

# Towards An Inclusive Democracy ?\*

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AFTER some acid comments on the book of Antoine Bevort, *For a participatory democracy* (see *Le Monde Libertaire*, No 1310) let us come to Takis Fotopoulos.<sup>[1]</sup> Here is a remarkably unknown author to the hexagonal militants but who however expresses libertarian approaches of man, society and of the social and economic *becoming* of the world.

In fact, Takis Fotopoulos proposes to us the installation of an inclusive democracy whose principles are firmly within the libertarian ideal. This is not surprising since constant references turn up in the book to Peter Kropotkin, Murray Bookchin, John Clark and, especially, Cornelius Castoriadis, an “ancient” of the red journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie*.

As from the introduction to the French edition, we are in familiar ground: “This book has one aim, to show that there is no way out of the crisis within the present institutional framework but only from without”.

Starting with this essential postulate, Takis Fotopoulos develops –on an egalitarian economic basis– the concept of inclusive democracy. A concept which implies the abolition of the forms of unequal distribution of political power.

## **The current situation of the world is the outcome of a dynamics...**

The theoretical and militant contribution of Takis Fotopoulos’ discourse is, most of all, to break with the marxist project (via Attac and the parties of the left, including the trotskytes) which sees the current state of the world as a conspiracy of the malicious neoliberals and social democrats, whereas, in fact, it is nothing more than the outcome of the dynamics that was created by the market economy and its corollary, the representative democracy.

It is quite obvious that according to this approach the action to be taken will not be found from within the institutional framework of the representative system (elections, Parliament, etc.) but from without. Why fight to change the governments when governments are only the accessories of the system?

## **A transition strategy**

Transforming society raises obviously the question of the means. Here again, Takis Fotopoulos’ thought is founded on the libertarian discourse: “A general guiding principle is guiding us in selecting an appropriate transitional strategy: consistency between means

and ends”. Contrary to the statist approaches which propose to change society from above, and those known as “civil society” approaches which do not aim at changing the system, Takis Fotopoulos does not propose a new type of political organization, but a confederation of communities functioning according to the principles of inclusive democracy (economic equality– collective ownership, political equality– direct democracy).

This book, in which the deliberately scientific or difficult jargon has been banished, is absolutely accessible to everybody. The demonstrations there are clear, logical and coherent. A will to be understood by as many as possible is felt in each page and thus places Takis Fotopoulos in the line of a Kropotkin or a Reclus.

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\* - This review of *Vers une démocratie générale* (Seuil: Paris, 2002) has been first published (in French) in *Le Monde Libertaire*, no 1311 (13-19 Mars 2003).

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[1] Economist and politist, is editor of the journal *Democracy and Nature, The international Journal of Inclusive Democracy* (see in the [internet](#) for a multitude of texts on Takis Fotopoulos).