

The Autonomy project and Inclusive Democracy

A critical review of Castoriadis' thought

TAKIS FOTOPOULOS

Cornelius Castoriadis' project of Autonomy has some significant similarities with the ID project, but as I attempted to show elsewhere, the differences between them are fundamental, despite the attempts of some supporters^[1] of the Autonomy project to minimise these differences in order to derive a distorted view of the ID project as a kind of a by-product of Castoriadian thought! In fact, however, the ID project represents the ***synthesis as well as the transcendence of existing traditions and movements***. It expresses a synthesis of the classical democratic and socialist traditions, whilst also encompassing the antisystemic trends within contemporary movements for emancipation (Greens, feminists and others). As such, the ID project is not a "model" to be copied, but simply defines the institutional preconditions for the equal distribution of all forms of power, (i.e. for individual and collective autonomy) and at the same time describes how an economy based on such an institutional framework could function in a way covering the needs of all its citizens.

The Castoriadian vs. the ID economic proposals

Castoriadis never produced a new visualisation of his economic system consistent with his late project of autonomy, leaving the impression that the same economic model, which he formulated in the 1950s for his earlier socialist project, still applied to his new project, despite the obvious differences between the two projects as regards the workers' role in the management of the economy! As I showed elsewhere,^[2] in the 1970s, there was a significant shift in the Castoriadian problematique, which involved a move from his notion of socialist workers' self-management to that of an autonomous democratic society. Yet, although he adopted a new conception for a future society, he did not disown his earlier formulations for a socialist model of workers' management, despite the obvious contradictions created by the significant differences between the citizens' democratic self-management implied by the Autonomy project of late Castoriadis and the workers' (self) management implied by the socialist project of early Castoriadis. However, as I attempted to show in my exchange with David Ames Curtis mentioned above, people in a democracy should take the major decisions to run it not just as producers (which is the idea behind workers' management) but as citizens, which is a much broader category than that of a producer. In fact, the late Castoriadis himself seemed to be concerned by this, when he stressed that in services it may not always be possible to create workers' councils based on working unity and a shared life, but instead it may be necessary to rely on associations or

co-ops based on occupation. However, if we take into account that in today's societies (unlike the nineteen fifties) the vast majority of the active population is employed in services, the proposal of early Castoriadis for workers' self-management seems not only incompatible with the project of autonomy of late Castoriadis but, also completely outdated.

Starting, therefore, first with the differences at the economic level between the Autonomy and the ID theoretical projects, if we contrast the early Castoriadis' visualisation of the future economy with that of Inclusive Democracy, there are two major areas of difference between the two types of proposals:

- First, Castoriadis' proposal presupposes a money and real market economy whereas Inclusive Democracy, following the libertarian tradition, presupposes a marketless and moneyless economy and,
- Second, the allocation of scarce resources in Castoriadis' economy takes place through a socialist planning controlled by the decisions of workers' councils and through a real market based on impersonalised money, whereas the allocation of resources in Inclusive Democracy takes place through a democratic planning controlled by the decisions of citizens' assemblies (citizens are in a much better position to express the general interest rather than only workers) and through an artificial market based on personalised vouchers (or special credit cards).

However, the real market cum money economy suggested by Castoriadis leads to serious problems and contradictions as it cannot avoid the problems that any real market creates, irrespective of whether it is capitalist or not. Thus, Castoriadis, ignoring the crucial differentiation introduced by Polanyi between the (pre-capitalist) "market" and the (capitalist) "system of market economy", assumes that in the present capitalist system there cannot be a 'genuine' market controlled by society ("where there is capitalism there is no genuine market and where there is a market there can be no capitalism")[3]. This of course contradicts the experience of social democratic statism (which, by the way, Castoriadis contrasts favourably to the present "planetary casino"), which showed that a form of social control of the capitalist market economy, under specific historical conditions, is feasible. So, Castoriadis is presumably unable to grasp that it was not just the private ownership of the means of production which led to the present system of the internationalised market economy but the dynamics of the market itself which, in conditions of private ownership of productive resources, will inevitably lead to such a system and that, therefore, the only genuine market which can exist in an internationalised economy like the present one is the present system of neoliberal globalisation[4]. So, competition develops in any real market –and not just in a capitalist market, as Castoriadis seems (erroneously) to assume– and it is the combination of the market with the commodification of the means of production that has led to the present system of the capitalist market economy, and not just the latter alone [5].

Furthermore, the Castoriadian model, in order to avoid the huge inequalities that the dynamics of a real market will inevitably create, has to assume wage equality –an arrangement, which ignores the huge inequalities in satisfaction drawn from various types of work. Thus, in the Castoriadian system, the miner and the dustman, who can draw a very limited –if any– satisfaction from their work, are rewarded the same as the actor and the university professor, who can draw a much higher degree of satisfaction from their work. The consequence of this complete disregard for citizens' desires, under the guise of the

'equality' established by equal wages, is that the proposed economic system ends up with no automatic mechanism at all for the allocation of work! This is because equal wages, in practice, would either imply the need for some kind of external force, or the compulsory rotation of tasks, so that some could be 'persuaded' to do the necessary work for society's survival, which involves also arduous or boring tasks. In contrast, the ID proposal aims at the full satisfaction of citizens' basic and non-basic needs and the parallel meeting of their real desires as regards the kind of work they wish to do, without any external compulsion and social waste.[\[6\]](#)

The significance of 'subjective' factors in the Castoriadian system and ID

But, even more important differences between ID and Castoriadis' Autonomy project arise at the *philosophical* level. As I showed elsewhere,[\[7\]](#) although both projects agree on the proposition that it is the outcome of the social struggle that determined in each historical period the nature and main characteristics of modernity, the *controversial issue* is what was the conditioning influence of 'objective' versus 'subjective' factors, as regards the final outcome of this struggle. For Marxists, objective factors like changes in technology play a crucial role in this outcome, if they do not determine History itself ('in the last instance'). On the other hand, for supporters of the autonomy/democratic tradition like Castoriadis, subjective factors, such as the 'social imaginary', play an equally crucial role leading to an indeterminate outcome. There is no doubt of course that 'objective' factors were at work during the entire history of the market economy system, although not in the rigid sense assumed by the Marxist 'science' of the economy ('laws/tendencies' of the falling profit rate, 'phases of accumulation' and the like), but rather in the general sense of the 'grow-or die' dynamic of the market economy. But, although such objective factors could explain the motives and actions, particularly of the economic elites, the eventual economic and social outcome of the ensuing social struggle has always been both indeterminate and unpredictable, as Castoriadis rightly points out. This is why the ID approach adopts the stand that it is the *interaction* between *equally important* 'objective' and 'subjective' factors which *conditions* historical development – an interaction which (unlike the Marxist 'dialectical' relationship) always leads to *indeterminate* outcomes.

Still, as it would be wrong to overemphasise the role of 'objective' factors in the history of the market economy at the expense of the 'subjective' factors, it would be equally wrong to do the opposite and overemphasise the role of the 'subjective' factors at the expense of the 'objective' ones. So, one could argue that some superficially inexplicable and far from radical theoretical or political positions of Castoriadis could well be explained on the basis of his *over-emphasis* of the imaginary element in History and the corresponding under-valuation of 'systemic' elements. To mention just a few striking examples, we may refer to his positions on neoliberal globalisation and present capitalism, the causes of underdevelopment, USSR and the war in the Gulf.

The flawed Castoriadian stand on neoliberal globalisation and South's underdevelopment

As regards neoliberal globalisation, his thesis was basically that capitalism today has turned against its own 'logic' when, by opening and deregulating markets, it has turned the global

economy into a “planetary casino”.[8] Thus, starting from the assumption that nobody controls today’s economy, he derived the conclusion that “nobody can say today that the functioning of the economy corresponds to clearly defined interests, if not of specific capitalists, of the capitalist class in general, since what is happening at this moment, with the chaos that exists in the world economy...is not in the interest of the capitalist class but it simply expresses its impotency in directing its own system”[9]. But, as I put it elsewhere, “one may counter-argue here that the present ‘chaos’ of the world economy is in fact the inevitable outcome of the liberalisation of markets and particularly of the capital markets, which, far from being undesired, meets perfectly the needs of the present internationalised market economy.[10] This is a fact, which is anyway abundantly confirmed by the present trends in capitalist profitability, which is growing rapidly, in consistence with the spreading of market liberalisation. It is obvious here that Castoriadis emphasises again the imaginary element at the expense of the ‘systemic’ fact that the marketization of the economy (i.e. the lessening of social controls – apart from pure regulatory controls– over markets), far from being incompatible with capitalist ‘logic’, has always been a precondition of capitalist efficiency and therefore, a basic aim of the ruling economic elites.

Then, as regards the case of underdevelopment, for Castoriadis, the basic obstacle to the spreading of the growth economy to the South, (and, by implication, to its non-"development", which led to the present widening gulf between the North and the South, has been the fact that "this extraordinary spreading of the West had to face societies with completely different imaginary institution which, as a result, have created anthropological types of a very different type than the type of the Western citizen, as described by the Declaration of Human Rights, or the type of the industrial worker and entrepreneur”.[11] It is obvious that such an approach ignores the catastrophic impact of the spreading of the market economy and the subsequent growth economy on the self-reliant communities of the South and, as a result, exonerates the system of the market economy itself, in order to blame the "imaginary significations" that developed in the South compared to those in the North! No wonder, that in this problematique the way out of the present global crisis can only emerge in the West: "I think that only a new development of the liberation movement in the West could change the parameters of the problem, i.e. could in some way ease the penetration-at least up to the point required- of the traditional institutions and traditional religious imaginary significations that today are dominant in most of the countries of the Third World”.[12]

The unacceptable political stand of Castoriadis on USSR and the Gulf War

Castoriadis’ controversial stand (to say the least) on USSR was widely criticised even by Marxist critics of the Soviet system. Thus, at the very moment a huge campaign had been launched by the US elite to initiate the collapse of USSR through an arms race designed (and proved eventually highly successful) to bring USSR on its knees from the economic point of view, Castoriadis was arguing that “of the two super-powers facing each other only Russia has the capability to carry out at this moment an aggressive policy”[13], and further on that “at all levels before a total nuclear war there is no ...balance of power but a massive imbalance in favour of Russia”.[14] Obviously, this position –which had hardly any relevance to reality, as it was also proved by the dilapidated state of USSR’s nuclear facilities that was discovered after its collapse– was massively exploited by Western establishments in their Cold War rhetoric (and, as a by product, ended the relative obscurity of Castoriadis,

who, up to that time, was unknown to the wider public –beyond certain Left circles— and made him a widely known intellectual).[15] Furthermore, although his critique of the totalitarian bureaucracy in the countries of ‘existing socialism’ was basically correct, any serious member of the antisystemic Left could only express disbelief at the fact that Castoriadis completely ignored the fact that the USSR, as the product of a socialist revolution had, after all, succeeded in meeting (even at a very low level) the basic needs of all its citizens (employment, health, education, housing, food), as it was tragically illustrated by the catastrophic regression in the degree of the universal covering these needs, following the integration of the country to the internationalised market economy. [16]

Finally, one should mention his stand on the Gulf War, which was completely unacceptable for a self-declared member of the antisystemic Left, when, in contrast to other analysts of the Left like Noam Chomsky (by no means an extremist and also an enthusiastic admirer of the collapse of USSR!), he did not take an unequivocal stand against this criminal war, which paved the way for the eventual destruction of Iraq but, instead, he adopted an indirect “equal distances” approach towards the victim (Iraqi people) and the victimizer (transnational elite). Thus, after dismissing oil as the basic cause of the war in the Gulf (and later, by implication, of the invasion of Iraq –something that nowadays has been acknowledged even by the then head of the US Federal Reserve System[17]) he then went on to suggest –more than a decade before Samuel Huntington— a sort of Castoriadian ‘clash of civilisations’ approach. This was in effect a disguised “equal distances approach” towards the victim and its victimizer (i.e. the usual approach adopted by the reformist Left on all the recent wars of the transnational elite):

“The conflict already goes well beyond the case of Iraq and Saddam Hussein. It is in the process of transforming itself into a confrontation between, on the one hand, societies held in the grip of a tenacious religious imaginary, now reactively reinforced, and, on the other, Western societies which, somehow or other, have been delivered from this imaginary but have revealed themselves incapable of transmitting to the rest of the world anything other than the techniques of war and the manipulation of opinion.”[18]

No wonder that in the 1990s Castoriadis, as far as I am aware, had never uttered a single word against the catastrophic Western embargo of that country which led, according to UN estimates, to the death of half a million Iraqi children, or against the murderous bombings of the country ordered by the Clinton administration). Needless to add that an “equal distances” approach, similar to the one adopted by Castoriadis and the reformist Left[19], in effect implies an indirect support of the ruling elites and their “wars”!

The unacceptable theses emanate from the philosophical core of the Castoriadian thought

The above Castoriadian theses, in effect, do not simply reflect errors in political judgement, as a superficial reading of his work might imply, but directly emanate from the philosophical core of his thought and in particular the stand he adopts on the relationship between radical imaginary, social imaginary and institutions. According to this stand, “it is the work of the radical imaginary as instituting, which brings itself into being as instituted society and as a given, and each time specified, social imaginary”. [20] In my view, the

reduction of institutions to the radical imaginary is epistemologically and ontologically faulty –although, as I have stressed elsewhere,[21] there is no impenetrable barrier separating epistemology from ontology.

The attempt to reduce institutions to the radical imaginary is epistemologically faulty, because this stand attempts to interpret the social dynamics through psychoanalytical theory, i.e. an essentially closed theoretical system, something that I consider incompatible with the project of autonomy. In fact, as Castoriadis himself put it: “Democracy is the project of breaking the closure at the collective level. Philosophy, creating self-reflective subjectivity, is the project of breaking the closure at the level of thought...both are expressions, and central embodiments, of the project of autonomy.”[22] However, the Castoriadian adoption of an essentially psychoanalytic interpretation of the socialisation process implies also an adoption of the Freudian psyche theory, which, even after its amendment by Castoriadis, still is a closed theoretical system (Castoriadis himself also stressed Freud’s determinism and positivism![23]). This conclusion is further confirmed by the fact that, according to many scientists on the field, recent developments in neuroscience make psychoanalytic theory obsolete and irrelevant—although of course the psychoanalytic camp (which, according to Foucault, has become a centre of power) with vested interests on psychoanalysis, will never accept this fact! As Paul Broks, a senior clinical lecturer and honorary consultant neuropsychologist based at the University of Plymouth, stresses[24]:

We know a great deal more than Freud ever could about how different neural systems construct the perceptual world from the raw materials of sensation, and we are mapping the mechanisms that control language, memory, and voluntary action. Brain circuits underlying emotional and motivational states are also under close scrutiny. The study of emotion, in particular, has been reinvigorated over the past decade, so much so that there is talk now of an "affective revolution", echoing the "cognitive revolution" of the late 1950s and 1960s. Evolutionary theory and experimental neuroscience have combined to produce a framework for understanding the emotions at every level, from the chemical to the cultural.

To my mind, the adoption of a closed system for the interpretation of social phenomena like socialisation is clearly incompatible with both the Autonomy project, as well as that of Inclusive Democracy. In other words, the Castoriadian use of social imaginary significations, instead of the broader concept ‘dominant social paradigm’[25] that I adopted, does not allow him to make clear the role of the elites in the socialisation process, (through the conditioning role they play in the formation of the dominant social paradigm)—a fact which frequently leads the later Castoriadis (in contrast to the early Castoriadis of *Socialisme ou Barbarie*) to talk about a class undifferentiated “society” and “its” imaginary. On the other hand, the ID project interprets the same social dynamic on the basis of the role of the ‘dominant social paradigm’ in the socialisation process — something that brings back the crucial class divisions into the analysis of social dynamics.

Moreover, the attempt to reduce institutions to the radical and social imaginary is ontologically faulty, because the Castoriadian thesis reduces the institutions to the imaginary of a class-undifferentiated society, which in effect exists only in the ideology of today’s elites! Thus, according to this thesis, “the institution of society is in each case the institution of a magma of social imaginary significations, which we can and must call a

world of significations".[26] This thesis could account for the above mentioned 'flaws', or unacceptable political stands, of Castoriadis which, in effect, emanate from his position that the institutions in each case express "society" and "its" imaginary. This thesis is based on the assumption that there are no "objective" class divisions in today's society. As he put it: "Quite evidently there are from several standpoints sizeable differentiations among wage earners but they do not furnish us with a division into classes".[27] Furthermore, retreating from the dividing line he had stressed in earlier works between directors and executants and admitting that this dividing line is tending to become less and less relevant because the categories of pure directors and pure executants are, numerically speaking, less and less sizeable, he concludes that:[28]

The sole criterion of differentiation within the mass of wage earners that remains relevant for us is their attitude towards the established system. That boils down to saying that ***one must abandon 'objective criteria' of whatever kind they may be*** (my emphasis). With the exception of the tiny minority at the summit, the whole of the population is just open-or closed-to a revolutionary outlook. It is possible that, conjuncturally speaking, this or that strata or category plays a larger role; but one can no longer maintain the idea that the proletariat is 'the' depository of the revolutionary project.

On the other hand, according to the ID approach, although class divisions today are much less economic (in the Marxist sense) than they were at the beginning of modernity, they still exist and extend to almost every social level, apart from the economic one.[29] This implies that there are more than one social imaginary reflecting in each case the various social classes and generally the division between ruling and ruled classes and groups – rather than a single class-undifferentiated social imaginary, as Castoriadis assumes. In the ID problematique, which 'imaginary' prevails in each case and determines the social institutions depends on the outcome of the social struggle between the ruling and the ruled social classes or groups. In much of modernity, this struggle was expressed by the Marxist class struggle, mainly in the economic level --but not anymore. Therefore, the thesis about the existence of a "social" imaginary which is the product of a class-undifferentiated "society" is totally incompatible not only with the ID project but, to my mind, with the Castoridian project of Autonomy itself.

So, according to the ID approach, the institutions simply represent, in each case, the ruling classes and groups, as well as their own imaginary. The same classes and groups in a heteronomous society 'legitimise' these institutions, through a process of socialisation and the exercise of various forms of violence (physical, economic, etc.). For instance, today's prevalence of neoliberal institutions and neoliberal globalisation in general is not the result of the mysterious ascendancy of a neoliberal imaginary but simply the outcome of the prevalence of the economic elites' neoliberal ideology, as a result of historical changes in the last three decades or so, which led to the defeat of the dominated classes and groups in the ensuing social struggle. Such changes were the huge and growing concentration of economic power at the hands of economic elites through the expansion of transnational corporations, technological changes which have led to the decimation of the working class, and the consequent emasculation of its syndicalist organs, the collapse of 'actual existing socialism', etc.[30] Similarly, the present rise of Islamic fundamentalism cannot be explained in terms of a sudden change of the Arab world's social imaginary, but it can be adequately explained in terms of the failure of Arab socialism and Arab nationalism, the

successive crushing defeats of the Arab nation at the hands of Zionists and the transnational elite and so on.

In conclusion, in every society characterised by class divisions, and at every historical 'moment', various 'social imaginaries' co-exist side-by side, expressing the main class divisions, and particularly the division between ruling and ruled classes and groups, with dominant in each case the imaginary of the ruling classes and groups, which is then formulated accordingly in the 'dominant social paradigm' and is legitimised through the socialisation process (education, mass media, economic and physical violence, etc.). On the other hand, during revolutionary periods, it is the 'imaginary' of the dominated classes and groups which eventually prevails and becomes the dominant social paradigm and then 'legitimises' the corresponding institutions, as it happened during the various attempts for an autonomous society (Athenian democracy, Soviet Revolution of 1917, Spanish Civil War)

A moral relativism?

Finally, Castoriadis' reluctance even to attempt to consider the sort of ethical values that he thinks are consistent with an autonomous society, as when, seemingly raising his hands, he declares, "we will always still have to make our lives under the tragic conditions that characterize those lives, for we do not always know where good and evil lie, either on the individual level or on the collective level,"^[31] justifiably raised Murray Bookchin's strong criticism that "in the absence of rational objective standards of behaviour, imagination may be as demonic as it may be liberatory when such standards exist; hence the need for *informed* spontaneity – and an *informed* imagination".^[32]

On the other hand, according to the ID approach, the problem with the Castoriadian stand is that it can easily lead to a post-modern type of moral relativism, i.e. to a "moral arbitrariness", as Bookchin calls it, covered by democratic procedures. Although therefore, as it was stressed above, the ID project does reject any kind of 'objective' ethics, at the same time it does explore the sort of moral values that are consistent with the institutional framework of a genuinely democratic society and proposes some specific *guidelines* for the development of a democratic ethics^[33].

From the "rising tide of insignificance" to reformism

According to Castoriadis, there is no crisis in the proper sense of the word but just a "rising tide of insignificance" and what is required is, "a new imaginary creation... that would put at the center of human life other significations than the expansion of production and consumption":^[34]

If one considers the present-day situation, a situation not of crisis but of decomposition, or dilapidation of the Western societies, one finds oneself faced with an antinomy of the first magnitude. Here it is: What is required is immense, it goes very far—and human beings, such as they are and such as they are constantly being reproduced by Western societies, but also by the other societies, are immensely far removed from that. What is required? Taking into account the ecological crisis, the extreme inequality of the division of wealth between rich countries and poor countries, the near-impossibility of the system

to continue on its present course, what is required is a new imaginary creation of a size unparalleled in the past, a creation that would put at the center of human life other significations than the expansion of production and consumption, that would lay down different objectives for life, ones that might be recognized by human beings as worth pursuing. That would evidently require a reorganization of social institutions, work relations, economic, political, cultural relations. Now, this orientation is extremely far removed from what humans today are thinking, and perhaps far from what they desire.

On the other hand, on the basis of the ID analysis, the present crisis of values and meanings, in fact, reflects the deteriorating crisis of the social, economic and political institutions in neoliberal modernity, as a result of the universalisation of the multidimensional crisis, following the corresponding universalisation of the modern economic and political institutions: the internationalisation of the market economy and the institution of representative 'democracy'. So, according to the ID approach, the present deepening crisis of Western societies is not just due to a crisis of 'imaginary significations' and a crisis of values and meanings, (i.e. what Castoriadis calls "the rising tide of insignificance"), but is primarily due to the systemic changes marked in neoliberal modernity. Even the ecological crisis cannot just be attributed to the crisis of growth ideology and the meaning of Progress but to the universalisation of the growth economy and, consequently, the consumerist pattern of living, through the internationalization of the market economy. No wonder that the present crisis of the growth ideology due to the widespread acknowledgement of the ecological implications of the growth economy, has simply led to various attempts to replace the old growth ideology based on "progress" with a new one based on the conception of some sort of 'sustainable development' that will accommodate the continuation of economic growth and consumerism —a pure contradiction in terms!

All this has very important theoretical and practical implications regarding the struggle for a new society and the transitional strategy towards it.

At the theoretical level, the later Castoriadis' elimination of class divisions from his analysis inevitably has led to his identification of the imaginary of society as a whole with that of the ruling classes and groups (which was then imposed, through the socialisation process, to the ruled classes and groups) and the elimination from the picture of any alternative social imaginaries expressing other classes and groups! This is how he 'managed' to omit from his analysis the change in objective and subjective conditions that led to the rise of neoliberal globalisation, or to the corresponding emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, ending up with a monstrous interpretation of the criminal Gulf War in terms of a 'clash of imaginaries', and an "equal distances" approach towards it, which, in fact, amounted to an indirect justification of the war, as we saw above. Furthermore, by reducing every aspect of the present multidimensional crisis to the "rising tide of insignificance", as it is expressed by the disappearance of meanings, of significations and the almost absolute wearing down of values, he also managed to avoid any reference to the systemic factors which have led to this crisis and particularly the dynamics of the system of market economy and of representative "democracy", which is the ultimate cause for the present huge and growing concentration of power at every social level!

No wonder therefore, that the later Castoriadis does not talk about a revolutionary change

of institutions which, in interaction with the corresponding change of values and ideas, would lead to a new revolutionary society (as the ID approach suggests) but, instead, he adopts the reformist stand for the need to somehow change values and imaginary significations first—in the form of a sort of cultural revolution—which would then lead to a change in institutions! This stand is of course identical to the approaches suggested by the reformists in the Green movement and the Left who attempt to radically change values in a way that would effectively lead to a new society, taking the existing system of market economy and representative 'democracy' for granted. It is not, therefore, surprising that the later Castoriadis, unlike the earlier one—and despite the pathetic efforts of his disciples like David Ames Curtis to deny the obvious early/late Castoriadis dichotomy—was fully embraced by the international (and Greek) status quo and their mass media, in a (negative) "honour" that was rarely, if ever, assigned by the elites to any truly revolutionary figures in the past!

[1] see my exchange with David Ames Curtis, the editor and English translator of most of his works, "[On a Distorted View of the Inclusive Democracy Project](#)", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999).

[2] "[Towards a Democratic Liberatory Ethics](#)", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (November 2002)

[3] see C. Castoriadis, "Done and To Be Done" in *The Castoriadis Reader* (ed. by David Ames Curtis) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 412.

[4] see T. Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, (London/New York: Cassell/Continuum, 1997), ch. 1.

[5] *ibid.*

[6] *ibid.*, ch. 6.

[7] T. Fotopoulos, *The Multidimensional Crisis and Inclusive Democracy*, (IJID, Aug. 2005), [ch. 2](#).

[8] see "The rationality of capitalism" in *Figures of the Thinkable* ed. by Werner Hamacher, (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2007).

[9] Castoriadis interviewed by channel 3 of Greek State TV (ERT 3) in 1993; see also C. Castoriadis, "The Rationality" of Capitalism" in *Figures of the Thinkable*.

[10] T. Fotopoulos, "Castoriadis and the democratic tradition", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Issue 10), 1997, pp. 157-163.

[11] C. Castoriadis "The West and the Third World" in the Greek edition of *World in Fragments*, (Athens: Upsilon, 1992), p. 91.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 96. See, also, C. Castoriadis "Reflections on "Rationality" and "Development" in *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, ed. by David Ames Curtis, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 199-218.

[13] C. Castoriadis, *Facing the War* (Athens: Upsilon, 1986) translation of Castoriadis' text under the same title (1980), p. 19.

[14] *ibid.*, p. 37.

[15] see e.g. World Revolution, "[Death of Cornelius Castoriadis: Bourgeoisie pays homage to one of its servants](#)", December 12, 2004.

[16] see Takis Fotopoulos, "The Catastrophe of Marketization", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 2

(July 1999).

- [17] Richard Adams, "Invasion of Iraq was driven by oil, says Greenspan", *The Guardian* (17/9/2007).
- [18] C. Castoriadis, "The Gulf War Laid Bare" (first published in French in *Libération* (Paris), February 5, 1991: 14).
- [19] For a critique of a similar to the Castoriadian myth used by the reformist Left, which also ends up with an "equal distances" approach, see "[The Myth of the Clash of Fundamentalisms](#)", *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (July 2005).
- [20] see C. Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, (Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 145.
- [21] see the Greek ID journal *Periektiki Dimokratia*, no. 8 (September 2004).
- [22] C. Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, p. 21.
- [23] see e.g. "Psychoanalysis and Philosophy" (1996) in *The Castoriadis Reader*, p. 355.
- [24] "The ego trip", Essay by Paul Broks, *The Guardian* (6/5/2006).
- [25] The dominant social paradigm is defined as the system of beliefs, ideas and the corresponding values, which are dominant in a particular society at a particular moment of its history, as consistent with the existing institutional framework; see T. Fotopoulos, "[Mass media, Culture and Democracy](#)", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999).
- [26] see C. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 359.
- [27] C. Castoriadis' introductory interview in *The Castoriadis Reader*, edited by David Ames Curtis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 26-27.
- [28] C. Castoriadis' introductory interview in *The Castoriadis Reader*, p. 27.
- [29] see T. Fotopoulos, "[Class Divisions Today: The Inclusive Democracy approach](#)", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (July 2000).
- [30] see *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, chs. 1-2.
- [31] C. Castoriadis, *World in Fragments*, (Stanford Univ. Press, 1997), p. 122.
- [32] M. Bookchin XE "Bookchin", *The Philosophy of Social Ecology* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1995), p. 178.
- [33] see T. Fotopoulos, "Towards a Democratic Liberatory Ethics".
- [34] Cornelius Castoriadis, *La Montée de l'insignifiance* (Paris : Seuil, 1996) –for an unauthorised translation see *THE RISING TIDE OF INSIGNIFICANCY* (December 2003) "translated from the French and edited anonymously as a public service" in <http://www.notbored.org/RTI.html>