

Editorial

The importance of Paideia in the democratic project cannot be emphasised enough. If the creation of institutions of Inclusive Democracy is the necessary condition for democracy, Paedeia certainly represents the sufficient condition for a genuine democracy. On the basis of this problematique, the present issue of the Journal is entirely devoted to the crucial question of education, which is one of the main victims of the present neoliberal globalisation.

The discussion opens with a paper by **Takis Fotopoulos** aiming to consider the institutional preconditions of a democratic paideia, both at the social level and the educational level itself. A basic tenet of the approach adopted by this paper is that education is intrinsically linked to politics, as the very meaning of education is assumed to be defined by the prevailing meaning of politics. On the basis of this thesis, the paper first examines the developments in education following the shift to modernity, as well as the educational changes which marked the various stages of modernity (i.e. liberal, statist and neoliberal). It then moves on to its main aim, i.e. to examine the institutional preconditions of a democratic paideia and to discuss a transition strategy for the move from present (mis)education, as it evolved in modernity, to a democratic paideia, through an emancipatory education process.

David Gabbard & Karen Anijar's insightful paper, after a critical but sympathetic presentation of Adler's work, concludes with a proposal to establish the *Democratic Paideia Project*, as part of the larger *Inclusive Democracy Project* advanced through this journal. Their argument is that, insofar as *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy* functions to develop the theoretical ends and strategic means for establishing the inclusive democracy project as a new dominant social paradigm, this should include a section that would allow theorists to build upon the theoretical and practical foundations of *paideia*. As they rightly stress, emancipation starts from the realization of the painful truth that USA is not and never has been a democratic society —something, we will add, applies also to any other modern nation-state. It is therefore only by drawing on the democratic tradition, as it emerged in classical Athens and continued developing in medieval city-states through the revolutionary attempts to institutionalise various forms of direct democracy (for example, the Parisian sections of the early 1790s, the Spanish collectives in the civil war etc.), that we can develop a comprehensive conception of democracy (as the Inclusive Democracy project does) and a corresponding conception of Paedeia. The latter should, of course, be seen not only as personal training but —even more important— as civic schooling involving the development of citizens' self-activity, as a means of internalising the democratic institutions and the values consistent with them.

Peter McLaren develops a very powerful critique of critical pedagogy which he rightly accuses on account of its present purely reformist character. As he aptly points out, 'critical pedagogy has become so completely psychologized, so liberally humanized, so technologized, and so conceptually postmodernized, that its current relationship to broader liberation struggles seems severely attenuated if not fatally terminated'. He proposes instead the development of a critical revolutionary pedagogy, which will be

enthused by Marxist class analysis and historical materialism. No doubt, all sections of the radical Left (including the libertarian Left) will agree with the author's insightful analysis of reformist education and the imperative need for emancipatory education (if we see it as an integral part of the transitional process towards a liberated society) to be inspired by a form of antisystemic analysis, as part of an antisystemic movement. However, the point of dispute is whether Marxist analysis is the appropriate tool for this purpose, given its one-dimensional character which focuses on one aspect of the power spectrum: the economic one. In other words, one may argue that although economic dominance is a crucial form of dominance in a social system based on a market economy, still, the other forms of *dominance* (political, military, ideological, cultural, sexual etc.) can not simply be reduced to *means* in exploiting the subordinate units, (not even 'in the last instance'), as they constitute ends in themselves and important components of the privileged position of the dominant social groups. In this sense, the concepts 'exploitation', 'class struggle' etc constitute the particular in comparison to the much broader concepts of dominance/subordination. The issue therefore is whether we need today a new democratic pedagogy based on a project for a genuine (inclusive) democracy that aims at the elimination of all forms of subordination, either they are based on economic power, or any other form of social power.

John Sargis' paper aptly examines the interrelationship and inner dynamic of education, democracy, and paideia with particular reference to the US educational experience. He convincingly shows that the system of public education is fundamentally flawed and that its purpose is not, as common belief has it, to educate, to enlighten, and thereby to produce citizens who act in both their own and in their society's best interests, that is, citizens for a true democracy but, instead, to produce a mass work force which does not think for itself and should accept without question the rhetoric and orders of the ruling economic, political, and social elite, who have amassed a concentration of economic and political power. As he characteristically puts it, "mass public education or "jail education" molds a consumer, who is frivolous, superficial, mediocre, and invariably prejudiced". He concludes that what is needed is to reappropriate the ancient Greek world, *paideia*; that is, a vision of educating which is an integral part of a genuine democratic society, i.e. a society aiming at individual and social autonomy-- freedom from domination. Therefore, knowledge and consequently education plays a key role in the struggle for autonomy and genuine democracy.

It is not uncommon to see the Platonic views on paideia being taken as a guide to the contours of democratic paideia. However, although it is not disputed that some of Plato's insights on education are useful, it should not be forgotten that Plato was in fact an enemy of democracy and of democratic politics --the very foundation of democratic paedeia. **Yorgos Oikonomou's** paper is very useful in this connection since it gives a comprehensive view of Castoriadis's powerful critique of the Platonic ideas, clearing up in the process a widespread misunderstanding, whereby Plato is believed to be the cornerstone, or the foundation of Greek political thought and its representative par excellence. As the author stresses at the outset, 'for Castoriadis, Plato is the total negation of Greek thought and indeed of political thought'. Oikonomou then goes on to show in detail how Castoriadis' critique demonstrates the effective Platonic concealment and distortion of important classical Greek beliefs, chiefly beliefs concerning politics and democracy.

The Editorial Committee