. Rodriguez's phrase "*people could have read books that are supposed to be based on Marx's writings, translations done by Cartago and FC. However, this texts do not correspond to Marx's texts...therefore the people have not read Marx's real texts*". It can not be denied that the FC's<sup>26</sup> edition has lot of an acceptable errors that must be rectify, this is the case of the mentioned errors when WR confused negative sentences with affirmative, opposite translation of adverbs, etc.

To conclude this paper, each translation have its advantages and disadvantages. Depends on the person which of them are better for each reader; easy, plain and common vocabulary: Juan B. Justo; style, beauty and flourish vocabulary: Wenceslao Rocés; accuracy, precision, more formal vocabulary: Pedro Scaron. All of them had its own importance as each one of them contributed to the diffusion of Marx's masterwork with all the difficulty of translating such a complex book. But the most important aspect was to prove that a translation can vary depending on the social-economic context of each translator. The different editions of *Das Kapital* are a response to its historical period. The translation is not alien to the translators' social context and with or without consciousness their work is not just a transcription of words into a different language; the translator tries to give a response to the historical necessity in each period of time.

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<sup>24</sup> See Marx's biography in: *Spanish Translation of Karl Marx's The Capital*. Lecture Guides, Economic e-Translations into and from European Language

<sup>25</sup> When we referred to irrationality, we mean: judgments, sensitivities, moral principles, indeed, the subjective part of the personality.

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