

# From (mis)education to *Paideia*

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**Abstract:** The aim of this article is twofold. First, to discuss the institutional preconditions of a democratic paideia, both at the social level and the educational level itself. Second, to examine a transition strategy for the move from present miseducation (as it evolved in modernity) to a democratic paideia, through an emancipatory education process. 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.

## 1. Democracy, Paideia and Education

### *Culture, the dominant social paradigm and the role of education*

Education is a basic component of the formation of culture<sup>[1]</sup>, as well as of the socialisation of the individual, i.e. the process through which an individual internalises the core values of the dominant social paradigm.<sup>[2]</sup> Therefore, culture in general and education in particular play a crucial role in the determination of individual and collective values. This is because as long as individuals live in a society, they are not just individuals but *social* individuals, subject to a process, which socialises them and induces them to internalise the existing institutional framework and the dominant social paradigm. In this sense, people are not completely free to create their world but are conditioned by History, tradition and culture. Still, this socialisation process is broken, at almost all times—as far as a minority of the population is concerned—and in exceptional historical circumstances even with respect to the majority itself. In the latter case, a process is set in motion that usually ends with a change of the institutional structure of society and of the corresponding social paradigm. Societies therefore are not just “collections of individuals” but consist of social individuals, who are both free to create their world, (in the sense that they can give birth to a new set of institutions and a corresponding social paradigm), and are created by the world, (in the sense that they have to break with the dominant social paradigm in order to recreate the world).

A fundamental precondition for the reproduction of every kind of society is the consistency between the dominant beliefs, ideas and values on the one hand and the existing institutional framework on the other. In other words, unlike culture<sup>[3]</sup> which has a broader scope and may express values and ideas that are not necessarily consistent with the dominant institutions (this has frequently been the case in arts and literature), the dominant social paradigm has to be in consistence with the existing institutions for society

to be reproducible. In fact, institutions are reproduced mainly through the internalisation of the values consistent with them rather than through violence by the elites which benefit from them. This has always been the case. The values, for instance, of the present system are the ones derived by its basic principles of organisation: the principle of heteronomy and the principle of individualism which are built-into the institutions of the market economy and representative 'democracy'. Such values involve the values of inequity and effective oligarchy (even if the system calls itself a democracy), competition and aggressiveness.

Still, what is wrong is not the very fact of the internalisation of some values but the internalisation of such values that reproduce an heteronomous society and consequently heteronomous individuals. Paideia will play a crucial role in a future democratic society with respect to the internalisation of its values, which would necessarily be the ones derived by its basic principles of organisation: the principle of autonomy and the principle of community, which would be built into the institutions of an inclusive democracy.<sup>[4]</sup> Such values, as we shall see in the third section, would include the values of equity and democracy, respect for the personality of each citizen, solidarity and mutual aid, caring and sharing.<sup>[5]</sup>

However, the institutions alone are not sufficient to secure the non-emergence of informal elites. It is here that the crucial importance of education, which in a democratic society will take the form of Paideia, arises. Paideia was of course at the centre of political philosophy in the past, from Plato to Rousseau. Still, this tradition, as the late Castoriadis<sup>[6]</sup> pointed out, died in fact with the French Revolution. But, the need to revisit paideia today in the context of the revival of democratic politics, after the collapse of socialist statism, is imperative.

### ***Education, Paideia and Emancipatory education***

Education is intrinsically linked to politics. In fact, the very meaning of education is defined by the prevailing meaning of politics. If politics is meant in its current usage, which is related to the present institutional framework of representative 'democracy', then politics takes the form of statecraft, which involves the administration of the state by an elite of professional politicians who set the laws, supposedly representing the will of the people. This is the case of a heteronomous society in which the public space has been usurped by various elites which concentrate political and economic power in their hands. In a heteronomous society education has a double aim:

- First, to help in the internalisation of the existing institutions and the values consistent with it (the dominant social paradigm). This is the aim of explicit school lessons like History, introduction to sociology, economics etc but, even more significantly —and insidiously— of schooling itself, which involves the values of obedience and discipline (rather than self-discipline) and unquestioning of teaching .
- Second, to produce 'efficient' citizens in the sense of citizens who have accumulated enough 'technical knowledge'<sup>[7]</sup> so that they could function competently in accordance with 'society's aims, as laid down by the elites which control it..

On the other hand, if politics is meant in its classical sense that is related to the institutional framework of a direct democracy, in which people not only question laws but are also able to make their own laws, then we talk about an autonomous society.<sup>[8]</sup> This is a

society in which the public space encompasses the entire citizen body that in an inclusive democracy will take all effective decisions at the ‘macro’ level, i.e. not only with respect to the political process but also with respect to the economic process, within an institutional framework of equal distribution of political and economic power among citizens. In such a society we do not talk about education anymore but about the much broader concept of *Paideia*. This is an all-round civic education that involves a life-long process of character development, absorption of knowledge and skills and –more significant– practicing a ‘participatory’ kind of active citizenship, that is a citizenship in which political activity is not seen as a means to an end but an end in itself. Paideia therefore has the overall aim of developing the capacity of all its members to participate in its reflective and deliberative activities, in other words, to educate citizens as citizens so that the public space could acquire a substantive content. In this sense, paideia involves the specific aims of civic schooling as well as personal training. Thus,

- *Paideia as civic schooling* involves the development of citizens’ self-activity by using their very self-activity as a means of internalising the democratic institutions and the values consistent with them. The aim therefore is to create responsible individuals that have internalized both the necessity of laws and the possibility of putting the laws into question, i.e. individuals capable of interrogation, reflectiveness, and deliberation. This process should start from an early age through the creation of educational public spaces that will have nothing to do with present schools, at which children will be brought up to internalize, and therefore to accept fully, the democratic institutions and the values implied by the fundamental principles of organisation of society: autonomy and community.
- *Paideia as personal training* involves the development of the capacity to learn rather than to teach particular things, so that individuals become autonomous, that is, capable of self-reflective activity and deliberation. A process of conveying knowledge is of course also involved but this assumes more the form of involvement in actual life and the multitude of human activities related to it, as well as a guided tour to scientific, industrial and practical knowledge rather than teaching, as it is simply a step in the process of developing the child’s capacities for learning, discovering, and inventing.

Finally, we may talk about *emancipatory education* as the link between present education and Paideia. Emancipatory education is intrinsically linked to transitional politics, i.e. the politics that will lead us from the heteronomous politics and society of the present to the autonomous politics and society of the future. The aim of emancipatory education is to give an answer to the ‘riddle of politics’ described by Castoriadis<sup>[9]</sup>, i.e. how to produce autonomous (that is capable of self-reflective activity) human beings within a heteronomous society, and beyond that, in the paradoxical situation of educating human beings to accede to autonomy while –or in spite of– teaching them to absorb and internalize existing institutions. Not less than the breaking of the socialisation process, which will open the way to an autonomous society, is involved here. The proposed by this essay answer to this riddle is to help the collectivity, within the context of the transitional strategy, to create the institutions that, when internalized by the individuals, will enhance their capacity for becoming autonomous.

Therefore, autonomy politics, i.e. the kind of politics implied by a transitional strategy towards a democratic society,<sup>[10]</sup> emancipatory education and Paideia form an

inseparable whole through the internal dynamic that leads from the politics of autonomy and emancipatory education to an autonomous society and Paideia. It is therefore clear that as paideia is only feasible within the framework of a genuine democracy, an emancipatory education is inconceivable outside a democratic movement fighting for such a society, as we shall see in the last section.

However, before we discuss the nature and content of a democratic paideia and the transition to it through emancipatory education we have to examine the nature of present miseducation, as it evolved in modernity—the topic of next section.

## **2. Education in modernity**

### ***The shift to modernity***

The rise of the present system of education has its roots in the nation-state, which did not start to develop until the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. The idea of a ‘nation’ was unknown in antiquity and even in the Middle Ages. Although in the territorial regnum of the Middle Ages some monarchies did indeed have their national territories and made claims to sovereign power within them, these monarchies were just part of European Christendom, so that there was little of a national state or indeed of any sort of state. In fact, it was not until the end of the Middle Ages and specifically in the seventeenth century that the present form of the nation-state emerged. The nation-state, even in its early absolutist form, extended its control beyond the political and into the religious (with the creation of the established church) and educational fields, as well as to almost all other aspects of human life. As the state bureaucracy was expanding, the need for well educated civil servants was significant and universities of the time became more and more training institutions for higher civil servants whereas, at the same time, elementary education for the middle classes developed further, particularly in the 17th and 18th centuries. A basic distinguishing characteristic of premodern schools and universities compared to modern ones was that whereas up to the 17th century the aim of education was conceived as a religious one, in the 18th century the ideas of secularism and progress, which constituted the fundamental components of the emerging new dominant social paradigm, began to prevail.

As I attempted to show elsewhere,<sup>[11]</sup> the two main institutions which distinguish premodern society from modern society are, first, the system of the market economy and, second, representative ‘democracy’, which are also the ultimate causes for the present concentration of economic and political power and, consequently, for the present multidimensional crisis. In this problematique, industrial production constituted only the necessary condition for the shift to modern society. The sufficient condition was the parallel introduction —through decisive state help— of the system of the market economy that replaced the (socially controlled) local markets that existed for thousands of years before. In both cases, it was the emergence of the nation-state, which played a crucial role in creating the conditions for the ‘nationalisation’ of markets (i.e. their de-localisation), as well as in freeing them from effective social control —the two essential preconditions of marketisation. Furthermore, it was the same development, i.e. the rise of the nation-state that developed from its early absolutist form at the end of the Middle Ages into the present ‘democratic’ form, which led to the establishment of the political complement of the market economy: representative ‘democracy.

The shift to modernity therefore represented in more than one way a break with the past. The new economic and political institutions in the form of the market economy and representative ‘democracy’, as well as the parallel rise of industrialism marked a systemic change. This change was inescapably accompanied by a corresponding change in the dominant social paradigm. In premodern societies, the ‘dominant social paradigms’ were characterised by mainly religious ideas and corresponding values about hierarchies, although of course there were exceptions like the Athenian democracy. On the other hand, the dominant social paradigm of modernity is dominated by market values and the idea of Progress, growth and rational secularism. In fact, the flourishing of science in modernity has played an important ideological role in ‘objectively’ justifying the growth economy—a role that has been put under severe strain in neoliberal modernity by the credibility crisis of science. Thus, just as religion played an important part in justifying feudal hierarchy, so has science, particularly social ‘science’, played a crucial role in justifying the modern hierarchical society. In fact, from the moment science replaced religion as the dominant worldview, it had ‘objectively’ justified the growth economy, both in its capitalist and ‘socialist’ forms.

However, although the fundamental institutions which characterize modernity and the main tenets of the dominant social paradigm have remained essentially unchanged since the emergence of modernity more than two centuries ago (something that renders as a myth the idea of postmodernity, into which humanity supposedly has entered in the last three decades or so), there have, nevertheless, been some significant *nonsystemic* changes within this period that could usefully be classified as the three main phases of modernity. We may distinguish three forms that modernity took since the establishment of the system of the market economy: liberal modernity (mid to end of nineteenth century) which, after the first world war and the 1929 crash, led to statist modernity (mid 1930’s to mid 1970s) and finally to today’s neoliberal modernity (mid 1970s-to date).

The various forms of modernity have created their own dominant social paradigms which in effect constitute sub-paradigms of the main paradigm, as they all share a fundamental characteristic: the idea of the separation of society from the economy and polity, as expressed by the market economy and representative ‘democracy’ –with the exception of Soviet statism in which this separation was effected through central planning and Soviet ‘democracy’. On top of this main characteristic, all forms of modernity share, with some variations, the themes of reason, critical thought and economic growth. As one could expect, the nonsystemic changes involved in the various forms of modernity and the corresponding sub-paradigmatic changes had significant repercussions on the nature, content and form of education, on which I now turn.

### ***Education in Liberal modernity***

During the period of liberal modernity, which barely lasted half a century between the 1830s and the 1880s, the grow-or-die dynamic of the market economy led to an increasing internationalisation of it, which was accompanied by the first systematic attempt of the economic elites to establish a purely liberal internationalised market economy in the sense of free trade, a ‘flexible’ labour market and a fixed exchange rates system (Gold Standard)—an attempt that, as I tried to show elsewhere,<sup>[12]</sup> was bound to fail given the lack of the objective conditions for its success and in particular the fact that markets were dominated

by national-based capital, a fact that led to two world wars with the main aim to redivide them.

The rise of the system of the market/growth economy in this period created the need to expand the number of pupils/students in all stages of education: at the primary level, because the factory system that flourished after the Industrial Revolution required an elementary level of literacy; at the secondary level, because the factory system led to the development of various specialisations that required further specialised training; and, finally, at the tertiary level, because the rapid scientific developments of the era required an expansion of the role of universities to train not just civil servants, as before, but also people who would be able to be involved in applied research on new methods of production, both as regards its physical and its administrative/organisational aspects.

All these developments had significant repercussions on education, one of the most significant ones being the gradual acceptance of the view that education ought to be the responsibility of the state. Countries such as France and Germany began the establishment of public educational systems early in the 19th century. However, this trend was in contradiction to the dominant social (sub)paradigm of liberal modernity. This paradigm was characterised by the belief in a mechanistic model of science, objective truth, as well as some themes from economic liberalism such as laissez faire and minimisation of social controls over markets for the protection of labour. This is why countries such as Great Britain and the United States, in which the dominant social paradigm has been better internalised, hesitated longer before allowing the government to intervene in educational affairs. The prevailing view among the elites of these countries was that “free schools” were to be provided only for the children of the lowest social groups, if at all, whereas general taxation (which was the only adequate way to provide education for all) was rejected. Still, when liberal modernity collapsed at the end of the nineteenth century, for the reasons mentioned above, governments across Europe and the US legislated to limit the workings of laissez-faire—first by inspecting factories and offering minimal standards of education and later by providing subsistence income for the old and out of work”.<sup>[13]</sup> As a result, by the beginning of the twentieth century, social legislation of some sort was in place in almost every advanced market economy.<sup>[14]</sup>

However, it was not only the access to education that changed during the nineteenth century. The nature of education changed as well, as the new social and economic changes also called upon the schools, public and private, to broaden their aims and curricula. Schools were expected not only to promote literacy, mental discipline, and good moral character but also to help prepare children for citizenship, for jobs, and for individual development and success. In other words, schools and educational institutions in general were expected to help in the internalisation of the existing institutions and the values consistent with it (i.e. the dominant social paradigm), on top of producing ‘efficient’ citizens in the sense of citizens who have accumulated enough technical knowledge so that they could function competently in accordance with ‘society’s aims, as laid down by the elites which control it. Similarly, the practice of dividing children into grades or classes according to their ages—a practice that began in 18th-century Germany—was to spread everywhere as schools grew larger. Massive schooling, which was to characterize the rest of modernity up to date, was set in motion.

### ***Statist modernity, education and social mobility***

Statist modernity took different forms in the East (namely the regimes of Eastern Europe, China etc.) and the West. Thus, in the East<sup>[15]</sup>, for the first time in modern times, a ‘systemic’ attempt was made to reverse the marketisation process and create a completely different form of modernity than the liberal or the socialdemocratic one –in a sense, another version of liberal modernity. This form of statism, backed by Marxist ideology, attempted to minimise the role of the market mechanism in the allocation of resources and replace it with a central planning mechanism. On the other hand in the West<sup>[16]</sup>, statism took a social-democratic form and was backed by Keynesian policies which involved active state control of the economy and extensive interference with the self-regulating mechanism of the market to secure full employment, a better distribution of income and economic growth. A precursor of this form of statism emerged in the inter-war period but it reached its peak in the period following the second world war, when Keynesian policies were adopted by governing parties of all persuasions in the era of the socialdemocratic consensus, up to the mid 1970s. This was a consensus involving both conservative and socialdemocratic parties, which were committed to active state intervention with the aim of determining the overall level of economic activity, so that a number of socialdemocratic objectives could be achieved (full employment, welfare state, educational opportunities for all, better distribution of income etc).

However, statist modernity, in both its socialdemocratic and Soviet versions, shared the fundamental element of liberal modernity, namely, the formal separation of society from the economy and the state. The basic difference between the liberal and statist forms of modernity concerned the means through which this separation was achieved. Thus, in liberal modernity this was achieved through representative ‘democracy’ and the market mechanism, whereas in statist modernity this separation was achieved either through representative ‘democracy’ and a modified version of the market mechanism (Western social democracy), or, alternatively, through soviet ‘democracy’ and central planning (Soviet statism). Furthermore, both the liberal and the statist forms of modernity shared a common growth ideology based on the Enlightenment idea of progress –an idea that played a crucial role in the development of the two types of ‘growth economy’: the ‘capitalist’ and the ‘socialist’ growth economy<sup>[17]</sup>. It is therefore obvious that although the growth economy is the offspring of the dynamic of the market economy, still, the two concepts are not identical since it is possible to have a growth economy which is not also a market economy –notably the case of ‘actually existing socialism’. However, the Western form of statist modernity collapsed in the 1970s when the growing internationalisation of the market economy, the inevitable result of its grow-or-die dynamic, became incompatible with statism. The Eastern form of statist modernity collapsed a decade or so later because of the growing incompatibility between, on the one hand, the requirements of an ‘efficient’ growth economy and, on the other, the institutional arrangements (particularly centralised planning and party democracy) which had been introduced in the countries of ‘actually existing socialism’ in accordance with Marxist-Leninist ideology.<sup>[18]</sup>

The dominant (sub)paradigm in the statist period still features the same characteristics of liberal modernity involving a belief in objective truth and (a less mechanistic) science, but includes also certain elements of the socialist paradigm and particularly statism, in the form of Soviet statism based on Marxism-Leninism in the East and a socialdemocratic statism based on Keynesianism in the West. Both types of statism attempted to influence the education process although Soviet governments, particularly in the early days after the

1917 Revolution, had much wider aims than Western socialdemocrats who mainly aimed at widening the access to education in order to improve social mobility.

Thus, the Soviets, immediately after the Revolution, introduced free and compulsory general and polytechnical education up to the age of 17, pre-school education to assist in the emancipation of women, the opening of the universities and other higher institutions to the working class, even a form of student-self management. On top of this, a basic aim of education was decreed to be the internalisation of the new regime's values. No wonder that, as soon as a year after the Revolution, the Soviet government had ordered by decree the abolition of religious teaching in favour of atheistic education.

As regards the socialdemocrats, their main achievement was the welfare state which represented a conscious effort to check the side effects of the market economy, as far as covering basic needs (health, education, social security) was concerned. An important characteristic of the ideology of the welfare state was that its financing (including education) was supposed to come from general taxation. Furthermore, the progressive nature of the tax system, which was generalised during this period, secured that the higher income groups will take the lion's share of this financing, improving thereby the highly unequal pattern of income distribution that a market economy creates. However, the expansion of education opportunities was not simply necessitated by ideological reasons. Even more important was the post-war economic boom that required a vast expansion of the labour base, with women and, sometimes immigrants, filling the gaps. On top of this, the incessant increase in the division of labour, changes in production methods and organisation, as well as revolutionary changes in information technology required a growing number of highly skilled personnel, scientists, high-level professionals etc. As a result of these trends, the number of universities in many countries doubled or trebled between 1950 and 1970, whereas technical colleges, as well as part-time and evening courses, spread rapidly promoting adult education at all levels

Still, despite the fact that massive education flourished in this period, the effects of this rapid growth of education opportunities on social mobility has been insignificant. If we take as our example Britain, in which a bold socialdemocratic experiment was pursued in the post-war period to change social mobility through education —a policy pursued (in various degrees) by both labour and conservative governments— the results were minimal. Thus, an extensive study by three prominent British academics concluded that the post-war expansion of education opportunities brought Britain no nearer meritocracy or equality of opportunity.<sup>[19]</sup> Another study, also carried out during the period of socialdemocratic consensus, concluded that despite the 'propitious' circumstances, 'no significant reduction in class inequality has in fact been achieved'<sup>[20]</sup> —a situation that has worsened in today's neoliberal modernity in which, as Goldthorpe showed, the chances of manual workers' sons not doing anything but manual work have risen. But, if the results of socialdemocratic education policies on social mobility and social change in general have been so meagre, one could easily imagine the effects of neoliberal policies to which I now turn.

### ***Neoliberal modernity and the privatisation of education***

The emergence of neoliberal internationalisation was a monumental event which implied the end of the social democratic consensus that marked the early post war period. The



market economy's grow-or-die dynamic and, in particular, the emergence and continuous expansion of transnational corporations' (TNC) and the parallel development of the Euro-dollar market, which led to the present neoliberal form of modernity, were the main developments which induced the economic elites to open and liberalise the markets. In other words, these elites mostly institutionalised (rather than created) the present form of the internationalised market economy.

An important characteristic of the neoliberal form of modernity is the emergence of a new 'transnational elite'<sup>[21]</sup> which draws its power (economic, political or generally social power) by operating at the transnational level – a fact which implies that it does not express, solely or even primarily, the interests of a particular nation-state. This elite consists of the transnational economic elites (TNC executives and their local affiliates), the transnational political elites, i.e. the globalising bureaucrats and politicians, who may be based either in major international organisations or in the state machines of the main market economies, and, finally, the transnational professional elites, whose members play a dominant role in the various international foundations, think tanks, research departments of major international universities, the mass media etc. The main aim of the transnational elite, which today controls the internationalised market economy, is the maximisation of the role of the market and the minimisation of any effective social controls over it for the protection of labour or the environment, so that maximum 'efficiency' (defined in narrow techno-economic terms) and profitability may be secured.

Neoliberal modernity is characterised by the emergence of a new social (sub)paradigm which tends to become dominant, the so-called 'post-modern' paradigm. The main elements of the neoliberal paradigm are, first, a critique of progress (but not of growth itself), of mechanistic and deterministic science (but usually not of science itself) and of objective truth, and, second, the adoption of some neoliberal themes such as the minimisation of social controls over markets, the replacement of the welfare state by safety nets and the maximisation of the role of the private sector in the economy.

As regards scientific research and education, neoliberal modernity implies the effectual privatisation of them. As a result, the non-neutral character of science has become more obvious than ever before, following the 'privatisation' of scientific research and the scaling down the state sector in general and state spending in particular.<sup>[22]</sup> As Stephanie Pain, an associate editor of *New Scientist* (not exactly a radical journal) stresses, science and big business have developed ever closer links lately:

Where research was once mostly neutral, it now has an array of paymasters to please. In place of impartiality, research results are being discreetly managed and massaged, or even locked away if they don't serve the right interests. Patronage rarely comes without strings attached.<sup>[23]</sup>

Also, as regards education in general, as Castoriadis pointed out,<sup>[24]</sup> for most educators it has become a bread-winning chore, and, for those at the other end of education, a question of obtaining a piece of paper (a diploma) that will allow one to exercise a profession (if one finds work) – the royal road of privatization, which one may enrich by indulging in one or several personal crazes.

The effects of the neoliberal privatisation of education on access to education in general

and social mobility in particular are predictable. Thus, as regards the former, it is not surprising that, as a result of increasing poverty and inequality in neoliberal modernity, the reading and writing skills of Britain's young people are worse than they were before the First World War. Thus, a recent study found that 15 per cent of people aged 15 to 21 are 'functionally illiterate', whereas in 1912, school inspectors reported that only 2 per cent of young people were unable to read or write. <sup>[25]</sup> Similarly, as regards the access to higher education, the UK General Household Survey of 1993 showed that, as the education editor of the London Times pointed out, 'although the number of youngsters obtaining qualifications is growing rapidly, the statistics show that a child's socio-economic background is still the most important factor in deciding who obtains the best higher education. Thus, according to these data, the son of a professional man was even more likely to go to university in the early 90s than one from the same background in the early 60s (33 percent versus 29 percent). Finally, an indication of the marginal improvement to access to education achieved by social democracy is the fact that whereas at the end of the 1950s the percent of the sons of unskilled workers going to university was too small to register, by the early 90s this percentage has gone up to 4%! <sup>[26]</sup> Needless to add that the situation has worsened further since then. The difference between the proportion of professionals and unskilled going to university has widened 10 points during the nineties and by the end of this decade fewer than one in six children from the bottom rung were going to university compared to nearly three-quarters of the top. <sup>[27]</sup>

No wonder therefore that social mobility in Britain has declined in neoliberal modernity. This is because, although the working class has declined in size following neoliberal globalisation, the middle classes have not been displaced. As a result, over the 20th century, the trapdoor beneath the upper social groups became less and less the worry it was in the 19th Victorian society and as sociologist Peter Saunders <sup>[28]</sup> put it, the safeguards against failure enjoyed by dull middle-class children are presently strengthening. Despite therefore a small increase in social mobility for children from lower social strata, at the same time, as a team led by Stephen Machin of University College London has found, more children from higher-class backgrounds have remained in the same social class as their parents. This could explain the paradox that the amount of 'equality of opportunity' may actually have fallen in recent years, despite the expansion of educational opportunity. <sup>[29]</sup> Another study by Abigail McKnight <sup>[30]</sup> of the University of Warwick's confirms this. Thus, whereas between 1977 and 1983, a full 39 per cent of workers in the bottom quarter of the earnings distribution had progressed into the top half by 1983, in the period between 1991 and 1997, that had dropped to 26 per cent.

Similar trends are noted everywhere, given the universalisation of neoliberal modernity. Predictably, the effects are even worse in the South where education was seen by the newly liberated from their colonial ties nations as both an instrument of national development and a means of crossing national and cultural barriers. No wonder that, worldwide, 125m children are not attending school today (two-thirds of them girls) despite a decade of promises at UN conferences to get every child in the world into a classroom. Thus, as cash-strapped governments have cut education budgets, forcing schools to charge fees, 'schools have become little more than child minding centres'. <sup>[31]</sup>

### **3. The preconditions of *Paideia***

As I attempted to show in the first section, Paideia in a democratic society is seen both as *civic schooling* and as *personal training*. In the first sense, Paideia is intrinsically linked with a set of institutional preconditions at society's level whereas in the second sense it is linked with the institutional preconditions at the educational level itself. Apart, however, from the institutional preconditions it is clear that Paideia presupposes a radical change in value systems —the main aim of emancipatory education— which would lead to a new dominant social paradigm. This conception of paideia clearly differentiates it from the stand on education usually adopted by liberals, but also by some Marxists and many more libertarians, who separate education from the system of market economy and representative 'democracy' and suggest that an alternative education is feasible even in the existing system. Thus, in contrast to the fathers of anarchism like Bakunin who insisted that a libertarian education is impossible in existing society,<sup>[32]</sup> supporters of Stirner's individualistic tendency within anarchism like Ivan Illich, adherents to the 'anarchy in action' current like Colin Ward and others<sup>[33]</sup> propose various schemes of libertarian education within the existing system of capitalist market economy. No wonder that a recent article published in *Social Anarchism* does not hesitate to adopt the neoliberal arguments of cost effectiveness in attacking state schools ['of the two forms (public and private) ... public school is by far the most expensive in direct cost']<sup>[34]</sup> in order to support a simplistic case for deschooling! At the other end, many Marxists, as well as anarchists and supporters of autonomy like Castoriadis, talk only about paideia *after* the revolutionary change in society, ignoring the crucial stage of the transitional period and the need to develop an emancipatory education for it.

In this section, I will attempt to describe the institutional preconditions of paideia whereas in the next section the issue of emancipatory education (i.e. the transition from present modernity education to a democratic Paideia) will be discussed in an effort to show that any attempt to create an alternative education within the existing system is doomed, unless it is implemented at a significant social scale and is an integral part of an antisystemic project .

### ***Institutional preconditions at society's level***

The institutional preconditions of paideia at society's level are summarised by the inclusive democracy (ID) conception, described in detail elsewhere,<sup>[35]</sup> so I will only attempt here to briefly describe the main elements of this conception that are relevant to the question of paideia.

The conception of inclusive democracy, using as a starting point the classical definition of it, expresses democracy in terms of direct political democracy, economic democracy (beyond the confines of the market economy and state planning), as well as democracy in the social realm and ecological democracy. In short, inclusive democracy is a form of social organisation which re-integrates society with economy, polity and nature. In this sense, democracy is seen as irreconcilable with any form of inequity in the distribution of power, that is, with any concentration of power, political, social or economic. Consequently, democracy is incompatible with commodity and property relations, which inevitably lead to concentration of power. Similarly, it is incompatible with hierarchical structures implying domination, either institutionalised (e.g., domination by men, educators and so on), or 'objective' (e.g., domination of the South by the North in the framework of the market division of labour), and the implied notion of dominating the natural world.

The ID conception draws a fundamental distinction between public and private, which is particularly important with respect to the paideia issue. The public realm, contrary to the practice of many supporters of the republican or democratic project (Arendt, Castoriadis, Bookchin et al) includes not just the political realm, but any area of human activity where decisions can be taken collectively and democratically. So, the public realm includes the political realm which is defined as the sphere of political decision-taking, the area where political power is exercised; the economic realm which is defined as the sphere of economic decision-taking, the area where economic power is exercised with respect to the broad economic choices that any scarcity society has to make; the social realm which is defined as the sphere of decision-taking in the workplace, the education place and any other economic or cultural institution that is a constituent element of a democratic society; and, finally, the ‘ecological realm’ which is defined as the sphere of the relations between the natural and the social worlds.

Correspondingly, we may therefore distinguish between four main types of democracy that constitute the fundamental elements of an inclusive democracy: political, economic, ecological and ‘democracy in the social realm’. Political, economic and democracy in the social realm may be defined, briefly, as the institutional framework that aims at the equal distribution of political, economic and social power respectively, in other words, as the system which aims at the effective elimination of the domination of human being over human being. Similarly, we may define ecological democracy as the institutional framework that aims at the elimination of any human attempt to dominate the natural world, in other words, as the system which aims to reintegrate humans and nature.

In the political realm there can only be one form of democracy, what we may call *political* or *direct democracy*, where political power is shared equally among all citizens. So, political democracy is founded on the equal sharing of political power among all citizens, the self-instituting of society. This means that certain conditions have to be satisfied for a society to be characterised as a political democracy, i.e. that democracy is grounded on the conscious **choice** of its citizens for individual and collective autonomy and not on any divine or mystical dogmas and preconceptions, or any closed theoretical systems involving social/natural ‘laws’, or tendencies determining social change; that no institutionalised political **processes** of an oligarchic nature exist so that all political decisions (including those relating to the formation and execution of laws) are taken by the citizen body collectively and without representation; that no institutionalised political **structures** embodying unequal power relations exist which implies specificity of delegation, rotation of delegates who are recallable by the citizen body etc; and that all residents of a particular geographical area and of a viable population size beyond a certain age of maturity (to be defined by the citizen body itself) and irrespective of gender, race, ethnic or cultural identity, are members of the citizen body and are directly involved in the decision-taking process.

The above conditions institutionalise a public space in which all significant political decisions are taken by the entire citizen body. However, one should clearly distinguish between democratic **institutions** and democratic **practice** which may still be non-democratic, even if the institutions themselves are democratic. It is therefore clear that the institutionalisation of direct democracy is only the necessary condition for the establishment of democracy. As Castoriadis puts it: “the existence of a public space (i.e. of a political domain which belongs to all’) is not just a matter of legal provisions guaranteeing rights of free speech etc. Such conditions are but conditions for a public space to exist”<sup>[36]</sup>.

Citizens in Athens, for instance, before and after deliberating in the assemblies, talked to each other in the *agora* about politics<sup>[37]</sup>. The role of paideia in the education of individuals as citizens is therefore crucial since it is only paideia that can “give valuable, substantive content to the ‘public space’.”<sup>[38]</sup> As Hansen<sup>[39]</sup> points out on the crucial role of paideia:

[T]o the Greek way of thinking, it was the political institutions that shaped the ‘democratic man’ and the ‘democratic life’, not vice versa: the institutions of the *polis* educated and moulded the lives of the citizens, and to have the best life you must have the best institutions and a system of education conforming with the institutions

The basic unit of decision making in a confederal Inclusive Democracy is the **demotic** assembly, i.e. the assembly of *demos*, the citizen body in a given geographical area, which delegates power to demotic courts, demotic militias etcetera. However, apart from the decisions to be taken at the local level, there are a lot of important decisions to be taken at the regional or confederal level, as well as at the workplace or the educational place to which we will come next. So, confederal democracy is based on a network of administrative councils whose members or delegates are elected from popular face-to-face democratic assemblies in the various **demoi**, which, geographically may encompass a town and the surrounding villages or even neighbourhoods of large cities. The members of these confederal councils are strictly mandated, recallable, and responsible to the assemblies that choose them for the purpose of co-ordinating and administering the policies formulated by the assemblies themselves. Their function is thus a purely administrative and practical one, not a policy-making one like the function of representatives in representative ‘democracy’.<sup>[40]</sup>

Therefore, the institutional preconditions described create only the preconditions for freedom. In the last instance, Individual and collective autonomy depends on the internalisation of democratic values by each citizen. This is why *paideia* plays such a crucial role in the democratic process. It is paideia, together with the high level of civic consciousness that participation in a democratic society is expected to create, which will decisively help in the establishment of a new moral code determining human behaviour in a democratic society. It is not difficult to be shown, as I attempted to do elsewhere<sup>[41]</sup>, that the moral values which are consistent with individual and collective autonomy in a *demos*-based society are those that are based on co-operation, mutual aid and solidarity. The adoption of such moral values will therefore be a conscious choice by autonomous individuals living in an autonomous society, as a result of the fundamental choice for autonomy, and not the outcome of some divine, natural or social ‘laws’, or tendencies.

However, political democracy does not make sense, particularly in a society based on a market economy, until it is supplemented by economic democracy. Given the definition of political democracy as the authority of the people (*demos*) in the political sphere —which implies the existence of political equality in the sense of equal distribution of political power— we may correspondingly define economic democracy as the authority of *demos* in the economic sphere —which implies the existence of economic equality in the sense of equal distribution of economic power. Economic democracy therefore relates to a social system which institutionalises the integration of society and the economy and may be defined as an economic *structure* and a *process* which, through direct citizen participation

in the economic decision-taking and decision-implementing process, secures an equal distribution of economic power among citizens. This means that, ultimately, the *demos* controls the economic process, within an institutional framework of *demotic* ownership of the means of production. Therefore, for a society to be characterised as an economic democracy there should be no institutionalised economic *processes* of an oligarchic nature, which implies that all ‘macro’ economic decisions, namely, decisions concerning the running of the economy as a whole (overall level of production, consumption and investment, amounts of work and leisure implied, technologies to be used, etc.) are taken by the citizen body collectively and without representation, although ‘micro’ economic decisions at the workplace or the household level may be taken by the individual production or consumption unit. Also, there should be no institutionalised economic *structures* embodying unequal economic power relations, which implies that the means of production and distribution are collectively owned and directly controlled by the *demos* so that any inequality of income is therefore the result of additional voluntary work at the individual level. Thus, *demotic ownership* of the economy provides the economic **structure** for democratic ownership, whereas direct citizen participation in economic decisions provides the framework for a comprehensively democratic control **process** of the economy. The *demos*, therefore, becomes the authentic unit of economic life, since economic democracy is not feasible today unless both the ownership and control of productive resources are organised at the local level. Briefly, <sup>[42]</sup> the main characteristic of the proposed model, which also differentiates it from socialist planning models, is that it explicitly presupposes a stateless, moneyless and marketless economy that precludes the institutionalisation of privileges for some sections of society and private accumulation of wealth, without having to rely on a mythical post-scarcity state of abundance, or having to sacrifice freedom of choice.

The satisfaction of the above conditions for political and economic democracy would represent the re-conquering of the political and economic realms by the public realm, that is, the re-conquering of a true social individuality, the creation of the conditions of freedom and self-determination, both at the political and the economic levels. But, political and economic power are not the only forms of power and therefore political and economic democracy do not, by themselves, secure an inclusive democracy. In other words, an inclusive democracy is inconceivable unless it extends to the broader social realm to embrace the workplace, the household, the educational place and indeed any economic or cultural institution which constitutes an element of this realm.

A crucial issue that arises with respect to democracy in the social realm in general and *paideia* in particular refers to relations in the household. Women's social and economic status has been enhanced during, particularly, the statist and neoliberal phases of modernity, as a result of the expanding labour needs of the growth economy on the one hand and the activity of women's movements on the other. Still, gender relations at the household level are mostly hierarchical, especially in the South where most of the world population lives. However, although the household shares with the public realm a fundamental common characteristic, inequality and power relations, the household has always been classified in the private realm. Therefore, the problem that arises here is how the ‘democratisation’ of the household may be achieved.

One possible solution is the dissolution of the household/public realm divide. Thus, some feminist writers, particularly of the eco-feminist variety, glorify the *oikos* and its values as a substitute for the *polis* and its politics, something that, as Janet Biehl observes, ‘can easily

be read as an attempt to dissolve the political into the domestic, the civil into the familial, the public into the private'.<sup>[43]</sup> Similarly, some green thinkers attempt to reduce the public realm into an extended household model of a small-scale, co-operative community.<sup>[44]</sup> At the other end, some Marxist feminists<sup>[45]</sup> attempt to remove the public/private dualism by dissolving all private space into a singular public, a socialised or fraternal state sphere. However, as Val Plumwood points out, the feminists who argue for the elimination of household privacy are today a minority although most feminists stress the way in which the concept of household privacy has been misused to put beyond challenge the subordination of women.<sup>[46]</sup> Another possible solution is, taking for granted that the household belongs to the private realm, to define its meaning in terms of the freedom of all its members. As Val Plumwood points out this means that "household relationships themselves should take on the characteristics of democratic relationships, and that the household should take a form which is consistent with the freedom of all its members."<sup>[47]</sup>

To my mind, the issue is not the dissolution of the private/public realm divide. The real issue is how, maintaining and enhancing the autonomy of the two realms, such institutional arrangements are adopted that introduce democracy at the household and the social realm in general (workplace, educational establishment etcetera) and at the same time enhance the institutional arrangements of political and economic democracy. In fact, an effective democracy is inconceivable unless free time is equally distributed among all citizens, and this condition can never be satisfied as long as the present hierarchical conditions in the household, the workplace and elsewhere continue. Furthermore, democracy in the social realm, particularly in the household, is impossible, unless such institutional arrangements are introduced which recognise the character of the household as a needs-satisfier and integrate the care and services provided within its framework into the general scheme of needs satisfaction.

Although therefore nobody disputes the fact that the family plays a crucial role in the socialisation of an individual in early age, still, the usual libertarian discussion of the 1960s and 1970s on whether family should be abolished raises the issue in simplistic, if not Manichaic terms. It is obvious today that living in a family is an individual choice which strictly belongs to the private realm. The crucial issue therefore is how democratic relations are created at the household or the educational place to support and enhance the democratic institutions created at society's level.

Finally, coming to ecological democracy the issue here is how we may envisage an environmentally-friendly institutional framework that would not serve as the basis of a Nature-dominating ideology. Clearly, if we see democracy as a process of social self-institution where there is no divinely or 'objectively' defined code of human conduct, there are no guarantees that an inclusive democracy will also be an ecological one. The replacement of the market economy by a new institutional framework of inclusive democracy constitutes only the **necessary condition** for a harmonious relation between the natural and social worlds. The sufficient condition refers to the citizens' level of ecological consciousness. Still, the radical change in the dominant social paradigm that will follow the institution of an inclusive democracy, combined with the decisive role that **paideia** will play in an environmentally-friendly institutional framework, could reasonably be expected to lead to a radical change in the human attitude towards Nature. In other words, a democratic ecological problematique cannot go beyond the institutional preconditions that offer the best hope for a better human relationship to Nature. However,

there are strong grounds to believe that the relationship between an inclusive democracy and Nature would be much more harmonious than could ever be achieved in a market economy, or one based on socialist statism, as a result of the new structures and relations that will follow the establishment of: political, economic and democracy in the social realm.

The above conditions for democracy imply a new conception of citizenship: economic, political, social and cultural citizenship which involves new political and economic structures and relations, self-management structures at the workplace, democracy in the household and the educational place, as well as new democratic structures of dissemination and control of information and culture (mass media, art, etc.) that allow every member of the demos to take part in the process and at the same time develop his/her intellectual and cultural potential. The conception of citizenship adopted here, which could be called a democratic conception, is based on the above definition of inclusive democracy and presupposes a 'participatory' conception of active citizenship, like the one implied by the work of Hannah Arendt.<sup>[48]</sup> In this conception, "political activity is not a means to an end, but an end in itself; one does not engage in political action simply to promote one's welfare but to realise the principles intrinsic to political life, such as freedom, equality, justice, solidarity, courage and excellence".<sup>[49]</sup> It is therefore obvious that this conception of citizenship is qualitatively different from the liberal and social-democratic conceptions which adopt an 'instrumentalist' view of citizenship, i.e. a view which implies that citizenship entitles citizens with certain rights that they can exercise as means to the end of individual welfare.

In conclusion, as it was stated above, the institutional conditions described are just necessary conditions for democracy. The sufficient condition so that democracy will not degenerate into some kind of "demago-crazy", where the demos is manipulated by a new breed of professional politicians, is crucially determined by the citizens' level of democratic consciousness which, in turn, is conditioned by *paideia*. Therefore, there is a continuous interaction between *paideia* and democracy which both should be seen as dynamic processes rather than as simply static structures. The institutional preconditions of *paideia* at the social level secure the institutional framework for *paideia*, as they provide the public space for the education of individuals as citizens. In other words, these conditions are the necessary conditions for an *autonomous paideia* which presupposes autonomous individuals (in contrast to libertarians who talk about a moral *paideia* instead of an autonomous one). At the same time, a democratic *paideia* is the necessary condition for the reproduction of democracy itself so that it does not degenerate in practice into a new kind of oligocracy.

### ***Change in values as a precondition and consequence of Paideia***

An Inclusive Democracy does not simply presuppose a set of institutional conditions that secure social and individual autonomy. It also assumes a set of values that are compatible with the democratic organisation of society. Therefore, the democratic project is incompatible with irrationalism because, democracy, as a process of social self-institution, implies a society which is open ideologically, namely, which is not grounded on any closed system of beliefs, dogmas or ideas. "Democracy," as Castoriadis puts it, "is the project of breaking the closure at the collective level."<sup>[50]</sup> In a democratic society, dogmas and closed systems of ideas cannot constitute parts of the dominant social paradigm, although, of



course, individuals can have whatever beliefs they wish, as long as they are committed to uphold the democratic principle, namely the principle according to which society is autonomous, institutionalised as inclusive democracy.

So, the democratic project cannot be grounded on any divine, natural or social ‘laws’ or tendencies, but on our own conscious and self-reflective choice between the two main historical traditions: the tradition of heteronomy which has been historically dominant, and the tradition of autonomy. The choice of autonomy implies that the institution of society is not based on any kind of irrationalism (faith in God, mystical beliefs, etc.), as well as on ‘objective truths’ about social evolution grounded on social or natural ‘laws’. This is so because any system of religious or mystical beliefs (as well as any closed system of ideas), by definition, excludes the questioning of some fundamental beliefs or ideas and, therefore, is incompatible with citizens setting their own laws. In fact, the principle of ‘non-questioning’ some fundamental beliefs is common in every religion or set of metaphysical and mystical beliefs, from Christianity up to Taoism. This is important if we take particularly into account the fact that today’s influence of irrationalist trends on libertarian currents has resulted in the silly picture of scores of libertarian communes organised democratically and inspired by various kinds of irrationalism (not unlike similar religious sects in the past, e.g. the Christian Catharist movement extolled by libertarians as democratic!<sup>[51]</sup>). Classical anarchists like Bakunin on the other hand were explicit in their hostility towards religious or other dogmas:

Education of children and their upbringing must be founded wholly upon the scientific development of reason and not that of faith; upon the development of personal dignity and independence, not upon piety and-obedience; on the cult of truth and justice at any cost; and above all, upon respect for humanity, which must replace in everything the e divine cult...All rational education is at bottom nothing but the progressive immolation of authority for the benefit of freedom, the final aim of education necessarily being the development of free men imbued with a feeling of respect and love for the liberty of others

The fundamental element of autonomy is the creation of our own truth, something that social individuals can only achieve through direct democracy, that is, the process through which they continually question any institution, tradition, or ‘truth’. In a democracy, there are simply no given truths. The practice of individual and social autonomy presupposes autonomy in thought, in other words, the constant questioning of institutions and truths. Democracy is therefore seen not just as a *structure* institutionalising the equal sharing of power, but, also, as a *process of social self-institution*, in the context of which politics constitutes an expression of both social and individual autonomy. Thus, as an expression of social autonomy, politics takes the form of calling into question the existing institutions and of changing them through deliberate collective action. Also, as an expression of individual autonomy, “the *polis* secures more than human survival. Politics makes possible man’s development as a creature capable of genuine autonomy, freedom and excellence”, as Cynthia Farrar<sup>[52]</sup> points out referring to the thought of the sophist philosopher Protagoras. Therefore, a democratic society will be a social creation, which can only be grounded on our own conscious selection of those forms of social organisation that are conducive to individual and social autonomy.

It is clear that democratic Paideia needs a new kind of rationalism, beyond both the

‘objectivist’ type of rationalism we inherited from the Enlightenment and the generalised relativism of postmodernism. We need a **democratic rationalism**, i.e. a rationalism founded on democracy, as a structure and a process of social self-institution. Within the context of democratic rationalism, democracy is not justified by an appeal to objective tendencies with respect to natural or social evolution, but by an appeal to reason in terms of *logon didonai*, (rendering account and reason), which explicitly denies the idea of any ‘directionality’ as regards social change. Therefore, as I tried to show elsewhere,<sup>[53]</sup> what is needed today is not to jettison science, let alone rationalism altogether, in the interpretation of social phenomena, but to transcend ‘objective’ rationalism (i.e., the rationalism which is grounded on ‘objective laws’ of natural or social evolution) and develop a new kind of democratic rationalism.

All this has very important implications directly on technoscience and indirectly on Paideia. As regards technoscience, as I tried to show elsewhere<sup>[54]</sup> modern technoscience is neither ‘neutral’ in the sense that it is merely a ‘means’ which can be used for the attainment of whatever end, nor autonomous in the sense that it is the sole or the most important factor determining social structures, relations and values. Instead, it is argued that technoscience is conditioned by the power relations implied by the specific set of social, political and economic institutions characterising the growth economy and the *dominant social paradigm*. What is therefore needed is the reconstitution of both our science and technology in a way that puts at the centre of every stage in the process, in every single technique, human personality and its needs rather than, as at present, the values and needs of those controlling the market/growth economy. This presupposes a new form of socio-economic organisation in which citizens, both as producers and as consumers, do control effectively the types of technologies adopted, expressing the general rather than, as at present, the partial interest. In other words, it presupposes first, a political democracy, so that effective citizen control on scientific research and technological innovation can be established; economic democracy, so that the general economic interest of the confederated communities, rather than the partial interests of economic elites, could be effectively expressed in research and technological development; ecological democracy, so that the environmental implications of science and technology are really taken into account in scientific research and technological development; and last, but not least, democracy in the social realm, that is, equal sharing in the decision-taking process at the factory, the office, the household, the laboratory and so on, so that the abolition of hierarchical structures in production, research and technological development would secure not only the democratic content of science and technology but also democratic procedures in scientific and technological development and collective control by scientists and technologists.

It should be clear, however, that the democratisation of science and technology should not be related to a utopian abolition of division of labour and specialisation as, for instance, Thomas Simon suggests who argues that democratising technology means abolishing professionals and experts: “the extent to which a professional/expert is no longer needed is partially the extent to which a process has become democratised. It is the extent to which we are able to make the professional terrain a deliberative assembly.”<sup>[55]</sup> But, although it is true that the present extreme specialisation and division of labour has been necessitated by the needs of ‘efficiency’, which are imposed by the dynamics of the growth economy, still, there are certain definite limits on the degree of reduction in specialisation which is feasible and desirable, if we do not wish to see the re-emergence of problems that have been solved

long ago (medical problems, problems of sanitation, etc.). The nature of the technology to be adopted by a democratic society does not just depend on who owns it, or even who controls it. Not only, as History has shown, it is perfectly possible that ‘socialist’ bureaucrats may adopt techniques which are as environmentally destructive and life-damaging (if not more) as those adopted by their capitalist counterparts, but also the possibility can not be ruled out that citizens’ assemblies may adopt similar techniques. So, the abolition of oligarchic ownership and control over technology, which would come about in a marketless, moneyless, stateless economy based on an inclusive democracy, is only the necessary institutional condition for an alternative pro-life and pro-nature technology. The sufficient condition depends, as always, on the value system that a democratic society would develop and the level of consciousness of its citizens. One therefore can only hope that the change in the institutional framework together with a democratic *paideia* would play a crucial role in the formation of this new system of values and the raising of the level of consciousness.

In conclusion, a democratic *paideia* should promote the values consistent with the new democratic institutions and particularly the principles of autonomy and community on which they are based. Thus, out of the fundamental principle of autonomy one may derive a set of moral values involving equity and democracy, respect for the personality of every citizen (irrespective of gender, race, ethnic identity etc) and of course respect for human life itself which, as Castoriadis puts it, ‘ought to be posited as an absolute because the injunction of autonomy is categorical, and there is no autonomy without life.’<sup>[56]</sup> Also, out of the same fundamental principle of autonomy, we may derive values involving the protection of the quality of life of each individual citizen —something that would imply a relationship of harmony with nature and the need to re-integrate society with nature. Similarly, out of the fundamental principle of community we may derive a set of values involving not only equity but also solidarity and mutual aid, altruism/self-sacrifice (beyond concern for kin and reciprocity), caring and sharing.<sup>[57]</sup>

### ***Institutional preconditions at the educational level***

As therefore the discussion of the institutional preconditions for *Paideia* at society’s level hopefully has made clear, the establishment of a democratic *Paideia* is impossible within the existing system of capitalist market economy and representative ‘democracy’. The next crucial issue is how we see the educational institutions of the future and the nature of education in general.

*Paideia* in a democratic society is seen as a means of achieving equal distribution of power, rather than, as at present and in any heteronomous society, as a means of maintaining and reproducing the concentration of power at the hands of privileged social groups. If *paideia* is seen as a means of achieving equal distribution of power it complements the institutions of political and economic democracy, which aim at an equal distribution of political and economic power respectively, so that a genuine classless society could be achieved.

As I mentioned in the first section, *paideia* in a democratic society should play the double role of *civic schooling* and *personal training*. The concrete forms that a democratic *Paideia* will take is of course a matter for the democratic assemblies of the future to decide and all we can do is outline some proposals that, in our view, would better implement these two fundamental aims. However, these two fundamental aims about the role of *paideia* in a

democratic society have some definite implications on the nature, content and methodology of the education process, which are helpful in formulating some concrete proposals on the matter. On the basis of these aims the following should be basic features of a democratic paideia:

- *Public spaces in Education.* The education process should create new public spaces in which students (who up to a certain age of maturity to be decided by demotic assemblies will not be able to be members of them) will experience and live democracy in running the educational process, as far as it affects them. This will involve educational assemblies for each area of study (general knowledge and specific areas of study/training), under the general guidance of demotic assemblies. Students in these assemblies will decide collectively, on an equal basis with their educators, the curriculum, the place/form of education/training and so on.
- *Free Generalised and Integral education for life.* This means that the education process for all children starts at an early age (to be decided individually within a reasonable age range) and continues for life. Furthermore, it is a process which does not distinguish in principle between intellectual and manual work that enjoy an equal social status. This however should not prevent an individual citizen from concentrating his/her training in a particular area of intellectual or manual work at some stage in his/her life, although all citizens should be able to do both types of work, so that they could effectively participate in the collective effort to meet the basic needs of the community.<sup>[58]</sup> The aim therefore will be to provide citizens with the general knowledge to understand the world, as well as the tools to carry out any activity they select to do in covering their basic and non-basic needs.
- *Individual and social autonomy.* The education methods used and the content of education itself should aim to promote freedom in the sense of individual and social autonomy both in the everyday educational practice as well as in the knowledge transmitted to students. The former should involve non-hierarchical relations in education (see below) whereas the latter should involve a systematic effort to create free self-reflective minds who would reject any dogmas and closed systems of thought and particularly any irrational belief systems, i.e. systems whose core beliefs are not derived by rational methods (i.e. reason and/or an appeal to ‘facts’) but by intuition, instinct, feeling, mystical experience, revelation etc. In this sense, education is seen as the principal means of encouraging the growth of the creative and autonomous person.
- *Non-hierarchical relations.* Paideia is a double-edged process in which students learn from educators and vice versa. Educators do not enjoy any hierarchical status as a result of their position and, therefore, their authority<sup>[59]</sup> over students is grounded on temporary differences in knowledge. In the democratic paideia which characterises an autonomous society, the instituted equality in the distribution of power at society’s level rules out any hierarchical authority; so, the only kind of discipline that exists is the self-discipline created by freedom and activity themselves, which, in turn, enhance the creative spontaneity of the individual. This is in contrast to the hierarchical paideia which characterises any heteronomous society in which the authority of the educator is based on power relationships and is imposed through coercive discipline that does not recognise the right and ability to dissent. An

implication of the non-hierarchical character of democratic paideia is that grades, diplomas and credentials have no place in it since they simply cultivate competition and create new hierarchies between trainees. The 'authority' of a person in his/her activity is confirmed by his/her knowledge and experience rather than by grades and diplomas.

- *Balance between science and the aesthetic sensibility.* Students should be encouraged in all areas of study and particularly in the general knowledge area to appreciate all forms of art and to be actively involved in practising creative art so that a meaningful balance could be achieved between scientific/practical knowledge on the one hand and aesthetic sensibility/creativity on the other; this will be a crucial step in developing balanced personalities .

The final critical issue refers to the form Paideia will take and in particular whether it will take the form of formal schooling in specifically designated educational institutions as today or whether instead it will take the form of 'de-schooling', as many libertarians of the individualistic trend within the anarchist movement suggest. It should be stressed at the outset that Marxists and classical anarchists like Bakunin did not reject schooling but adopted the view that a socialist 'schooling' is impossible within the capitalist system. The resolution adopted by the First International in its Congress of Brussels in 1867 explicitly stated the need for the organisation of the 'schooling' of workers:

Recognizing that for the moment it is impossible to organize a rational system of education, the Congress urges its various sections to organize study courses which would follow a program of scientific, professional, and industrial education, that is, a program of integral instruction, in order to remedy as much as possible the present-day lack of education among workers. It is well understood that a reduction of working hours is to be considered an indispensable preliminary condition.

Although the system of massive state education, which was organised everywhere during modernity, supposedly provided education to all as we saw in the second section of this paper, the type of education provided had very different aims from the aims of socialist education, or of the democratic paideia discussed above. In fact, we may call the present form of education 'miseducation' to distinguish it from emancipatory education and paideia. However, the authoritarian type of education that developed particularly during the statist phase of modernity both in the East and the West gave rise to the counter-culture of the 1960s and an attack against not only the content but also the form of education. Authoritarian schooling carried out by professional teachers, using fixed curricula determined 'from above' rather than through any democratic decision-taking process, were particular targets of this attack. Paul Goodman's ideas on libertarian education and particularly Ivan Illich's 'deschooling' thesis were especially influential and it seems that they still inspire 'life-style' anarchists today.

Thus, Matt Hern<sup>[60]</sup> stresses that 'what is needed is a vast, asystematically organized fabric of innumerable kinds of places for kids to spend their time' on the grounds that 'compulsory schooling is a culture that reifies the centralized control and monitoring of our daily lives'. However, this statement makes clear that the author, throwing away the baby with the bath-water, confuses control and organisation of education (which of course

do not have to be centralised) with education itself. Next, he confuses the content with the form of schooling when he states, for instance, that ‘schools are institutions with their own particular ideologies and pedagogical approaches, and they are devoted to schooling, or imparting a certain set of values, beliefs and practises upon their clients’. Still, as I tried to show above, in a democratic system of education, the values taught could be decided democratically rather than by elites as today. Furthermore, the individualistic trend which the article expresses (a trend which today seems to be dominant among ‘anarchists’ –a clear illustration of the degradation of this movement<sup>[61]</sup>) is evident in the following statement by the same author:

The deschooling argument I want to make here presumes that each and every individual is best able to define their own interests, needs and desires. Schools and education assume that children need to be taught what is good, what is important to understand I refuse to accept this. Kids do not need to be taught. ... Deschooling suggests the renunciation of not only schooling, but education as well, in favour of a culture of self-reliance, self-directed learning, and voluntary, non-coercive learning institutions

Thus, according to this passage, ‘each and every individual’ is best able to define the content and form of education in accordance with its own interests, needs and desires. Clearly, there is no society in this scheme, as the guru of neoliberalism Mrs Thatcher, has declared twenty years earlier! There are no social individuals but simply self-reliant individuals of the Robinson Crusoe type –the typical example used by orthodox neoclassical economists to justify the market system. Finally, the author, in an obvious confusion of what a direct democracy means, he stresses that a directly democratic agenda has to include an explicit renunciation of the other-controlled mentality of compulsory schooling because:

If we want and expect our kids to grow up to be responsible creatures capable of directing their own lives, we have to give them practise at making decisions. To allow authority to continually rob our kids of basic decisions about where and how to play is to set our kids up for dependence and incompetence on a wide scale. If we are to truly counter the disabling effect of schools, this is indeed our fate. A genuine democracy, a society of self-reliant people and communities, has to begin by allowing children and adults to shape themselves, to control their own destinies free of authoritarian manipulation.

It is clear that direct democracy is distorted here to mean *individual* rather than collective decision-taking by assemblies of educators and trainees. The distortion attempted here becomes even more obvious when it is made clear that the author confuses also the form and content of learning with learning itself, as for instance when he declares that ‘Learning is like breathing. It is a natural human activity: it is part of being alive... Our ability to learn, like our ability to breathe, does not need to be tampered with. It is utter nonsense, not to mention deeply insulting to say that people need to be taught how to learn or how to think’. However, although nobody would deny that learning is a natural ability this does not mean that a dentist, a pilot, or a pianist do not have to be taught how to learn (i.e. to be given a curriculum) dentistry, flying or playing the piano! The issue therefore is who determines the curriculum, i.e. the program of study, and this clearly can neither be left to the individual student to decide, as proposed by libertarian supporters of deschooling, nor of course to the elites, as it happens today, but to the democratic assemblies of educators

and pupils/students.

So, given the fundamental aims of democratic paideia and their implications we considered above and given the objections to the deschooling thesis, as far as it rejects the very idea of a curriculum, how do we see the education ‘institutions’ of a democratic society? To my mind, the best way out of the present strictly structured miseducation, which aims to produce career people who have internalised the values of the heteronomous society, is the creation of ‘education groups’ as the basic units within which the education process will take place. I would propose three categories of such groups which I will call ‘primary’, ‘secondary’ and ‘tertiary’ groups although, as we shall see, their relationship to today’s three grades of education under similar names is almost nil.

*‘Primary’ education groups* consist of pupils of an early age (to be determined by the demotic assemblies, e.g. 6-15) and educators. Every child of this age has to join one of these groups, as this represents the only compulsory stage in the education process. The reason for this compulsory element is that, given the accumulated knowledge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a minimum of knowledge is required for all citizens to be able to participate in the production of the ‘basic’ goods and services (i.e. the ones covering basic needs) which secure the survival of their self-reliant communities and themselves. Therefore the basic aim of primary educational groups is to provide the minimum knowledge required for this purpose, which would include industrial skills, if group assemblies decide so, as well of course as the general knowledge and aesthetic sensibility we described above. Furthermore, the knowledge provided by these primary educational groups would provide a sufficient background for attending secondary or tertiary groups. The curriculum, as mentioned above, would be decided by each educational group democratically. ‘Educators’ would consist not only of trained educators but also of citizens involved in every kind of activity who could offer their knowledge and experience. There would be no fixed time-tables neither specifically designed ‘schools’ since education would take place in the actual areas of activity, linking knowledge and learning to real-life processes. Still, specially designed public buildings with various facilities would be available to these educational groups for their assembly meetings, in which the curriculum, the planning of their activity in implementing their curriculum etc would be determined. Therefore, much of the group’s activity would take place in laboratories, science centres, factories, farms, offices, shops, as well as in museums, libraries, theatres, cinemas, etc. Pupils, who would not be able during this education stage to participate in the production of the basic goods and services necessary for the survival of the community, would be allocated ‘basic vouchers’<sup>[62]</sup>, in exactly the same way as any other citizen, for the satisfaction of their basic needs and, on top of them, any ‘non-basic vouchers allocated to them by the confederal assembly on the basis of the resources available to the confederal democracy.

Citizens who have finished attending the primary groups and do not wish to join a specialised tertiary group but want to extend their knowledge of particular areas, or simply wish to update their general knowledge acquired at primary groups, could do so either on an individual basis through ‘open education’ programmes offered by TV, the internet etc, or collectively, by voluntarily joining *‘secondary’ education groups*, which could be done at any age. These groups are distinguished from ‘tertiary’ groups on the basis of the degree of specialisation involved. In contrast to ‘tertiary’ groups which aim at a clearly specialised education, secondary groups aim at providing semi-specialised education, beyond the level provided within primary groups. Citizens attending the secondary groups are entitled to

their basic and non-basic vouchers as any other citizen, according to need and labour offered to the community respectively, which implies that students attending such groups would still have to contribute to the community the minimum 'basic' hours of labour required for covering their basic needs. As regards educators, places of education, curricula etc similar arrangements to the ones proposed for primary groups could be adopted by these groups.

Finally, *'tertiary' educational groups* aim at providing the specialised knowledge required in areas of activity which necessitate a high degree of specialisation (e.g. medicine, engineering, physics, education etc). Joining these groups is also voluntary and can take place at any age after attending the primary education groups. Educators in tertiary groups are specialised in a particular area of knowledge and constitute the only 'teachers', in the sense of professionals, within the democratic system of paideia. Given however the time requirements of attending the tertiary groups, students are exempted from communal work in the production of basic goods and services, but they are entitled, like pupils in primary groups, to the same basic and non basic vouchers as they are. Clearly, given the burden on communal resources that specialised education involves, the time allowance granted by the community to attend such groups should be fixed within a reasonable range and determined by the decisions of the assemblies of educators and students in each area of study and the resources available. Similarly, the curriculum is determined by the same assemblies in which, however, the vote of educators, given the specialised knowledge required for this purpose, will have an increased weight. Finally, the places of education will necessarily be determined by the needs of each area of study. The education provided within the tertiary groups, would therefore effectively be, given their specialised needs, the only 'structured' education in a democratic system of paideia,.

The proposed scheme could avoid both the Scylla of statist education, which characterised modern capitalist and socialist societies (particularly the latter), with all its authoritarianism and suppression of the individual, as well as the Charybdis of individualistic education like the one proposed by libertarians of the individualistic trend (Illich, Spring, Hern et al) according to whom, (as Illich put it), the most pressing problem of the modern world is to change the style of institutions and technology so that they work for the benefit of the individual.<sup>[63]</sup> Instead, a democratic paideia should work for the benefit of both the collectivity and the individual. A democratic paideia is therefore neither the present miseducation and schooling nor the individualistic affair of 'anything goes' proposed by some 'libertarians' aiming at maximising individual autonomy. A democratic paideia could only mean gaining knowledge and ability to maximize individual **and** social autonomy, as a means of individual **and** social liberation.

## **4. Emancipatory education as the transition from modernity education to a democratic Paideia**

The final crucial issue refers to what Castoriadis called 'the riddle of politics' i.e. how within an heteronomous society and an heteronomous education we may create autonomous institutions and the infrastructure of paideia, or what I would call the conditions for an emancipatory education i.e. the conditions for the transition from present modernity miseducation to a democratic paideia. This would involve the breaking of the socialisation process on a massive scale so that the minorities of activists who have managed to



internalise the values of an alternative democratic society would be joined by the majority . The problem has engaged in the past the radical Left and is still of course unresolved. I would classify the main stands on this issue as follows. First, there are those who in effect do not propose any transitional strategies because they believe that only after a revolutionary change in society would it be possible to introduce a paideia. Second, there are those who propose a transition through various schemes of libertarian education and finally there is the Inclusive Democracy approach, which proposes linking emancipatory education to the transitional political strategy and setting up emancipatory educational institutions as an integral part of the political and economic institutions being created during the transition.

### ***The ‘Paideia after the Revolution’ thesis***

The classical position of the radical Left on the matter was one of rejecting the possibility of paideia within the existing system of the capitalist market economy and representative ‘democracy’. The position was best summarised by Bakunin but stressed also by other Marxist and anarchist writers of the past and explicitly or implicitly repeated by contemporary radicals like Bookchin, Castoriadis et al. Thus, Bakunin explicitly links the advent of a socialist education with the socialist transformation of society :<sup>[64]</sup>

Public education, not fictitious but real one, can exist only in a truly equalitarian society... Socialist morality is altogether contrary to existing morality, the teachers who are necessarily dominated to a greater or lesser extent by the latter, will act in the presence of the pupils in a manner wholly contrary to what they preach. Consequently, socialist education is impossible in the existing schools as well as in present-day families. But integral education is equally impossible under existing conditions. The bourgeois have not the slightest desire that their children should become workers, and workers are deprived of the means necessary to give their offspring a scientific education...It is evident that this important question of the education and upbringing of the people depends upon the solution of the much more difficult problem of radical reorganization of the existing economic conditions of the working masses

The same author gives perhaps the best answer to many contemporary anarchists who advocate various schemes of free schools and vouchers as a means of creating the conditions of a ‘libertarian’ paideia:<sup>[65]</sup>

If it were even possible to found in the existing environment schools which would give their pupils instruction and education as perfect as we can imagine, would those schools succeed in developing just, free, and moral men? No, they would not, for upon leaving school the graduates would find themselves in a social environment governed by altogether contrary principles, and since society is always stronger than individuals, it would soon come to dominate them, and it would demoralize them.

Similarly, Castoriadis<sup>[66]</sup>, to mention just one of the contemporary radical writers who have explicitly dealt with the issue of paideia, stresses that:

Only the education (paideia) of the citizens as citizens can give valuable,

substantive content to the ‘public space.’ This paideia is not primarily a matter of books and academic credits. First and foremost, it involves becoming conscious that the polis is also oneself and that its fate also depends upon one's mind, behaviour, and decisions; in other words, it is participation in political life.

As ‘participation in political life’ for Castoriadis has nothing to do with today's liberal representative ‘democracy’, which he appropriately called liberal ‘oligarchy’, it is obvious that Castoriadis too saw as non-feasible the creation of institutions of paideia under the present system.

### ***Libertarian education as a transition ‘strategy’***

Next, we may refer to various proposals, usually made by supporters of the individualistic trend within the anarchist movement, ‘life-style anarchists’ and adherents of ‘anarchy in action’, who adopt various schemes of ‘libertarian education’ within the existing framework of the market economy and representative ‘democracy’. The common element in all those proposals is that they are not suggested as an integral part of the program of an antisystemic movement. In fact, most if not all of those proposals, implicitly or sometimes explicitly, reject any idea of action within a political movement to overthrow the present system and describe instead various schemes to maximise individual autonomy in education, as a kind of desired life-change rather than as means to create the consciousness for a systemic change. No wonder that these proposals do not link the suggested institutional changes at the ‘micro’ educational level with the required institutional changes at the ‘macro’ social level. In this sense, one may classify these proposals to what Murray Bookchin aptly called ‘life-style anarchism’,<sup>[67]</sup> which could easily be considered as a kind of libertarian reformism, given that most if not all of the proposed changes could easily be integrated within the present system —as they actually have been, whenever implemented.

As Joel Spring, the author of *A primer of Libertarian Education* and an adherent to the individualistic trend within the anarchist movement described the free school movement that flourished in the 1950's and 1960's, it was an attempt to establish an environment for self-development in a world that was considered overly structured and rationalized, with precursors (among others) to the ‘free playground’ movement in the 1940's. It was seen ‘as an expression of libertarian concern about reshaping the world so that people could control and use it for their own purposes’, or even as ‘an oasis from authoritarian control and as a means of passing on the knowledge to be free’, with the overall aim to providing a free and unstructured environment.<sup>[68]</sup> As the same author points out, the American libertarian Paul Goodman was one of the major spokesmen for the free school movement who advocated the decentralization of large and cumbersome school systems and the establishment of small scale schools. As is obvious, the establishment of ‘free schools’ had nothing to do with any antisystemic political movement or a transition strategy but simply aimed at providing a kind of libertarian education (presumably to hippy middle class parents who could afford the luxury of paying the fees). Anecdotal evidence has it that most of these children who attended the ‘free schools’ have by now moved from ex-hippies to yuppies who flourish within the neoliberal ‘new economy’!

Ivan Illich in the late 1960's took a step further and rejected the ‘free school’ movement in

order to promote his ‘deschooling’ thesis. But, Illich, as far as I know, never challenged the very system of the capitalist market economy and representative ‘democracy’ which are the foundations of the present system. His ‘revolution’ was basically against bureaucracy and technocracy with particular emphasis on the industrial culture (as deep ecologists do today) rather than against the system itself. It is not therefore surprising that he sees the abolition of the right to corporate secrecy as ‘a much more radical political goal than the traditional demand for public ownership or control of the tools of production’ and that he comes out in favour of a ‘subsistence economy’ whose feasibility, as he stresses, ‘depends primarily on the ability of a society to agree on fundamental, self-chosen, antibureaucratic and anti-technocratic restraints’.<sup>[69]</sup> The inevitable conclusion is that a ‘subsistence economy’ and a ‘deschooled society’ could also develop within the present system as long as the appropriate culture has been created!

Then, in the 1970s, the ‘anarchy in action’ libertarian current inspired by Colin Ward made similar proposals for maximisation of individual autonomy as regards education, through a voucher scheme. According to this scheme, each citizen at birth receives actual or notional book of vouchers or coupons (representing his/her share of nation's educational budget) which entitle him/her to so many units of education which can be bought any time in his/her life.<sup>[70]</sup> Ward argued that such a scheme would allow libertarians to exploit the existing system with the aim to provide ‘genuine’ alternatives. However, such a scheme in fact does not ‘exploit’ the existing system but could instead be used by it not only to marginalise and integrate the ‘alternative’ schools within a supposedly ‘pluralistic’ education system but also to reproduce and enhance the vast inequalities the system creates. It is obvious that those coming from elite social groups will have a clear comparative advantage at school/college and in later life with respect to those coming from non-privileged ones, despite the fact that they attended the same education institutions—the experience of social democracy is illuminating. Even more important is the fact that the voucher scheme by itself not only does nothing at all to create an antisystemic consciousness among pupils/students, but in fact cultivates the liberal/neoliberal mythology of a ‘genuine’ freedom of choice that the market system supposedly creates, which, (with the libertarian approval!) should extend to education as well. Colin Ward himself stressed that his voucher scheme would “appeal to those who would like to see a genuine freedom of choice with competition on equal terms between radically different kinds of learning, and who want to see the education made more responsive to the expressed needs of students”<sup>[71]</sup>. No wonder that even neoliberals and social-liberals proposed similar voucher schemes in neoliberal modernity! The voucher scheme is therefore another scheme to maximise individual rather social autonomy, which could easily end up with a reformist improvement of the system.

In this context, Matt Hern’s recent proposals may be seen as the ‘dialectical synthesis’ of the views expressed by supporters of “libertarian education as a transition strategy” — something that in fact, for the reasons discussed, constitutes neither a strategy nor a transition to a libertarian society.

### ***The ID strategy for the transition to Paideia***

The ID strategy for the transition from present modern miseducation to a democratic paideia is an integral part of the ID transitional strategy to an inclusive democracy, as described in Vol. 8, No. 1 of D&N.<sup>[72]</sup> Briefly, the ID strategy involves the building of a

mass programmatic political movement, like the old socialist movement, with an unashamedly universalist goal to change society along genuine democratic lines, beginning here and now. Therefore, such a movement should explicitly aim at a systemic change, as well as at a parallel change in our value systems. This strategy would entail the gradual involvement of increasing numbers of people in a new kind of politics and the parallel shifting of economic resources (labour, capital, land) away from the market economy. The aim of such a strategy should be to create changes in the institutional framework, as well as to value systems, which, after a period of tension between the new institutions and the state, would, at some stage, replace the market economy, representative ‘democracy’, and the social paradigm “justifying” them, with an inclusive democracy and a new democratic paradigm respectively.

The rationale behind this strategy is that, as systemic change requires a rupture with the past, which extends to both the institutional and the cultural level, such a rupture is only possible through the development of a new political organisation and a new comprehensive political program for systemic change that will create a clear anti-systemic consciousness at a massive scale. This is in contrast to the statist socialist strategy, which ends up with the creation of a clear anti-systemic consciousness only with respect to an avant-garde, or to the life-style activities which, if they create any antisystemic consciousness at all, it is restricted to the few members of various libertarian ‘groupuscules’. However, the creation of a new culture, which has to become hegemonic before the transition to an inclusive democracy could be effected, is only possible through the parallel building of new political and economic institutions at a significant social scale. In other words, it is only through action to build such institutions that a mass political movement with a democratic consciousness could be built. Such a strategy creates the conditions for the transition, both the ‘subjective’ ones, in terms of helping the development of a new democratic consciousness, and the ‘objective’ ones, in terms of creating the new institutions which will form the basis of an inclusive democracy. At the same time, the establishment of these new institutions will crucially assist here and now the victims of the concentration of power which is associated with the present institutional framework, and particularly the victims of neoliberal globalisation, to deal with the problems created by it.

Therefore, the objective of an ID strategy is the creation, from below, of ‘popular bases of political and economic power’, that is, the establishment of local inclusive democracies, which, at a later stage, will confederate in order to create the conditions for the establishment of a new confederal inclusive democracy. A crucial element of the ID strategy is that the political and economic institutions of inclusive democracy begin to be established immediately after a significant number of people in a particular area have formed a base for ‘democracy in action’ –preferably, but not exclusively, at the significant social scale that is secured by winning in local elections under an ID program. It is because the *demos* is the fundamental social and economic unit of a future democratic society that we have to start from the local level to change society. Therefore, participation in local elections is an important part of the strategy to gain power, in order to dismantle it immediately afterwards, by substituting the decision-taking role of the assemblies for that of the local authorities, the day after the election has been won. Furthermore, contesting local elections gives the chance to start changing society from below, as against the statist approaches that aim to change society from above through the conquest of state power, and the ‘civil society’ approaches that do not aim at a systemic change at all. However, the main aim of direct action, as well as of the participation in local elections, is not just the conquest of power but the rupture of the socialisation process and therefore the creation of a

democratic majority ‘from below’, which will legitimise the new structures of inclusive democracy.

It is at the stage when power has been won at the local level through contesting local elections that the transition to a democratic paideia could begin. The creation of ID institutions at the local level involves the development not only of political institutions of direct democracy and cultural institutions controlled by *demos* but also of a ‘demotic’ sector, which involves production units that are owned and controlled collectively by the citizens, as well as institutions of demotic welfare, education and health which are self-managed and indirectly controlled by the *demos*. A new *demotic tax system* (i.e. a tax system directly controlled by the *demos*) would finance: programmes for the demoticisation of the local productive resources, providing employment opportunities for local citizens; social spending programs that will cover the citizens’ welfare needs which include educational needs; various institutional arrangements that will make democracy in the household effective (e.g. payment for work at home, for the care of children and the elderly etc). The combined effect of the above measures will be to redistribute economic power within the community, in the sense of greater equality in the distribution of income and wealth. This, combined with the introduction of democratic planning procedures, should provide significant ground for the transition towards full economic democracy.

In this system, assemblies would have significant powers in determining the allocation of resources in the demoticised sector, namely, the demotic enterprises and the demotic welfare system. As a first step, demotic assemblies could introduce a voucher scheme with respect to social services which could take the form of a *demotic free credit card scheme* with the aim of covering the welfare needs of all citizens in a *demotic welfare system*, i.e. a welfare system controlled by the *demos* that would provide important social services (education, housing, etc.) locally, or regionally in cooperation with other *demoi* in the area.

As regards the content and nature of the education process as well as the form education institutions will take, the proposals made in the last section about the way a democratic paideia would be organised could provide a guideline about the way emancipatory education could be organised and the aims it should pursue. The overall aims of emancipatory education would be to break the socialisation process in a significant social scale, maximise social and individual autonomy and create the infrastructure for a democratic paideia.

In case therefore education is already controlled by local authorities, as it still happens in some countries, a program of establishing primary, secondary and tertiary education groups, as described above, could be set in motion immediately after local power has been won . In that case, citizens would be credited, through the *demotic free credit card scheme*, a certain amount to be determined by the demotic assemblies in relation to the *demos*’ resources, which could be spend at any age to cover their education needs.

In case however education is still controlled by the state, a full system of emancipatory education cannot be set up until enough *demoi* have been created so that a confederal inclusive democracy could be established. However, even before that happens, demotic assemblies should fight not only to create a decentralised education system but also to create alternative education opportunities within the existing system. A demoticised education system could implement the obligatory national curriculum in a way that would

challenge the imposed national system of education both in theory (interpreting prescribed textbooks on the basis of the democratic social paradigm and its values, contrasting the officially prescribed program with alternative programs of knowledge based on democratic values etc) and in practice (creating educational public spaces to run these institutions). The provision of supplementary educational facilities promoting the alternative democratic world-view through e.g. a demoticised ‘open-education’ TV-operated system, the free distribution of alternative education material (books, videos etc) would be an important part of emancipatory education.

However, apart from the creation of alternative education opportunities, which would be supplemented by the free provision of a democratic culture through a system of demoticised mass media, theatres, cinemas etc, the very fact that citizens would, for the first time in their lives, be able to have a real say in the running of their everyday life, through the new political and economic institutions being created, would be the most important means of emancipatory education towards a democratic paideia and an inclusive democracy.-

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[1] Culture is frequently defined as the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behaviour. This is a definition broad enough to include all major aspects of culture: language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, institutions, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, ceremonies and so on.

[2] By this I mean the system of beliefs, ideas and the corresponding values which are dominant (or tend to become dominant) in a particular society at a particular moment of its history, as most consistent with the existing political, economic and social institutions. The term ‘most consistent’ does not imply of course any kind of structure/superstructure relationship a la Marx. Both culture and the social paradigm are time- and space-dependent, i.e. they refer to a specific type of society at a specific time. Therefore, they both change from place to place and from one historical period to another and this makes any ‘general theory’ of History, which could determine the relationship between the cultural and the political or economic elements in society, impossible.

[3] For the differences between culture and dominant social paradigm, see T. Fotopoulos, ‘[Mass Media, Culture and Democracy](#)’, *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999), pp. 33-64.

[4] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy* (London/N.Y.: Cassell/Continuum, 1997).

[5] See T. Fotopoulos, ‘[Towards a Democratic Liberatory Ethics](#)’, *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Nov. 2002), pp. 361-396.

[6] C. Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 162.

[7] ‘Technical knowledge’ here means the absorption of some general skills (reading, writing) as well as the introduction, at the early stages of schooling, to some general scientific and technological ideas to be supplemented, at later stages, by a higher degree of specialisation.

[8] Following Castoriadis, we may call autonomous “a society that not only knows explicitly that it has created its own laws but has instituted itself so as to free its radical imaginary and enable itself to alter its institutions through collective, self-reflective, and deliberate activity.” On the basis of this definition Castoriadis then defines politics as “the lucid activity whose object is the institution of an autonomous society and the decisions about collective endeavours” –something that implies, as he points out, that the project of an autonomous society becomes meaningless if it is not, at the same time, the project of bringing forth autonomous individuals, and vice versa . In the same sense, he defines democracy as the regime of collective reflectiveness (C. Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997) p. 132.

[9] C. Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, p.131

- [10] See T. Fotopoulos, '[Transitional Strategies and the Inclusive Democracy Project](#)' *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 2002), pp. 17-62.
- [11] See T. Fotopoulos, '[The Myth of postmodernity](#)', *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 2001), pp. 27-76.
- [12] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 1.
- [13] Will Hutton, *The State We're In* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), p. 174.
- [14] See Nicholas Barr, *The Economics of the Welfare State* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), ch. 2.
- [15] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, pp. 75-79.
- [16] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, pp. 21-33.
- [17] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 2.
- [18] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, pp. 73-85 and 100-104 See also, T. Fotopoulos, '[The catastrophe of Marketisation](#)', *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (July 1999), pp. 275-310.
- [19] A. H. Halsey et al *Origins and Destinations, Family, Class and Education in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).
- [20] J. J. Goldthorpe, *Social mobility & class structure in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 252.
- [21] See T. Fotopoulos, '[Globalisation, the reformist Left and the Anti-Globalisation movement](#)', *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001), pp. 233-280.
- [22] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards an Inclusive Democracy*, pp 33-46.
- [23] Stephanie Pain, "When the Price Is Wrong," *The Guardian* (27 Feb. 1997).
- [24] See *The Castoriadis Reader*, ed. By David Ames Curtis, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 260.
- [25] Tracy McVeigh, 'Level of illiteracy among young is above that of 1912', *The Observer* (August 19, 2001).
- [26] Ian Murray, 'Class and sex still decide who goes to university', *The Times* (29 April 1993).
- [27] Will Woodward, 'Students are the new poor', *The Guardian* (June 27, 2001).
- [28] David Walker, 'Snakes and ladders', *The Guardian* (March 28, 2002).
- [29] *ibid.*
- [30] see Will Hutton, 'The class war destroying our schools', *The Observer* (May 26, 2002).
- [31] Charlotte Denny, Paul Brown and Tim Radford. 'The shackles of poverty', *The Guardian* (August 22, 2002).
- [32] See G.P. Maximoff, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, (New York: The Free Press, 1953), pp. 334-336.
- [33] Most of the contributors in *Education Without Schools* ed. by Peter Buckman (London: Souvenir Press, 1973) support similar views.
- [34] Matt Hern, '[The Promise of Deschooling: Politics, Pedagogy, Culture, Self-design, Community Control](#)', *Social Anarchism*, issue no 25, (1998).
- [35] See T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, chs. 5-6.
- [36] Cornelius Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, p. 113.
- [37] Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes*, p. 311.
- [38] Cornelius Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) p. 113.

- [39] Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991) p. 320.
- [40] Murray Bookchin has described a similar scheme which, however, is based on communities and does not involve a proper economic democracy since it assumes a moral economy that assumes away the problem of scarcity, see "[The Meaning of Confederalism](#)", *Society and Nature*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1993), pp.41-54.
- [41] See T.Fotopoulos, 'Towards a Democratic Liberatory Ethics'.
- [42] For the full version of this model see, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, chapter 6; see, also, Takis Fotopoulos, 'Pour une démocratie économique', *Agone*, no 21 (1999), pp. 136-158.
- [43] Janet Biehl, *Rethinking Ecofeminist Politics* (Boston: South End Press, 1991), p. 140.
- [44] Ted Trainer, *Abandon Affluence!* (London: Zed Books, 1985).
- [45] Pat Brewer, *Feminism and Socialism: Putting the Pieces Together* (Sydney: New Course, 1992).
- [46] Val Plumwood, 'Feminism, Privacy and Radical Democracy', *Anarchist Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2. (Autumn 1995), p. 107.
- [47] Val Plumwood, 'Feminism, Privacy and Radical Democracy', p. 111.
- [48] Maurizio Passerin d' Entreves, "Hannah Arendt and the Idea of Citizenship" in *Dimensions of Radical Democracy*, ed. by C. Mouffe (London: Verso, 1995 & 1992), pp. 145-68.
- [49] Maurizio Passerin d' Entreves, "Hannah Arendt and the Idea of Citizenship", p. 154.
- [50] Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, p. 21.
- [51] See G. Woodcock, 'Democracy, heretical and radical', *Our Generation*, Vol. 22, Nos. 1-2 (Fall 1990-Spring 1991), pp.115-16.
- [52] See Cynthia Farrar, "Ancient Greek Political Theory as a Response to Democracy" in *Democracy, the Unfinished Journey, 508 BC to AD 1993*, ed. by John Dunn, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 24.
- [53] Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards an Inclusive Democracy*, Chapt. 8.
- [54] See T.Fotopoulos, '[Towards a democratic conception of science and technology](#)', *Democracy & Nature*, vol. 4 no. 1, (1998) pp. 54-86.
- [55] Thomas W. Simon, "Beyond Technological Things," in *Renewing the Earth*, John Clark, ed. (London: Greenprint, 1990), p. 112.
- [56] *The Castoriadis Reader*, p. 400.
- [57] As Michael Taylor has shown, one of the core characteristics of a community is reciprocity, which covers 'a range of arrangements and relations and exchanges, including mutual aid, some forms of cooperation and some forms of sharing.' Michael Taylor, *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) pp. 28-29.
- [58] See Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 6.
- [59] A usual gross error of many libertarians, as April Carter stresses, is that they confuse –not unlike conservatives– authority with authoritarian rule, April Carter, *Authority and Democracy*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979) p. 67. As the same author points out, 'There are three spheres in which some form of authority is necessary and intrinsic: the relationship between adult and child, teacher and student, and professional and layman. Authority in these spheres may be abused or insufficiently authoritative, but unless it exists child rearing, education and professionalism are impossible' (ibid. p. 70).
- [60] Matt Hern, 'The Promise of Deschooling: Politics, Pedagogy, Culture, Self-design, Community Control'.
- [61] See Takis Fotopoulos, '[The End of Traditional Anti-systemic Movements and the Need for a new type of Antisystemic Movement Today](#)', *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (November 2001). pp.



415-456; see also, Murray Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism* (Edinburgh: AK press, 1995).

[62] See Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 6 for a detailed description of basic and non-basic needs satisfaction in an inclusive democracy.

[63] Joel Spring, *A Primer of Libertarian Education*, (New York: Free Life Editions, 1975), p. 57.

[64] G.P. Maximoff, *The Political Philosophy of Bakunin*, pp. 335-336.

[65] *ibid.* p. 335.

[66] C. Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, p. 113.

[67] Murray Bookchin, *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*.

[68] Joel Spring, *A primer of Libertarian Education*, p. 54-55.

[69] See Ivan Illich, 'The Deschooled society' in *Education Without Schools*, ed by Peter Buckman, p. 15 & p. 18.

[70] See Colin Ward, 'The Role of the State' in *Education Without Schools*, pp. 39-48.

[71] *ibid.* pp. 44-45.

[72] See Takis Fotopoulos, 'Transitional Strategies and the Inclusive Democracy Project.'