# The Inclusive Democracy project: A rejoinder

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I would like first to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the contributors taking part in this special issue. It is indeed through the development of a comprehensive dialogue on the crucial issues that the Inclusive Democracy (ID) project raises that we could meaningfully assess its merits and possible weaknesses. In the lines that will follow the intention is not to engage in any kind of polemic against any of the distinguished contributors but simply to give alternative explanations, from the ID perspective, to the reservations, or even criticisms, raised against it. I hope that the bona fide spirit within which this debate takes place will be recognized by everybody and the fruitful dialogue developed here will function as a catalyst for its further expansion in the future.

I hope that most in the radical Left would agree today on the need for the expansion of such a dialogue on the contours of a future society at a moment when many —particularly within the anti-globalization movement— assert that 'another world is possible' without even taking the trouble to define this world . But, if this movement is not capable of giving at least the contours of such an alternative world (and this is the objective of the ID project) then it is bound to register in popular memory as simply a protest movement and not as a liberatory movement —the kind of movement we need today to move forward towards a new society. Brave words about 'the multitude' and unity of movements are empty and meaningless unless the objectives uniting the multitude are specified, not in terms of what we are against but, mainly, of what we are for — provided of course that we do not restrict ourselves to the usual generalities expressed for instance by the World Social Forum and the local forums and attempt to define the kind of society we wish to live in and the way to move towards it. To my mind, this is the crucial issue facing any antisystemic movement today and the following dialogue, in which almost all main currents of the Left are expressed, will hopefully offer a significant help in this direction.

I have classified below the comments on the ID project and my response to them thematically, beginning with the comments made to the original English edition of *Towards An Inclusive Democracy* (Cassell, 1997). I will continue with the French edition *Vers une democratie generale* (Seuil, 2002), the Greek edition *Periektiki Dimokratia* (Kastaniotis, 1999) and the Latin American edition *Hacia Una Democracia Inclusiva* (Nordan, 2002). Unfortunately, the contributions on the Italian edition *Per una democrazia globale* (Eleuthera, 1999) and the German edition *Umfassende Demokratie* (Trotzdem, 2003) could not meet the journal's deadline and are therefore not included in this exchange.

## 1. The concept of democracy

I will start with three significant reviews of the English edition of *Towards An Inclusive Democracy* (TID) which represent almost the full range of the Left political spectrum in the Anglo-Saxon world, from the libertarian up to the (genuine) socialdemocratic viewpoints. Coming first to Michael Levin's contribution, I would like first to express my strong reservation on his assertion that 'social Democracy has to its credit a significant democratic achievement for through its impetus the class disqualification to political participation was overcome and, in its best phase, it sought to obtain both full employment and adequate welfare provision'. In fact, social democracy, even at its height when it had indeed secured conditions of high levels of employment and social welfare, it never secured an effective political participation irrespective of class. Since social democracy was based on representative 'democracy', the political participation of lower classes was in fact mainly informal, as they were restricted to taking part in electing their leaders (who mostly belonged to the middle classes anyway) rather than in taking part in the decision-taking process themselves. This is the inevitable outcome of the fact that, unlike in a genuine democracy in which this process is shared among all citizens, in a representative 'democracy' decisions are taken by economic and political elites –the latter expanded to include also some ex working class professional politicians of the Labour and socialdemocratic parties in Europe and elsewhere.

Furthermore, one could create the wrong impression from reading that the ID project: in one sense it belongs to the genre of pre-Thatcherite critiques of Social Democracy in that it seeks to analyse its failings and find a way of overcoming them. It is, then, an updating of that debate for it commences with a thorough analysis of the significantly changed current situation. Its point of continuity with earlier debate is that it takes the bold and currently unpopular view that the socialist project is still a plausible one.

In fact, not only the ID project has nothing to do with social democracy but also in no way seeks to analyse its failings and find a way of overcoming them. Social democracy belongs to the reformist tradition and aims at improving the present system —which secures the unequal distribution of power— through reforms, whereas the ID project belongs to the antisystemic tradition and aims at replacing the present system with one securing equal distribution of power in all its forms. The former is a project of socialist statism whereas the latter is a synthesis of the libertarian wing of the socialist tradition with the autonomy-democratic tradition and the currents expressed by the new social movements.

I would also have to express my reservation on his claim that 'where Gray looks for global regulation, Fotopoulos proposes the local community as the prime agency of a renewed and deepened democracy', since this claim gives the impression that the ID project proposes an anachronistic return to isolated local communities. However, as TID made clear and my article on globalisation[1], hopefully, even clearer, the ID project assumes that in today's globalised world the aim could only be an alternative democratic globalisation, or a New democratic World Order, based on really democratic structures, i.e. on confederal inclusive democracies, whose prime agencies would be the local *demoi* —the communities' inclusive democracies.

A basic source of disagreement with Levin's analysis is the conception of democracy itself which, far from concerning the philosophy of language, as he asserts, is, according to the ID project, at the very centre of analysis of current politics and society. For Levin, TID "does not sufficiently integrate his awareness that the Greeks left out of their democracy those not qualifying for citizenship, 'women, slaves, immigrants'. This, despite the fact that

in my reply to a similar assertion in an earlier exchange with Levin,[2] I quoted extracts from TID ro show that the classical conception of democracy was seen as inadequate and therefore not as a model for today's conditions but simply as a sperm for the development of a new conception of democracy and that in fact, one of the basic aims of the book was to show that the classical democracy was not inclusive in two basic senses: first, because it did not include all residents and, second, because it did not include all realms of public life.

Levin then proceeds to repeat the orthodox academic belief (which he states that he shares) that 'democracy' is regarded as "an 'essentially contested concept', whose meaning has altered over time, often according to the wider political purposes being proposed'. However, this explanation is rather economical with the truth. it is only in the last two hundred years or so, i.e. since the establishment by the ruling elites of the system of the market economy and its political complement, representative 'democracy' that orthodox social scientists (i.e. all those that take the existing system for granted) began disputing the very meaning of democracy. In fact, the notion of 'representation' was unknown in classical political philosophy. This is why, as Castoriadis points out, 'direct democracy has been rediscovered or reinvented in modern history every time a political collectivity has entered a process of radical self-constitution and self-activity: town meetings during the American Revolution, sections during the French Revolution, the Paris Commune, the Workers' Councils, or the Soviets in their original form".[3]

Neither is it true another assertion of Levin that 'Greek democracy was a form of rule by the largest class of citizens in a society based on slavery'. As I attempted to show in TID, there is only one form of democracy at the political level, and that is the direct exercise of sovereignty by the people themselves —a form of societal institution which rejects any form of 'ruling' and institutionalises the equal sharing of political power among all citizens. On this, as well as on the fact that the Athenian democracy was not 'a kind of rule', every libertarian thinker (apart from those close to the individualistic trend inspired by the liberal tradition) agrees: from April Carter to Murray Bookchin and from Hannah Arendt to Cornelius Castoriadis. Furthermore, I think that one should not confuse the scope of citizenship with the institutional framework itself. The fact that those qualifying as citizens were exercising a kind of rule over those not qualifying as such is well known. However, this fact does not negate the democratic character of the institutions themselves but only of the concept of citizenship used. A comparison of the Athenian democracy with two examples of democracy in modernity illustrates the fact that the former was much superior than the latter. Thus, whereas in classical Athens those qualifying as citizens enjoyed full political democracy, in the sense of equal distribution of political power, the same could not be said even about the minority of American citizens (white males) in 19th century U.S. 'democracy', who enjoyed 'full' rights, in contrast to the majority (women and slaves) who did not enjoy even the same rights as white men. Similarly, the kind of 'democracy' enjoyed by Israeli Jews today (forgetting the Israeli Arabs, a fifth of the population, who, in practice, do not share even the same rights as Jews[4]), cannot be compared with the full democracy enjoyed by Athenian citizens. This is why in TID I characterised Athens as a mix of non-statist and statist democracy: non-statist, (i.e. full political democracy) as regards the citizen body, which was 'ruled' by nobody and whose members shared power equally among themselves, and statist, as regards those not qualifying as full citizens (women, slaves, immigrants), over whom the demos wielded power.

Likewise, it is historically inaccurate to argue that 'direct democracy of the citizens has,

after a very long interval (since classical Athens) in which democracy in all its possible forms was totally denigrated, given way to modern representative democracy, with distinct variations between western liberal democracy, third world democracy and even the claims once made by Soviet democracy'. In fact, forms of direct democracy reappeared again in the twelfth century AD, in the medieval free cities of Europe, but soon came into conflict with the new statist forms of heteronomy which, at the end, destroyed the attempts for local self-government and federalism.[5] Therefore, the modernity concepts of democracy, i.e. liberal democracy (which Castoriadis aptly called 'liberal oligarchy'), third world democracy, or Soviet democracy are not forms of democracy, not because they hardly have any relation to the classical Greek conception, but because they have no relation at all to any conception of democracy as self-government of the people and, as such, constitute an abuse of the word.

Levin's reply to this is that:

> the English language is full of words whose current meanings have departed from their etymology. Anyone now using current concepts in accord with their supposed original meaning would be incomprehensible to almost everyone else. Consequently, in order to communicate effectively, it is advisable to use words in accord with current usage. Words have their own histories, which are, like all histories, chronologies of change'.

However, although it is true that the abuse of political concepts by the ideologues of political systems has always been a standard practice, and then, through their control over the propaganda mechanisms, the abused terms become the 'norm', there is no reason why radical thinkers should participate in such a practice, particularly if the aim is to develop a liberatory theory. Concepts like socialism and democracy have been widely abused by those supporting oligarchic regimes (Stalinists, socialdemocrats and liberals respectively) and reclaiming the true, original, meaning of such concepts has always been a basic aim of liberatory theory. Particularly so if, as I attempted to show in TID, there can never be an 'objective' social science, given the very object of its study. Most political terms are bound to be 'contestable', with at least two possible interpretations for each of them, one from the othodox 'scientists' taking for granted the status quo and the other from the radical ones who challenge it. For instance, the meaning assigned to socialism by the hegemonic Soviet social 'science' in the USSR was the one consistent with the dominant 'socialist' social paradigm (as interpreted by the Soviet elite). Similarly, it is not accidental that the meaning assigned to the concept of 'democracy' by the hegemonic liberal social 'science' in the West has always been one that is consistent with the dominant liberal social paradigm and its interpretation of this concept.

So, Levin's conclusion that 'one cannot say precisely which (democracy) definition is right and which is wrong' implicitly accepts the 'objectivity' of orthodox social 'science' which, unable to delete from historical memory the classical meaning of democracy in terms of self-determination alleges that the meaning of democracy is 'contestable'. But, the meaning radical thinkers assign to democracy is neither a matter concerning the philosophy of language nor a contestable matter. It is simply a matter reflecting the axiomatic choice they have to make between the two historical traditions of heteronomy and autonomy. For those that adopt the autonomy tradition democracy has only one meaning, the original meaning of self-determination. On the other hand, for those who adopt, consciously or unconsciously, the heteronomy tradition, the concept of democracy as self-determination

is disputed, and alternative definitions of democracy compatible with the present oligarchic regimes are given. No wonder that, for them, the concept of democracy itself inevitably becomes contestable, or a linguistic matter. If therefore Levin agrees that 'the real issue is which is our primary choice of social paradigm' then, to my mind, he should also take the next step and agree that for those who adopt the autonomy tradition democracy is not a contestable term.

Finally, Levin is right that the concept of inclusive democracy is not fully identical with the ancient Greek one  but this is inevitable once the ancient meaning of democracy is taken to be only a sperm rather than a model, given the partial character of Greek democracy[6]. However,  I could not agree with his conclusion that 'as against its predecessors, feudalism and absolute monarchy, liberal democracy represented a major step in a liberatory direction'. As I stressed in TID, I would have no hesitation to recognise  that constitutional monarchy did express a more sophisticated form of heteronomy than absolute monarchy and, by the same token, parliamentary 'democracy' does represent the most sophisticated form of oligarchy in History. Still, the differences between the political regimes mentioned refer to the gradual change in the size and the composition of the ruling elites, not to the fundamental distinction itself between ruling elites and the rest of the population —a distinction, characterising all heteronomy-based regimes, which excludes the vast majority of the population from any effective political decision taking. In this sense, I cannot see liberal democracy as a major step in a liberatory direction but only as a significant step in the historical evolution *within* the heteronomy tradition.

# 2. The feasibility of Inclusive Democracy

## *Is Inclusive Democracy feasible?*

Levin comes next to his reservations about the feasibility of the ID project. Thus, he first points out that "Fotopoulos rejects what he calls the 'myth of the 'experts' and imagines that a modern industrial state can operate without them and that even economic decisions can be 'taken by the citizen body collectively and without representation".

In fact, however, as I stressed in the TID, in an inclusive democracy, in which efficiency will be defined very differently than at present, so that all needs (not just the survival needs) of all citizens are satisfied, the role of the 'experts' will be very different from present. This does not mean that specialised knowledge will not be needed anymore. But, such knowledge, given the institutional framework of inclusive democracy which precludes any institutional inequality in the distribution of power, cannot be the basis for a new hierarchical structure. As April Carter has pointed out,[7] we should always distinguish between authority based on special knowledge and authority based on special status in a social hierarchy. The former is inevitable and desirable, while the latter is avoidable and non-desirable. Also, as regards the relationship between 'experts' and citizens'assemblies, the ID proposals for economic democracy describe in considerable detail how assemblies would only have to select, from a range of draft plans which specify alternative ways of allocating resources, the one most consistent with the collectively decided objectives. In other words, all that is required from the 'experts' would be to spell out clearly the implications of each plan and citizens would not need to be experts in economics to understand these implications and decide accordingly!

Next, Levin refers to historical experiences on the feasibility of alternative social models. Thus, strangely enough —in view of the fact there is no historical precedent for ID— he does not attempt to express his reservations on the feasibility of the ID model with reference to the concrete proposals for economic democracy made in TID but he prefers to rely instead on what I will attempt to show are completely irrelevant experiences. Furthermore, when he was challenged to show the relevance of the ID project to the experiences of three twentieth-century thinkers he mentions —'all of whom claimed to wish democracy well'— his reply was that "present and past experience is relevant and important because it is all we have to go on' and that his historical examples were intended as reminders that egalitarian projects have been attempted before and that there is much to learn from them. It would therefore be important to see in detail how relevant are the experiences mentioned by Levin to the ID project.

Levin's first thinker is Robert Michels who, in 1911, produced 'what has become a classic of Political Sociology, *Political Parties*, revealingly sub-titled *A Sociological Examination of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*', in which he concluded that organisation produces oligarchy. His argument was that 'any organisation pursuing particular ends would elevate administrators who gain or claim expertise in their particular niche and so become indispensable to the organisation. In that way they become separated from the mass they were originally meant to serve and so develop an interest apart and different from them'. However, had Levin referred to the concrete proposals for the ID organisation, he would have inevitably noticed that they involve a complete restructuring of society where 'experts', who are in charge of drafting the economic plans, will have no more political, economic or social power than an 'expert' in, say, farming, ship building, carpentry or shoe making. How this particular sort of social organisation will produce oligarchy is a mystery left unexplained by Levin.

Next, Levin turns to Lenin who, a few months after writing *State and Revolution,* (in which he was still talking about the combination of proletarian rule and modern scientific developments to facilitate the gradual withering away of the state through the performance of necessary administrative tasks devolving to the community as a whole) he abandoned it 'for the tasks of actual revolution'. The reason for this about turn, according to Levin, was that 'he soon found that economic understanding and administrative ability were less widespread than he had assumed' —something that necessitated the use of large sections of the Czarist bureaucracy. However, this is again a completely irrelevant experience to the ID proposals. Lenin wanted to rebuild a centralist state in which the Tsarist elite would have been replaced by the Bolshevik elite. This implied the need for all the paraphernalia of bureaucracy which, of course, are completely alien to the ID project. No wonder that Lenin had to turn to the Tsarist bureaucracy so that the new state could function at all. Still, Lenin's stand was hardly surprising. It was in fact, as I pointed out in TID, fully consistent with the Marxist-Leninist worldview, in the context of which a non-statist conception of democracy is inconceivable, both at the transitional stage leading to communism and at the higher phase of communist society (pp. 196-99). So, if the Russian revolution has taught us a lesson this is that if a revolution is organised, and then its program carried out, through a minority using the state machine, it is bound to end up with new hierarchical structures. But, this is in complete contrast to an ID-based society in which the institutional preconditions of concentration of power have been abolished, as soon as the confederal inclusive democracy, with the explicit approval of the majority of the population, has been established.

Finally, Levin turns to Theodor Roszak, one of the spokesmen of the US counter-culture in the 1960s and 1970s, who stressed that, in today's' world, experts are a necessity and that our democracy has become a spectator sport in which the general public chooses up sides among contending groups of experts. It is obvious, however that Roszak bases his argument on a society in which division of labour and specialisation, in the pursuit of the highest degree of economic efficiency (defined along narrow technico-economic criteria), have reached absurd dimensions. Again, this has nothing to do with the radical decentralisation of an ID-based society in which efficiency is defined on the basis of the 'needs-satisfaction' criterion, decisions are taken by citizens' assemblies who choose between alternative plans whose implications are explained by the experts, and a democratic techno-science[8] has already been developed. The latter is particularly important if one takes into consideration the well known fact that today's extreme specialisation and the huge gap that has been created between experts and the rest of society are mainly due to the nature of the present techno-science, which is geared to a continuous concentration of economic power.

## *The nature of the present crisis*

Levin moves next to the present crisis seen as 'an opportunity for transformation'. As he stresses, 'for Fotopoulos the opportunity of transformation occurs because the system is in crisis. However we must note that a crisis does not always lead to a desirable solution'. To reinforce this point the reviewer refers to the Russian crisis before 1917, as well as to the recent crisis in the 1990s, noting that, in both cases, the outcome was not favourable from the liberatory viewpoint.

Still, although he is right about the outcome, again, he does not compare similar situations. The pre-Soviet, as well as the post-Soviet, crises in Russia were not of the same nature as the crisis I mentioned in TID. The former type of crisis refers to a crisis specific to a particular country at a low level of capitalist development, whereas the latter refers to the chronic crisis of the system itself. In fact, the reason I devoted the entire first part of TID to the analysis of the present multi-dimensional crisis was not to show the existence of an 'opportunity of transformation' but to stress the systemic nature of this crisis and, in particular, the fact that the ultimate cause of it is the huge concentration of power created by the present political and economic structures.

The present crisis, as I stressed in TID, is differentiated from past crises both in terms of its scale and nature, given in particular the addition of an ecological dimension to it. As I noted there, "the present crisis calls into question not just the political, economic, social and ecological structures that came into being with the rise of the market economy, but also the actual values that have sustained these structures and particularly the post-Enlightenment meaning of Progress and its partial identification with growth" (values also shared by the Bolsheviks). It is therefore obvious that the crisis which began about two centuries ago, when the system of the market economy and representative democracy was established, has, in the past twenty years or so, intensified, as it has led to the present huge concentration of economic power and the related ecological crisis. In other words, the Inclusive Democracy project, which proposes the equal distribution of power, is suggested as the only long term solution to this chronic and constantly worsening crisis.

However, the fact that the present multidimensional crisis is an unprecedented one does

not mean that its outcome should necessarily be a favourable one. History is full of examples where serious crises led not just to unfavourable outcomes but to tragedies, like the rise of fascism and national socialism in the interwar period. Therefore, if the chronic and systemic nature of the present crisis does not lead to a mass movement for a genuine democracy, it could simply lead instead to a chronic and systemic authoritarianism —we are already witnessing the first signs of this authoritarianism in the present global and permanent 'war' against terrorism.[9]

# 3. The transitional strategy

## *The problem of transition*

It is however with respect to the transitional strategy that Levin raises most of his reservations on the ID project. One of his main reservations is that whereas in TID I stressed that what is needed is the development of a similar mass consciousness about the failure of "actually existing capitalism" to the one that led to the collapse of "actually existing socialism", 'the problem is', as Levin puts it, that 'the collapse of socialism occurred in the context of a real alternative' and that 'nothing so visible now exists as an alternative to prevailing capitalism'.

However, this reservation ignores the fact that the transition strategy proposed by the ID project does indeed involve the creation of a real alternative visible to all citizens. Therefore, although Levin's criticism is right for the cases when the transition to the new society takes place through a revolution ('from above' or 'from below'), it is not valid as regards the ID project. This is because whereas the former case assumes a sudden insurrection or outburst followed by a transitional period within which the institutions leading to the new society are built (usually by avant-gardes), the latter assumes a long process, which may extend over an entire historical period and could begin immediately, through the building of the alternative institutions leading to the new society. The fundamental implication which crucially differentiates the two kinds of approaches is that the latter, unlike the former, could potentially solve the fatal problem faced by all attempts for systemic change in the past : the problem of the unevenness of consciousness. This is the problem that any revolution (which presupposes a rupture with the past, both at the subjective level of consciousness and at the institutional level) faces, when it takes place in an environment in which only a minority of the population has broken with the dominant social paradigm — something inevitable at the initial stage. This is the problem for instance that the communists faced in Russia or in China in the last century when the party avant-garde (supposedly the proletariat's avant-garde) had to impose 'from above' the new institutions and values to the majority of the population –a process which ended up with totalitarianism. Or, to come to the historical example mentioned by Levin, this is the problem faced by the few antisystemic activists in Eastern Europe during the shift to free market capitalism at the end of 1980s/early 1990s. Most of the people who turned against the 'communist' system in Eastern Europe, in fact, have never abandoned the values of the old regime, despite the brain washing from the party elite —as it is shown for instance by the important role the church has played during this shift in Poland and to a certain extent even in Russia itself. So, the reforms that have been introduced by the party elites in the last decade or so before they were swept away, as well as the opening to the west in general, simply reinforced the (de facto) hegemonic paradigm (that of individualism), as against the dominant (from above) social paradigm of collectivism. This is why the antisystemic

currents never had in effect any chance to turn the majority of the population towards a new social project transcending both 'actually existing socialism' and 'actually existing capitalism'.

On the other hand, the ID strategy assumes that the building itself of the alternative institutions within the existing society that it proposes will create the democratic majority for a genuine political and economic democracy. Thus, as I attempted to show in my article on transitional strategies,[10] a real democratic process could only be a long process of gradual establishment of the alternative antisystemic institutions, which would transcend the problem of the highly uneven —at the beginning of the transition— level of consciousness among the population that had fatal consequences in past revolutions. For the ID project, although the social change will indeed be revolutionary, it will neither be achieved 'from above', following, for instance, an insurrection organized (or exploited) by an avant garde, nor of course through reformist changes. As History has taught us, in the former case, the change is bound to end up with the creation of new elites and oligarchic structures, whereas in the latter case there is bound to be no systemic change at all. Having said this, the above should not be taken as an assertion that the transition will be a peaceful one. As I stressed in TID, as soon as the new ID institutions begin to be installed, the ruling elites will react, initially, by legal or economic means, but, as the movement gains strength, by increasing physical force. So, the transition towards an ID will set in motion a race against time, the outcome of which will determine the fate of the attempted social change. If the socialization process is effectively broken and the alternative social paradigm becomes hegemonic before any attempt by the ruling elites to break the movement using massive force, then, any use of violence will boomerang against the ruling elites themselves, as people will be prepared by then to use counter-violence to defend their new institutions. If on the other hand the winner in this race against time is the ruling elites then a new period of totalitarianism may be unleashed.

Then, Levin comes to the opposition that radical proposals like that of the ID project are bound to produce. What, for example, he asks, would be the reaction to the attempt to 'expropriate' such 'privately owned big enterprises' as MacDonalds, Coca-Cola and Shell ? And how would the state react to the gradual taking over of its fiscal powers? And what about the consequences of breaching our international obligations? Would, for example, ecologically inclined communities still be prepared to allow 40 ton lorries along their streets? If not, we would have broken European Union regulations. Furthermore, even if the Inclusive Democracy movement is able to 'eventually capture the imagination of the majority of the population' and achieve sanity in one country, how would the insane world react? Wouldn't they react as once did against Allende's Chile?

However, as he himself recognizes, I am the first to admit the difficulties involved in the transitional process. But, one should not also exaggerate them and be condemned to the inactivity, which is the present system's main source of strength. Thus, first, one should not confuse the various stages of the transitional period. For example expropriations, as I stressed in TID, would only come about at the end of a long process which marks the transition to an inclusive democracy: "At the end of this process, the demotic enterprises would control the community's economy and would be integrated into the confederation of communities, which could then buy or expropriate privately-owned big enterprises" (TID, p.298). The same applies to his question about the state's reaction to the gradual taking over of its fiscal powers . As I pointed out in TID: "This way, community assemblies would

start taking over the fiscal powers of the state, as far as their communities are concerned, although in the transitional period, until the confederation of communities replaces the state, they would also be subject to the state fiscal powers. (TID, p. 299) In other words, what is envisaged for the transitional period is a dual taxing power —an arrangement which already exists in many countries with local authorities having the power to tax residents.

Finally, as regards the issues arising from the international ramifications of the attempt to begin building ID institutions, it is true that I did not deal with such issues in the book, although in the article on globalisation I mentioned above I did refer to the need to develop an international antisystemic movement aiming at the creation of a new democratic Europe of the peoples (in place of the present EU of capital) as part of a new democratic world order. This implies that the demand for cutting the links with the EU would be one of the primary demands of such a movement, which, together with other movements that already support the dismantling of EU, could well lead, during the transitional period, to a secession from it. Needless to add that up to that moment, the ID movement will have to use any available means to fight the EU legislation which comes in conflict with its basic aims: direct action, massive demonstrations, civil/social disobedience etc . No doubt that a Chile-type of reaction (or even worse nowadays involving the dispatch of the mercenary armies as in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq to smash any radical antisystemic movement), is very real. However, no army in the world could succeed in the long term in smashing a movement that enjoys wide popular support. Only if the ruling elites control the majority of the population will they be able —through internal coups or external aggression— to impose their will. In case however the majority has already adopted an alternative social paradigm that has become hegemonic, then, neither a coup nor external aggression could succeed. If even in cases like those of Iraq or Afghanistan (despite the very uneven and qualitatively disparate level of consciousness of the peoples involved), the transnational elite has dismally failed to legitimise and even physically impose its order, one could imagine how successful such moves will be in case the same elite faces a people with a high level of consciousness to defend its new institutions — something that obviously did not happen in Chile in the 1970s, when the reformist policies of Allende simply enhanced the confusion and the unevenness of consciousness among the population.

## *The emancipatory subject*

A crucial issue arising with any antisystemic movement and raised also by Levin is the identity of the emancipatory subject that will bring about the new society. All antisystemic strategies in the past were based on the assumption that the revolutionary subject is identified with the proletariat. However, the 'systemic changes' that marked the shift from statist modernity to neoliberal modernity and the associated class structure changes, as well as the parallel ideological crisis,[11] meant the end of traditional class divisions — although not the end of class divisions as such, as many suggest today.[12] Others in the libertarian Left, like Bookchin[13] and Castoriadis,[14] moved to a position according to which, in defining the emancipatory subject, we have to abandon any 'objective criteria' and assume that the whole of the population ('the people') is just open-or-closed-to a revolutionary outlook. The ID problematique, while recognising the different identities of the social groups which constitute various sub-totalities (women, ethnic minorities etc), at the same time sees the ultimate cause of the present multidimensional crisis and the various forms of oppression in the present institutions, which secure the concentration of power at all levels, as well as the corresponding value systems. In other words, it

acknowledges the existence of an overall socio-economic system that secures the concentration of power at the hands of various elites and dominant social groups within society as a whole. In this problematique, given the broad perspective of the project for an inclusive democracy, a new movement aiming at an inclusive democracy should appeal to almost all sections of society —apart of course from the dominant social groups, i.e. the ruling elites and the overclass.

Thus, the economic democracy component of the ID project should primarily appeal to the main victims of the internationalised market economy, i.e. the underclass and the marginalized (the unemployed, blue collar workers, low-waged white collar workers, part-timers, occasional workers, farmers who are phased out because of the expansion of agribusiness), as well as the students, the prospective members of the professional middle classes, who see their dreams for job security disappearing fast in the 'flexible' labour markets being built. It should also appeal to a significant part of the new middle class which, unable to join the 'overclass', lives under conditions of constant insecurity, particularly in countries of the South, as the Argentinian crisis showed .

The political democracy component of the ID project should appeal to all those who are presently involved in local, single-issue movements for the lack of anything better. The present decay of parliamentary politics is not the same thing as depoliticisation, as it becomes obvious by the parallel growth of new social movements, NGOs, citizens' initiatives etc. Although the celebrated expansion of the 'civil society' is concentrated in the new middle class, still, this is an indication of a thirst for a genuine democracy in which everybody counts in the decision-taking process. Furthermore, given that the scope for citizen participation is presently restricted to single issues, it is not surprising that it is single issue movements and organisations which flourish. Finally, the ecological component of the ID project, as well as the one related to 'democracy at the social realm', should appeal to all those concerned about the effects of concentration of power on the environment and to those oppressed by the patriarchal and other hierarchical structures in today's society.

There is no doubt that several of these social groups may see at the moment their goals as conflicting with those of other groups (middle classes vis-à-vis the groups of the main victims of the internationalised market economy in lower social groups and so on). However, the ID project does offer a common paradigm consisting of an analysis of the causes of the present multidimensional crisis in terms of the present structures that secure the unequal distribution of power and the corresponding values, as well as the ends and means that would lead us to an alternative society. Therefore, the fight to build a movement inspired by this paradigm, which to be successful has to become an international movement, is urgent, as well as imperative, so that the various social groups which form the new liberatory subject could function as the catalyst for a new society that would reintegrate society with polity and the economy, humans and Nature.

Levin's reply to all this is that "we have been here before. At the demise of communism in East Germany some of the category of people that Fotopoulos favours were at the forefront of opposition: radical democrats, democratic socialists, and environmentalists. Their moment came... and went. They were swept aside by those with more economic power." However, as I mentioned in the last section, this assertion neglects the fact that the social paradigm that has, in effect, become hegemonic within the countries of 'actually existing socialism' was that of liberal democracy and its economic complement —a 'free' market—

and not a new comprehensive type of democracy that would replace what passes as political and economic democracy in the West. In other words, very few in these countries have realised that the problem with the 'socialist' system was the concentration of economic and political power at the hands of the party elites and the technocrats. This is why it was probably a nasty surprise what they discovered after joining the world capitalist system : i.e. that they still are powerless since the concentration of power at the hands of elites (though different from those in 'socialist' countries) is also a fundamental characteristic of the new system they joined.

In fact, this feeling of powerlessness is spreading at the moment in both the West and the East, as the rise of the antiglobalisation movement shows, which marks, as Levin aptly points out, 'a significant shift in sensibilities...a shift consonant, in broad terms, with the mentality of the Inclusive Democracy project'. I would only add that the antiglobalisation movement could indeed represent the first step in the direction of creating a new massive antisystemic movement (despite the rigorous effort made by the World Social Forum, Attac, *Le Monde Diplomatique* etc, to disorient it towards reformist demands and practices). As I stressed elsewhere[15], although the activities of the present anti-globalisation 'movement', in its present form, have no chance to function as transitional strategies for systemic change, potentially, this movement could lead parts of it to dissociate themselves from the reformist World Social Forum and create a new programmatic mass political movement for systemic change. This is the basic precondition for the development of the anti-systemic consciousness required for systemic change. Such a development, one could expect, would become inevitable once activists within this movement realise that even their mild reformist demands could not be met in the present system and that what is needed instead, so that humanity could move out of the present multidimensional crisis, is a clear concrete vision about the form of a future society and a clear strategy and short-term program to bring it about.

# 4. ID and social Democracy

## *Autonomy, social democracy and the ID project*

Arran Gare, in a powerful and thought-provoking article, attempts to show that autonomy and social democracy are not antagonistic traditions, as assumed by the ID project, as well as by most libertarian writers on the matter —Bookchin and Castoriadis included. His clear aim is to show that the ID and the socialdemocratic projects could potentially be complementary to each other. To my mind, this is an impossible task, mainly, because the socialdemocratic tradition has never challenged the two fundamental institutions on which the present system of concentration of power is based, i.e. the market economy and representative 'democracy'. It is no accident anyway that the motto of mainstream social democracy has always been social justice rather than autonomy. But, the 'social justice' conception takes for granted the unequal distribution of political and economic power and implies the need for the gradual decrease of this inequality through the improvement of existing institutions, whereas the 'autonomy' conception explicitly rejects the existing institutions, which are considered to be the ultimate cause of concentration of power, and implies the need for their replacement with new institutions securing the equal distribution of political and economic power. It is also worth noting that even when some radical trends in early social democracy, e.g. the guild socialists within the British Labour party or the Swedish social democrats, pursued the objective of autonomy, still, this aim

was supposed to be achieved within the existing institutions of the market economy and representative 'democracy' —through the socialisation of the means of production and the imposition of social controls on the market system, as well as through the 'deepening' of democracy effected by the insertion of procedures of direct democracy within an essentially representative system, respectively. In other words, a fundamental tenet of social democracy in all its variants has always been that these two fundamental institutions could be reformed rather than replaced by new institutions.

However, this problematique of reforms ignores the fact that the founding institutions of a social system form an integral whole, with its own logic and dynamic, which would not make possible any institutional reforms that fundamentally contravene this logic and dynamic. This implies that the present collapse of social democracy should not simply be seen as the outcome of the corruption and degeneracy of socialdemocratic parties (as Gare assumes) but rather as the outcome of a fundamental change in the present system, which has taken place in the era of neoliberal globalisation of late modernity —a change that, as I tried to show in TID, has even made the socialdemocratic achievements of the statist phase of modernity (mid 1940s-mid 1970s) incompatible with the present system. In my view, this is the only way one could meaningfully explain the crucial fact that not a single governing socialdemocratic party today has resisted its conversion to social-liberalism.

Gare attempts first to show that Castoriadis uses a somehow broader conception of autonomy than I do, despite the fact that I explicitly stated in TID that on the issue of defining autonomy I follow Castoriadis.[16] As Gare puts it, "without going into the complex arguments surrounding these issues, it is important to note that, firstly, Castoriadis' position is more complex and perhaps more contradictory than Fotopoulos acknowledges" He then goes on to argue that "as Castoriadis developed the notion, autonomy was portrayed as something aimed at and achieved by degrees" and he quotes Castoriadis for confirmation when he explains why he sees autonomy (defined as "the unlimited self-questioning about the law and its foundations as well as the capacity, in light of this interrogation, *to make, to do* and *to institute*") 'as a germ', and therefore as a *project*. In a crucial passage, Gare then points out that Castoriadis uses two conceptions of autonomy, a narrow one identified with direct democracy and a broader conception, which could exist even in the absence of direct democracy. Thus, after quoting Castoriadis when in 1974 restated autonomy from "collective management" to "the *permanent and explicit self-institution of society*", he concludes that autonomy, in the sense of unlimited self-questioning:

> began in Ancient Greece and revived with modernity, reaching a new intensity with the Enlightenment. The emancipation of philosophy and art from religion in the eighteenth century, which generated enormous creativity in these fields, was an aspect of autonomy. This would suggest that while direct democracy might be something to be aimed at by a tradition of autonomy, autonomy is a broader project and cannot be identified with direct democracy.

So, can we really separate autonomy from democracy and should we assume that autonomy, as a project, implies an evolutionary change over time, "something aimed at and achieved by degrees", exactly as socialdemocrats have always asserted with respect to socialism? If our answer to these questions is positive then we should agree with Gare that there is no clear dividing line between the autonomy and heteronomy traditions and that

social democracy could belong to either, given the presence of autonomistic trends in early social democracy and the present predominance of heteronomistic trends, seen as the inevitable corruption brought about by the socialdemocratic conquest of power.

At the outset, I would point out that, in fact, the Castoriadian conception of autonomy is almost identical to mine and that the significant differences between the project of autonomy and the ID project, which indeed exist, have nothing to do with those assumed by Gare.[17] Next, although it is true that Castoriadis used a broad and narrow sense to the concept of autonomy, this does not imply that only one of those senses is identical with direct democracy, as Gare sssumes. Thus, for Castoriadis, autonomy is the project that aims:[18]

- in the broad sense, at bringing to light society's instituting power and at rendering it explicit in reflection (both of which can only be partial and
- in the narrow sense, at resorbing the political as explicit power, into politics, as the lucid and deliberate activity whose object is the explicit institution of society.

It is therefore obvious that this distinction was introduced, as it is clear from the extract mentioned by Gare, simply to extend the meaning of autonomy from mere 'collective management' ("self-management") to *permanent and explicit self-institution of society; that is to say, a state in which the collectivity knows that its institutions are its own creation and has become capable of regarding them as such, of taking them up again and transforming them*".[19] In other words, autonomy in the broad sense, far from being associated even with forms of non-direct democracy —let alone with gradualism and evolutionism, as Gare assumes— implies that direct democracy is only the necessary condition for autonomy, the sufficient condition being that society is conscious of the fact that the democratic institutions are its own creation. "Democracy," as Castoriadis puts it, "is the project of breaking the closure at the collective level,"[20] in other words, democracy is a process of social self-institution that implies a society which is open ideologically. This means a society, which is not grounded on any closed system of beliefs, dogmas or ideas, otherwise, even New Age or monastic communities implementing direct democratic procedures should be classified as autonomous, despite the fact that they are bound by close theoretical systems and/or dogmas.

The fact that Castoriadis never associated autonomy, in both its senses, with non direct-democratic forms of organisation or with evolutionism is obvious by the following:

First, he repeatedly stresses, making no distinction between broad and narrow senses of autonomy, that autonomy is identified with democracy: 'If I accept the idea of autonomy as such…then the existence of an indefinite plurality of individuals belonging to society entails immediately the idea of democracy defined as the effective possibility of equal participation of all in instituting activities as well as in explicit power'[21]. And, again, even more explicitly, 'the first condition for the existence of an autonomous society —of a democratic society— is that the public/public sphere become effectively public, become an ecclesia'.[22] No wonder therefore that he called present representative democracies as "liberal oligarchies."[23]

Second, I think that the attempt to assign an evolutionist dimension to the concept of a

project ('autonomy is something aimed at and achieved by degrees') is a serious misreading of the meaning of this concept in Castoriadis' work, which is completely alien to his thought. For Castoriadis autonomy (and inclusive democracy for me) is a project in the sense that it is an aim rather than a 'programme', a set of concrete measures,[24] and, as such, it expresses subjectivity which is also 'a social-historical *project*'.[25] The emergence of autonomy for him is:

> a moment of creation, and it ushers in a new type society and a new type of individuals. I am speaking intentionally of germ, for autonomy, social as well as individual, is a *project*. The rise of unlimnited interrogation creates a new social-historical *eidos*.[26]

This non-evolutionary understanding of the concept of project could also explain his statement "that there is an essential plurality, synchronic and diachronic of societies (which) means just that: there is an instituting imaginary.[27]" It is in the same non-evolutionist sense of a project that he talks about the 'vanishing' of the project of autonomy for a long period[28] and then its *rediscovery* and *reinvention* (in the form of direct democracy).[29] All these statements become meaningless if we do not see the emergence/vanishing/re-emergence of autonomy and direct democracy as something that represents a *rupture* with the past rather than as something 'achieved by degrees'. This is made even more explicit when he states that 'democracy and philosophy are the twin expressions of a social-historical rupture, creating the project of (social and individual) autonomy'[30], and, similarly, 'Democracy and philosophy... are themselves creations, and they entail a radical break with the previously instituted state of affairs. Both are aspects of the project of autonomy'.[31] Not accidentally, the view of Castoriadis as some kind of evolutionist is also rejected by his closest political associate, David Ames Curtis who, in an exchange with me, stated that 'Castoriadis is constantly challenging those reformists who believe that socialism or an "autonomous society" can be achieved... by means of incremental changes and without a thorough revolutionizing of existing social, political, economic, and psychical conditions'.[32]

However, if one assumes that autonomy is a rupture with the past, as Castoriadis does, the clear implication is that despite the possibility of development *within* the autonomy and heteronomy traditions and of an interaction between them, still, no development *between* them may be established. Therefore, although it is true that the emancipation of philosophy and art from religion in the eighteenth century, and I would add of science itself, was an aspect of autonomy this in no way implies that a kind of evolutionist development between the two traditions occurred in the 'modern period (1750-1950), as Gare implies. In fact, as Castoriadis stresses, this period 'is best defined by the conflict but also the mutual contamination and entanglement, of two imaginary significations: autonomy, on the one hand, unlimited expansion of "rational mastery" (i.e. the capitalist embodiment of the heteronomy tradition), on the other'.[33] It is also significant that, although he recognises the significance of the contaminations between the two traditions, he emphasises that 'despite these mutual contaminations, the essential character of this epoch is the opposition and the tension between these two core significations'[34].

Finally, there is no doubt in my mind that both liberalism and statist socialism (to which Marxism-Leninism as well as socialist statism belong) are parts of the heteronomy

tradition, despite the fact that one could find in them some aspects close to the autonomy tradition. Thus, although liberalism adopts a negative conception of freedom which implies a close relationship to individual autonomy the fact that this movement explicitly takes for granted the state and the market economy —the two institutions on which heteronomy is founded— firmly classifies it in the heteronomy tradition. Similarly, although statist socialim adopts a positive conception of freedom which implies collective autonomy, still, the socialdemocratic wing of it also takes for granted the institutions on which heteronomy is founded, whereas for the Marxist-Leninist wing, as I attempted to show in TID (pp 197-8), a non-statist conception of democracy is inconceivable both at the transitional stage leading to communism and at the higher stage of communist society. It is for these reasons that I adopted a definition of freedom in terms of the Castoriadian conception of individual and collective autonomy which, to my mind, transcends both liberalism and socialist statism, individualism and collectivism (TID pp 177-180). The above clearly imply that Castoriadis, for similar reasons, would also have classified liberalism and statist socialism in the heteronomy tradition, although explicitly he only referred to the "radical inadequacy, to say the least" of both liberalism and Marxist-Leninist 'socialism' as embodiments of the project of autonomy, on the grounds that both these two movements shared the imaginary of Progress i.e. the heteronomy ideology of unlimited expansion of 'rational mastery'.[35]

Therefore, although it is true, as Gare argues, that I characterise all activity associated with the institutions of the state as part of the tradition of heteronomy this is only the necessary by-product of adopting the same definition of autonomy as Castoriadis does who, in turn, adopts the classical meaning of the word according to which autonomy means to give to oneself one's laws[36] — a definition which implies that only direct democracy could secure both individual and social autonomy. In this sense, statist socialism, in both its forms as Marxism-Leninism and social democracy, does not belong to the autonomy tradition. This is because statist socialism —unlike the libertarian wing of socialism— sees the move to an autonomous society not through the abolition of the division of state from society but, instead, through the **use** of the state by an elite for the emancipation of society, either through representative 'democracy' and gradual reforms (social democrats), or through a soviet system (Marxists-Leninists).

## *The working class movement, autonomy and the ID project*

Next, Gare, after shrewdly pointing out that the ID project's analysis of history of the market economy uses a very different problematique than the usual radical analyses, as it becomes clear by the fact that it focuses on the struggles of people against the market and its elites rather than on objectivist elements, he points out that some ambiguity is created by the fact that :

> on the one hand, the development of the social-democratic consensus appears simultaneously as a major achievement in the struggle of society against the market and as the strategy the market elites had to adopt in their struggle for profits. The latter position (denying the importance of the struggle by society against the market, the different strategies used in different countries and the different degrees of success) appears to derive from an overestimation of the effects of objective circumstances and of the power and role of the market elites. Thus, Fotopoulos portrays German social democracy as merely 'a remnant of the statist phase of marketisation' and argues that 'in the competition between the

USA/UK model of liberalization and the Rhineland social market model, it is the former that is the clear winner' (p.97). This leads to an acceptance of the triumph of neo-liberalism over social democracy as inevitable given the logic of the market and the power of its elites, absolving socialists from blame for their increasing managerialism and corruption.

In fact, however, my acceptance of the triumph of neo-liberalism over social democracy as inevitable does not simply derive from an overestimation of the effects of objective circumstances and of the power and role of the market elites. As I stressed in the French edition of TID, it is always the interaction between equally important 'objective' and 'subjective' factors which condition historical development. The crucial issue is always what is possible to be achieved by the 'subjective' factors (social praxis) within the existing 'objective' conditions. Thus, within the framework established by the objective conditions prevailing in statist modernity, pressure from within (mainly the labour movement) and from without (the very existence of the soviet bloc) could force and did force the ruling elites in the West to introduce, within the socialdemocratic consensus framework, various reforms involving the development of the welfare state, the drastic expansion of the role of the state in controlling the level of economic activity and employment, taking steps to secure better distribution of income etc. Vice versa, the objective conditions created by neoliberal modernity and particularly the opening of markets (mainly from below, through the growing internationalisation of the market economy) but also the shrinking of the working class (because of technological changes) have allowed the ruling elites, within the neoliberal consensus framework, to reverse by and large those reforms. It is therefore again the interplay of the changes in the objective and subjective conditions, rather than the increasing managerialism and corruption of socialdemocrats, which established the neoliberal consensus.

Therefore, far from overestimating the power of the market elites, my thesis is based on the reasons why the working class movement has decayed in the era of neoliberal modernity, as a result not just of corruption of its leadership but of technological and economic changes which led to the present 'service economy' and the consequent dramatic decline of the size of the working class –if we define it, following Marx, both 'subjectively' and 'objectively.[37] So, it is this decay of the working class rather than any 'overestimation' of the power of the market elites that can explain my stand.

Today, it is more than ever true what I tried to show in TID, i.e. that  there is no chance at all for a return of statist socialism in general and social democracy in particular[38] or that , as I predicted there, 'in the competition between the USA/UK model of liberalization and the Rhineland social market model, it is the former that is the clear winner'. In fact, the confirmation of my prediction on Germany became even more clear in the last few months. The German socialdemocratic government, struggling with stagnation and mounting unemployment (which according to the TID analysis is due to the fact that statist socialism is merely lingering on in Germany, with negative implications on its ranking in the competitive league) has adopted in August a set of reforms described by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder as the most significant social reforms ever in Germany. These reforms, following other similar reforms taken earlier, in effect, lead to the dismantlement of the Rhineland social model. On this, the German socialdemocrats simply followed the advice of Wolfgang Wiegard, (a member of the ruling German Social Democratic Party for over 30 years and of the public employees union, as well as a "'60s radical") who last year was

nominated by the Social Democratic/Green government to the Expert Council —a group of 5 economists that commissions reports on the economy for the government. In his yearly report last November, Wiegard stated "we need more social inequality in order to get more employment." The report recommended wage/ salary cuts, limits to unemployment benefits, cuts in social security, and a growth in the low-wage sector.[39] Most of these recommendations have already been adopted by the German government, such as limits to unemployment benefits, cuts in taxes that are mostly benefiting the rich, cuts in the welfare state (e.g. health), encouragement of the low-wage sector (temporary employment, part-time jobs etc). Clearly, the socialdemocratic about turn in Germany, following similar reversals of socialdemocratic policies all over the world, are not the outcome of some corruption taking epidemic proportions but simply of the fact that growth and employment are hardly compatible with socialist statism in an environment of open markets. This is the reason why the ID project, as Gare notes, denies that any other path to the future is conceivable, apart from a continuation of neoliberal globalisation or the development of a new democratic globalisation based on confederal inclusive democracies.

Next, Gare argues that my ambiguous attitude towards the achievements of the social-democratic consensus and the role of the workers' movements in this process appears to be influenced by my characterization of all activity associated with the institutions of the state as part of the tradition of heteronomy, which, as such, has nothing to do with the tradition aspiring to autonomy. For Gare, the problematic nature of this characterization of the social-democratic consensus becomes clearer in the light of Castoriadis' broader notion of autonomy, specifically in relation to the working class. Thus, according to Gare, Castoriadis supposedly included far more in the autonomous tradition than I do, as it becomes evident by his characterization of the working class and its historical role. However, I have no reason to disagree with Castoriadis that the self-organizing activity of English workers, which preceded Marx, was 'the logical continuation of a democratic movement.'[40] Even less so I would disagree with Castoriadis' conclusion that it was the same movement that was primarily responsible for the 'social-democratic consensus' and that it was when this autonomous movement was captured  by the capitalist imaginary through Marxism (or I would say through statist socialism to differentiate it from libertarian socialism and the independent working class movement) that workers ceased being autonomous agents and became militant activists indoctrinated into the teachings of a gospel.

Yet, I would disagree with the conclusion Gare draws from all this that what had emerged from the quest for autonomy was a new form of heteronomy in the guise of the quest for autonomy which (as he rightly points out) is something different from being part of the tradition of heteronomy. Likewise, I would disagree with the related conclusion he draws that:

> Castoriadis broader notion of autonomy could not justify Fotopoulos' division of the modern political world into two, totally separate traditions. Drawing a sharp line between those in the labour movement who founded the socialist and labour parties and attempted to gain control of and to transform the institutions of the nation state and those people who have sought to develop direct democracies obscures the complex relations between these two traditions. Among all those striving for emancipation as construed by Castoriadis there have been struggles, never entirely successful, with successes prone to corruption or attack and reversal, to overcome elites and for people to aspire to autonomy and to take

control of their own destinies.

To my mind, the above statement is in direct contradiction to Castoriadis' reading of the history of the working class movement. When Castoriadis mentioned the struggle of this movement to make capitalism more tolerable he referred to the independent workers' movement and he explicitly excluded the struggles of workers controlled by socialist and labour parties, as well as by trade union bureaucracies. This is why he mentioned this movement only with reference to the era before socialist statism, describing their struggle as a continuation of the democratic movement that culminated in the French revolution, the Paris sections of 1790s etc. On the other hand, when Castoriadis refers to the workers' struggles during the socialdemocratic consensus he draws a clear line between independent workers' struggles and those under the guidance of socialist statists. Thus, in his major essay 'Modern Capitalism and Revolution', workers during the socialdemocratic era could only be thought as struggling —very indirectly even then— for some kind of self-management only when they were struggling independently of political parties and trade unions (usually controlled by Marxists and/or socialdemocrats). This is why he adopts only the 'unofficial' activity of workers' which has been organised from below (wildcat strikes etc) rather than the activity initiated by bureaucratic parties and unions. As the extract below makes clear, the worker's struggle around reformist demands is completely incompatible to the tradition aspiring to autonomy and emancipation:

> There is nothing fundamentally unacceptable to capitalism in the Labour program or in the power held by Scandinavian socialist parties. Contemporary reformism is just another way of managing capitalism and, in the end, of preserving it. When one considers this state of affairs, the meaning of the political attitude of workers in modern countries appears in a clear light. The proletariat no longer expresses itself as a class on the political plane; it no longer expresses to transform or even to orient society in its own direction. On the terrain of politics, it acts at the very most as just another "pressure group"[41].

Furthermore, given that unofficial workers' activity on working conditions was a phenomenon which only lasted for less than a decade or so (end of 1960s-mid 1970s) and was not widely spread geographically but mainly appeared in countries like Britain and Italy and much less so in countries like the USA and Japan, it is obvious that the workers' activity which qualifies according to Castoriadis as aspiring to autonomy was very small in proportion to the activity which was definitely ruled out by him (i.e. the activity for higher wages organized by bureaucratic unions, Marxist and socialdemocratic parties etc) –all this even before the rise of neoliberal globalization.

So, neither Castoriadis, nor myself, have ever dismissed the achievements of past struggles, either these struggles where motivated by movements for autonomy, or by Marxist and socialdemocratic movements. The point is however that all these achievements (to the extent they still characterise today's societies and have not already been reversed, as it is the case with most of the socialdemocratic achievements) have only effected developments *within* the heteronomous tradition. As long as the fundamental division between society and the state and the economy remain, we still talk about heteronomous societies and therefore the changes that have been effected by those struggles and the consequent achievements in no sense imply that we have gradually moved closer to an autonomous society. Even if these achievements were not reversible (and the present neoliberal globalisation has clearly shown how much they were!) the adoption of the view that

gradually, over time, we have moved towards an autonomous society would bring us back to the idea of Progress, which few people accept today, and which factually cannot stand anymore, as I attempted to show in ch 8 of TID.

Therefore, on the basis of the above problematique, I would not agree with Gare's statement that :

> clearly what Castoriadis had in mind by autonomy could not justify Fotopoulos' division of the modern political world into two, totally separate traditions. There is no justification for drawing a sharp line between those in the labour movement who founded the socialist and labour parties and attempted to gain control of and to transform the institutions of the nation state and those people who have sought to develop direct democracies.

However, the division of the modern political world into two, totally separate traditions is also a characteristic element of Castoriadis thought, as for instance when he states that 'the very history of the Greco-Western world can be viewed as the history of the struggle between autonomy and heteronomy',[42] or when he describes the historical dominance of heteronomy: ''in heteronomous societies, that is to say, in the overwhelming majority of societies that have existed up to the present time —almost all of them'.[43] For him, most of the people, for most of the time, adopt significations of heteronomy. It is only on some rare historical moments that large parts of society adopt —as a kind of rupture with the past— significations of autonomy. The working class movement initially had indeed adopted autonomous significations and, at that point, constituted part of the autonomy tradition. However, once the majority in it (we should not forget the minority in the form of the libertarian tradition, e.g. anarcho-syndicalism) adopted the significations of Marxism or of social democracy (which embodied crucial significations of heteronomy) it clearly ceased to play this role.

Therefore, the move of the majority of the working class from the original significations of autonomy to Marxism-Leninism and social democracy clearly represents a gestalt-switch in the Kuhnian sense, a shift from one paradigm (the autonomous one) to another one (heteronomous) and not a development *within* the same tradition (the autonomous one), as Gare's analysis implies. Furthermore, although Castoriadis recognises that both the liberal republic and Marxism-Leninism have been seen by large sections of the working class movement and other social groups as embodying the autonomy project, he is clear in rejecting this view. This is evident when he characterises for instance Marxism-Leninism's claims to liberation, i.e. autonomy, as an 'unprecedented historical fraud'[44] and concludes that 'the monstrous history of Marxism-Leninism shows what an emancipatory movement cannot and should not be.[45]

## *Is inclusive democracy compatible with social democracy?*

Next, Gare raises the issue of compatibility of social democracy with the ID project. His starting point is that :

> the quest for autonomy in the broader sense is a project that can never be fully realized. Measures of autonomy can emerge from and then be corrupted or subverted by new forms of heteronomy. As Fotopoulos himself acknowledges,

even in the direct democracies of the past there were serious imperfections. Autonomy, broadly conceived, has never been completely achieved with representative democracy, but neither has it ever been completely achieved with forms of direct democracy. And just as Fotopoulos is proposing a new model to overcome the limitations of earlier forms of direct democracy, it is possible that social democrats, recognizing the failure of earlier or existing forms of social democracy, could propose a new, more democratic model to aspire to.

However, the fact that autonomy and inclusive democracy on the one hand and social democracy on the other constitute projects (in the sense defined above), and a gradualist process respectively, signifies fundamental differences between them. This is because the former presuppose a rupture or break with the past (not necessarily achieved through a violent revolution), aiming at the building of *alternative* institutions to the market economy and representative 'democracy' whereas the latter is supposed to be an evolutionist process aiming at the improvement of the *existing* institutions. No wonder that post modernists like Mouffe[46], Laclau and others, moving a step further than Gare, propose a 'radical democracy' defined in terms of 'extending and deepening" the present 'liberal oligarchy' (which is christened democracy) rather than in terms of the institutional preconditions for a genuine democracy, and, unlike Gare, even rule out such a genuine democracy because of a supposed "unresolvable tension between the principles of equality and liberty." In other words, Laclau and Mouffe, ignoring the fundamental fact that this tension is the inevitable outcome of the unequal distribution of political, economic and social power and that consequently the issue is how to create the necessary (but not the sufficient) institutional conditions for eliminating the tension between equality and liberty, take this tension for granted, as a kind of God-given curse on humanity! To sum up, it is one thing to talk about an improvement of autonomy institutions of the past, whenever social praxis allows for it, and quite another to talk about gradualist improvements in heteronomy institutions, with the hope of transforming them eventually into autonomy institutions (Gare) or, more realistically, with no hope at all for such a transformation (Laclau, Mouffe.

Next, Gare raises the issue whether the aspirations of those fighting for emancipation and autonomy within nation states (like himself) are likely to be frustrated by the size of these societies. On that, he invokes, like Levin, Robert Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy' which overtakes all large-scale organizations, including those of radical political parties.[47] This 'law' —according to which, even when people aspire to greater autonomy in large territories, they must aim to inferior forms of democracy (i.e. representative democracy) compared to those who aspire to democracy in smaller communities— is blamed for having reoriented the organizations developed by the working class away from the quest for autonomy to developing the means of production. However, as I tried to show in TID, the quest for developing the means of production is a by-product of the dynamic of the market economy and its ideology, as the latter developed after the Enlightenment's identification of Progress with the development of productive forces —an ideology adopted later on by the statist socialist movement (both Marxist and socialdemocratic). Given that statist socialism in its two forms was dominant all over the world in the era of socialdemocratic modernity, it is no wonder that the growth ideology was adopted universally since both liberals (fervent supporters of the market economy) and socialists (who identified Progress with the development of productive forces) embraced it. It is not therefore population and territory size that could explain oligarchy (although an inclusive democracy does require –for

different reasons —a radical decentralisation which however may be, initially, administrative) but the form of social organisation and the ideology used to legitimise it.

This brings Gare to what he considers a different problem in my work. He argues that a confederal ID is plausible, so long as each community is conceived in isolation from its relation from other communities and societies and that the confederal proposals, according to which such communities could relate to each other in confederations, share necessary resources and organize to confront and defeat existing states, is far less convincing because, as he puts it:

> this is a major problem when one thinks of small-scale communities in the past, including those in ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy. These were perpetually in conflict with each other, and as a consequence, were able to be subjugated by larger, more powerful societies. This problem is accentuated in the present by the power of existing states... The whole movement for direct democracy is dissolving under pressure from these institutions. Given the incredible power and brutality of the new liberal fascist regimes led by USA, and considering realistically the prospects of reining in such rogue states, this defect in Fotopoulos' thinking could lead to the dismissal of all his proposals. To avoid this it is necessary to re-examine efforts by social democrats to transform the institutions of the nation-state to bring the economy under democratic control. Castoriadis' broader notion of autonomy facilitates this.

However, the reference to the inter-conflict of classical *poleis* is contradictory because one of the basic reasons for which a ***confederal*** inclusive democracy is proposed, instead of a community-based one, is exactly to avoid this sort of competition among direct democracies. Also, as regards the argument about today's tremendous power of the transnational elite, it is clear that this argument equally applies to socialdemocratic efforts that could threaten its power (Allende's example is indicative). Therefore, the counterforce to this power could only be built from below, in the form of an international movement for a genuine democracy that would undermine the power base of the transnational elite. So, although a confederal inclusive democracy could initially be established in a single country, it is clear that such an experiment will be doomed unless it is followed soon by the establishment of confederal inclusive democracies at the regional, continental and, eventually, global level.

Having said that, Gare proceeds next to support his case for complemetarity between the ID project and social democracy. Thus, he points out that, instead of seeing the struggle to reform social democracy and the development of inclusive democracy as rival programs, they could be seen as complementary projects separated more by the corrupt state of social democratic movements that had led to a massive concentration of power than by the social democratic project as such.

However, corruption and decay of socialdemocratic and trade union movements can explain neither their bureaucratization denounced by Castoriadis, nor their adoption of the growth ideology, let alone the concentration of power. Corruption and bureaucratization are not independent variables but could well be explained by structural factors (e.g. their hierarchical organization), as well as by historical factors on which I cannot expand here. Furthermore, no political party which does not challenge the market economy itself is able to challenge the growth ideology since it is growth which is the motor of the market

economy and any effective measures to challenge the power of multinationals will directly affect the dynamic of the market economy leading to more unemployment and a worsening of the economic crisis, and, consequently, to a further eroding of the electoral base of socialdemocrats. Finally, it is not decadence that prevents socialdemocrats from abandoning the capitalist imaginary, uphold autonomy as their main goal and then mobilize against global markets. What prevents them from doing so is that in the era of neoliberal globalisation economic growth depends crucially on world markets as the main agent of this growth is transnational corporations. Only therefore the return to the semi-closed economies of the socialdemocratic era would make possible the re-regulation of markets −something that is not feasible anymore within the institutional framework of the market economy.

It is not accidental anyway that even those in the reformist Left who criticize socialdemocrats (e.g. those participating in the World Social Forum, in their proposals for an 'alternative globalisation', take for granted the present open markets and restrict themselves to proposals that would curb the power of transnational corporations at the global level and allow the effective protection of labour and the environment. However, such proposals are much more utopian than the proposal for an inclusive democracy, not only because the built-in power structures of the internationalized market economy will never allow any effective measures in this direction to be taken and effectively implemented, but also because, even if this was possible, the effect of such measures would have been a further worsening of the economic crisis, given that open markets require also de-regulated markets, for competitiveness to be maximized. No wonder that not only the social democrats in Germany, as we saw above, but also those in the Swedish bastion of social democracy had to adopt measures which, far from indicating any kind of rethinking their attitudes towards economic growth, as Gare asserts, in fact seriously undermine the past achievements of social democracy (privatisations of social services like the postal service, private-public mix in health care etc)[48]. This was not due to the decadence of Swedish social democrats but simply the inevitable choice they, as well as German socialdemocrats, had to make, given that foreign and local capitalists, both in Germany and Sweden, could easily move −some actually began moving− to places with fewer restrictions to their activities, further deteriorating the precarious state of the corresponding economies.

Finally, although I very much appreciate Gare's intention to make the ID proposals 'more relevant to the present and more likely to be taken up in the immediate future' I am afraid I will not be able to agree with his main conclusion that perhaps the only possible solution to the present problems is to attempt synthesizing radical social democracy and inclusive democracy. This implies that social democrats should work towards creating the kind of inclusive democracies proposed by the ID project, "with the aim not to overthrow the state but to transform it into an institution for producing and sustaining the environment within which inclusive democracies could flourish, while at the same time serving to mediate their relations to each other, to the rest of society and, collectively, to other societies while, in parallel, to radically re-regulate markets, particularly of trade and finance, towards the long-term goal of replacing the market economy completely by inclusive democracies".

However, apart from the fact that, as I attempted to show above, the goal of radically re-regulating markets today is not feasible, the state, by definition, could not be transformed to the kind of institution proposed by Gare since its very existence −as a separate institution from society− means that the political and economic elites which control it will

do everything in their power to undermine inclusive democracies. This is why, as I put it in TID, the aim of a democratic movement could only be "to transform and democratize city governments, to root them in popular assemblies, to knit them along confederal lines, to appropriate a regional economy along confederal and municipal lines, in other words, the goal is to develop "a public sphere —and in the Athenian meaning of the term, a *politics*— that grows in tension and ultimately in a decisive conflict with the state". Having said that it is now clear that any kind of alliance between mainstream socialdemocrats and supporters of the ID project would not only be utterly utopian but also extremely undesirable given the active or passive support of the former for the criminal wars of the transnational elite in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

## *Determinism, creativity and voluntarism*

Finally, Gare raises the all important issue of the role of determinism versus creativity and voluntarism in History. First, he attempts to draw a line, yet again, between TID and Castoriadis on the issue of my 'dualistic' thinking as regards autonomy and heteronomy and also on the issue of creativity and its relationship to the past. In fact, however, such a dividing line is non-existent since Castoriadis, as I attempted to show above, was absolutely clear on the matter as he also saw History as creation and the entire Western history as a conflict between the autonomy and heteronomy traditions. In this context, I will argue that Gare inadvertently simplifies my position on the matter when he presents it as a voluntaristic one and he points out that:

> creation in this sense cannot be equated with deliberate action or a choice, since before the emergence of autonomy people were bound by their roles and except in rare instances were virtually incapable of thinking beyond these... That is, instituting democracy is not simply a matter of people choosing to create a new form of autonomous society from what had been a heteronomous tradition. It is only in a society within which the tradition of autonomy survives to some extent despite the prevalence of heteronomy that people can actually choose to fight for democracy.

However, as I stressed in TID (p 181), it is a historical fact that individuals are not absolutely free to create their world, nor does the world just create the individual. As long as individuals live in a society, they are not merely individuals but *social* individuals, subject to a process which socialises them into internalising the existing institutional framework and the dominant social paradigm. In this sense, they are not just 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. In other words, since freedom itself is defined in TID in terms of autonomy, I take it for granted that there have always been and will always be individuals in every society which will not take for granted the institutions of heteronomy and the dominant social paradigm to which they are socialized.

At the same time, Gare notes that my voluntarism —where the possibility of creating direct democracies is concerned— is accompanied by what appears to be 'an excessively deterministic understanding of the evolution of the market and the actions of its elites in

recent history' and construing the advance of the market as inexorable. However, in my analysis, the economic crisis of the market economy is endemic within the system and this is why I devoted an entire chapter to the generalised systemic crisis (ch 4). In other words, in my problematic, the crisis does not refer only to the neoliberal 'model', as Gare presents it, since a similar crisis led to the end of the socialdemocratic consensus in the early 70s, for the reasons explained in the book. For me, the crisis is a systemic one caused by the inherent contradictions of the market system itself, which is the worst system of allocating resources when purchasing power is unequally distributed (see my criticism of the market system on pp 248-250). It is this fundamental structural defect that is causing the growing concentration of power, which is the ultimate cause of the present multidimensional crisis. In this context, the advance of the market has indeed been inexorable since its emergence, two hundred years or so ago, and the advent of socialist statism was only a temporary aberration that lasted less than fifty years —except in USSR where it survived another twenty years or so.

Still, this does not mean that the position adopted by the ID project is either a deterministic or a voluntaristic one. The following extract from the French edition of TID (Seuil, 2002) hopefully makes clear the ID stand, as regards the relation between 'determinism' and 'voluntarism' and the essentially indeterminate nature of the outcome of the social struggle on the crucial issue of autonomy versus heteronomy:

> It was the outcome of the social struggle that determined in each historical period the nature and main characteristics of modernity. The controversial issue however 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 (even 'in the last instance') History itself. On the other hand, for supporters of the autonomy/democratic tradition like Castoriadis subjective factors, like 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...but, although such objective factors could explain the motives and actions, particularly of the economic elites, still, the eventual economic and social outcome of the ensuing social struggle has always been both indeterminate and unpredictable, as Castoriadis rightly points out. However, in this book's problematique, it is equally a mistake to attempt to overemphasise the role of 'objective' factors in the history of the market economy at the expense of the 'subjective' factors, or, to do the opposite and overemphasise the role of the 'subjective' factors at the expense of the objective ones. Instead, this book is based on the hypothesis that it is the interaction between equally important 'objective' and 'subjective' factors which condition historical development —an interaction which (unlike the Marxist 'dialectical' relationship) always leads to indeterminate outcomes.

Finally, It is clear that Gare gives a much narrower meaning to the outcome of social struggle which includes even changes *within* the heteronomy tradition, as changes supposedly leading to a potential rupture with it. Thus, Gare argues that "an alternative to Fotopoulos' opposition between creativity and a deterministic account of the evolution of the market is to recognize that evolutionary processes, including the evolution of social forms, are not deterministic and can allow for different directions to be taken and also that

there can be radical emergence with creative imagination playing a central role in this" —something that he thinks provides a better grasp of the place of creativity and agency in history. He continues that "from this perspective, however, it is only when there are major crises that radically new forms, natural or social, are likely to emerge, and it is only when there are pre-existing projects that choice becomes a major influence on outcomes". His point of reference here is the Great Depression, which precipitated a crisis the outcome of which was 'the triumph of a weak form of the welfare state in USA, Nazism in Germany and social democracy in Sweden', followed by a far less severe crisis in the 1970s that led to the rise and dominance of neo-liberalism, whereas a new major crisis is looming today which, according to Gare, could open a whole new set of possibilities, ranging from a further development of the liberal fascism being pursued by USA and Australia and to some extent in Britain to efforts to create radically new forms of democracy.

However, the kind of crises he mentions —as the very historical examples he brings up make clear— has never led to a systemic change. This is not accidental. In the ID problematique a crisis — however severe — will never lead to a systemic change by itself, unless the subjective conditions for such a change have been created. These conditions involve, as I briefly explained above, the development of antisystemic consciousness not simply through the struggle against the system, (i.e. the usual strategy of the traditional antisystemic Left), but also through the struggle to begin building 'from below' alternative democratic institutions, well before the actual transition to an Inclusive Democracy takes place. If these conditions have not been created at the moment the crisis erupts then the inevitable outcome will be either some kind of totalitarian regime of the Right or the Left, or an easily reversible reform like the welfare state mentioned by Gare.

Today, however, the objective conditions do not create even the conditions for a significant 'endo-systemic' change —like the one assumed by Gare— let alone a systemic change. This can be seen if we compare today's conditions with the conditions which led to the rise of the welfare state. To my mind, the main reason which could explain the rise of the welfare state refers to the existence of such subjective conditions as a strong socialist movement, which had already cut off Russia from the capitalist market economy, as well as the aspirations of the most in the West who have fought the war for a better post-war society with no unemployment and poverty, as promised by their elites. Today, however, not only similar subjective conditions are not seen in the horizon but also the objective conditions that allowed for the rise of the welfare state (semi-closed economies whose growth depends on the internal market) are absent. It is on account of this problematique that I concluded in TID that only the building of a mass movement for a new form of society based on inclusive democracy could provide a permanent way out of the present multidimensional crisis, through the struggle against the system and through the parallel building of alternative democratic institutions. This is because, in the ID problematique, even a significant change *within* the heteronomy tradition, let alone a change *between* the heteronomy and autonomy traditions, is impossible in neoliberal modernity, unless it is accompanied by a change in the objective conditions themselves (i.e. a systemic change) . Alternatively, we have to enter a dream world in which capitalists and the states controlled by them abandon economic growth, transnational corporations and open markets and come back to the socialdemocratic paradise of the 1950-1970s or some variant of it!

# 5. The desirability of Inclusive Democracy

## *Is ID desirable?*

David Freeman, in a brilliant analysis of TID, asks a series of crucial questions, which he cleverly stages as a kind of an exchange between the author and three different constituencies expressing the main trends in the political spectrum: antisystemic, prosystemic and reformist. Although sometimes his predicted answers are off the mark — either because they represent wild guesses of the author's possible response who, in the time since publication of TID, has already provided his own answers to these questions, or because of errors in guessing the author's attitude on certain matters— Freeman, generally, manages to create a very insightful imaginary exchange on the issues involved. Particularly so since he shrewdly perceives (this constitutes the main theme of his review) that the main contribution of TID is that it attempts to fill what he perceives at the major gap in most of contemporary antisystemic critique : to propose an alternative type of social organisation rather than exhaust itself with the usual critique of the present system. This is a particularly crucial issue, not only for anarchism —which never managed to go beyond some moral generalities about the future society— but for every kind of radical movement, as we saw above with respect to the World Social Forum. Still, to my mind, after the collapse, in the last decade, of the only real alternative to the present system, i.e. socialist statism in the form of soviet socialism and social democracy, this is the main question which critics of the existing system have to answer if they wish their critique to have any credibility value.

I will not deal here with the questions asked by Freeman, which have already received a reply in other parts of this rejoinder. This particularly applies to his questions about the transition to an ID and comments like the following one: "If asking a polity to embark on a new road, one will be required to demonstrate well before-the-fact that this road cannot possibly be the harbinger of disaster. Otherwise, the public response will surely be 'better the devil you know'". But, I hope it is clear from the above, that this sort of problem does not arise with respect to the ID project in which the transition to an inclusive democracy involves the majority of the population in building the alternative institutions proposed by the ID project and acquiring in the process the experience of living with them. The democratic consciousness that this experience will create is anyway the only guarantee that people will be willing and able to defend their new institutions from the inevitable attack of the elites, from within, or without.

Setting therefore aside questions concerning the feasibility of ID and the transition to it which I considered above, I will now focus instead on a set of significant questions raised by Freeman concerning the desirability of ID in general and I will continue next with questions concerning the desirability of direct democracy in particular . Freeman points out first that many may regard the state as a buffer against the 'problem of evil' and that state absence could generate a vacuum, providing malevolence/human nature especial opportunity without accountability or state-administered recourse. Similarly, he argues, Pareto's suggestion that élites are likely to emerge in any form of social organisation, even in those committed to the absence of elites, has to rebuffed, for the ID project to look credible. "Fotopoulos" he stresses "needs to respond to intimations, notably from Freud, totalitarianism, pogroms and popular wars, that collectivities and not only élites can support murderousness; this goes directly to why people might seek the rule of law with state-as-enforcer". He then goes on to ask questions about safeguards against the possibility that a cabal might undertake (the stateless equivalent of) a coup, seizing the

voucher repository, distributing vouchers to enjoin any with weapons or substantial musculature to their cause, and banishing all democratic practice. "Fotopoulos needs to satisfy as to how internal and external aggression is prevented or resolved;" Finally, he raises the well rehearsed argument about private property 'as a buffer for the individual and not simply a mechanism of domination' —something that requires to show that demotic ownership could not prove demonic.

So, let us consider briefly the issues raised by these questions. First, as regards the state as a 'buffer' against the problem of evil, the real issue of course is whether the state's role is in fact exausted to this function or whether instead an even more important function of it is to maintain and reproduce the system of concentration of political and economic power at the hands of the elites, which control the state mechanism. Radical theory and History itself unquestionably confirm the latter. Furthermore, the absence of state does not mean the absence of social organisation and law, as some primitive views of anarchism suggest. An ID simply implies a different sort of social organisation and laws approved by the demotic assemblies and implemented by delegates chosen by them, i.e. by the people themselves rather than by minorities 'representing' the people and 'acting on its behalf'. Second, as regards Pareto's suggestion that élites are likely to emerge in any form of social organisation, the real issue is whether the institutional framework creates the necessary conditions for the emergence of elites and there is no doubt that the market economy and representative 'democracy' do create, almost by definition, such conditions. On the other hand, the institutional framework of an ID does create the necessary conditions for the non-emergence of elites. This is of course no guarantee that elites will never emerge, even in such a system, but, whereas in the present system this is the effect of the normal functioning of the system itself, in an ID this could only be the outcome of its abuse and will only be possible in the absence of the sufficient conditions for a genuine democracy, i.e. in the absence of a level of democratic consciousness that people are expected to acquire through paideia and the living experience of genuine democracy itself. Third, as regards the safeguards against internal and external aggression —safeguards that of course have never been provided by the present system which excels at the moment in organising aggressions all over the world and in undermining even basic human rights at home— again, the ultimate safeguard could only be the level of democratic consciousness achieved by the people itself, through living democracy and paideia. On top of this however, although demotic assemblies may indeed make errors of judgement –as many mistakes have always been made by elites—an error by the elites is worse than a thousand errors made by the people, given that the elites' decisions by definition express particular interests. Finally, as regards private property, one may imagine various ways to reproduce its benefits, in terms of offering a buffer for the individual, without forcing society to suffer its serious drawbacks, in terms of creating an unequal distribution of income and wealth. Thus, there is little doubt that ownership and control of the means of production and distribution has to be collective, given that production and distribution are social processes affecting every member of society. However, as regards housing, demotic assemblies could maintain, for instance, the ownership of the entire housing stock and then distribute to citizens long-term leases for residential properties, on the basis of objective criteria expressing the citizens' needs (number of rooms per person etc).set by the assemblies themselves.

Next, Freeman questions whether the ID model will be culturally attractive to people who do not share its values, like for instance many in the middle classes who presumably have adopted the values of the present consumer society. However, the feeling of life emptiness

that the consumer society creates was one of the main reasons for the massive movement against it, which developed all over the West in the late sixties. It is the same feeling which has pushed many people today to the various forms of irrationalism, from official religions up to the various sects that are rampant particularly in the USA –the citadel of consumer society —New Age, Zen, Tao etc.[49] On the other hand, a massive movement for an Inclusive Democracy could  function as a catalyst for the development of new values based on democratic ethics,[50] expressing the need to organise individual and collective life on a rational basis. Also, it should not be forgotten that the freedom of choice that is an integral element of the ID economic proposals, is a sufficient guarantee against any trend towards the kind of 'dour monasticism' that Freeman is worried about. Furthermore, this will be a freedom of choice that, being socially controlled, could not lead to the kind of  growth economy prevailing today, which has led us to the edge of an ecological catastrophe. Finally, as regards the argument that capitalism, in its very search for more expansion and profits, could be 'greened', this is only partially true and is mainly valid with respect to the secondary ecological problems (e.g. pollution) rather than as far as the primary ecological problems is concerned like the greenhouse effect. In the latter case, it is clear that the benefits from the continuation of the status quo, which are being gained by  some of the most powerful multinationals like those in the oil industry, far outweigh the disadvantages to others (e.g. insurance industry) —something that could well explain the reason why even the adoption of the mild Kyoto proposals (which in no way could stop the present catastrophic climatic change) finally proved impossible![51]

Freeman then argues that only two of the crises TID identifies as part of the present multi-dimensional crisis are indisputable: ecological and North-South. Still, I think few would dispute the existence of a political crisis, as expressed by the huge abstention rates in the electoral process and the lack of participation in general, as far as  party politics is concerned. Even fewer would dispute the size of the present social crisis, as shown by mounting crime, massive drug abuse and the like, which have resulted in the growing development of luxury ghettos for the affluent middle classes. Finally, the fact that the Great Depression, or any other of the crises through which capitalism went through, did not lead to the end of it is not, as the ideologues of the system suggest, a result so much of the system's capacity to reinvent itself but rather of the lack of a credible alternative.  In other words, in the ID problematique, no crisis, however grave, will lead to the end of the present system, unless a credible alternative adopted by a significant part of the population has already emerged . _

Next, Freeman raises the question whether most really desire extensive participation, as direct democracy assumes. I think however that this question presupposes the kind of mentality that has inevitably been created in the present pseudo public space, in which most people have never come in contact with a real public space and have therefore justifiably withdrawn from what passes as politics today —as the political crisis mentioned above illustrates. The very fact that many people have been brain washed by the system to believe that participation in politics is a kind of vocation to be assigned to the specialists is the clearest illustration of the abysmal failure of what passes as politics today. Politics, in the sense of direct participation of people in public affairs (as it was the classical conception of the term)  is an expression of autonomy, i.e. of freedom itself and I cannot imagine that in a free society, in which everybody will be able to take part in the decision-process, some will consciously select heteronomy, namely, to assign to others the right to decide for them. Particularly so since the decision-taking process does not have to be unnecessarily  time-

consuming and interfering with the citizens' private lives. Thus, a degree of flexibility may easily be introduced in the decision-taking process, so that citizens are required to attend only the discussion of issues judged as important by a committee of delegates chosen by lot to prepare the agenda for the next assembly, whereas attendance to less important meetings could be optional, and so on. The fact anyway that the minimum amount of work requested from each citizen, so that basic needs are met, will be much smaller than the present average workload will ensure that attending assemblies' meetings will not be a significant burden on citizens' free time.

## *'Radical' democracy or direct democracy?*

Serge Latouche offers a wide-ranging analysis of the ID project which helps the reader enormously to form a complete image of its problematique, its aims and the means to achieve them. As usual, instead of describing the aspects of Latouche's insightful analysis which find me in broad agreement , I will attempt in the following to discuss the main issues/ reservations raised by the reviewer, which, to my mind, express a viewpoint favouring the 'deepening' of representative 'democracy'—an approach close to the one adopted by supporters of the 'radical democracy' approach (Laclau, Mouffe et. Al.) that I considered above.

At the outset, Latouche doubts the desirability of direct democracy and invokes Aristotle who noted that "as for the poor, they are ready to keep quiet, even when excluded from office, provided they are not subjected to violence or to confiscation of their property"[52] on the assumption that "the masses take no great offence of being excluded from office, (on the contrary, they may even be glad of this opportunity to look after their private affairs)". [53] However, even the extracts that Latouche refers to make clear that the reason why participation by the masses to the democratic proceedings was not perfect was not their lack of interest but the very fact that, for many citizens, the loss of income resulting from participation was significant. This is made clear by another passage from *Politics* in which Aristotle stresses that "in time of war, for example, the poor generally begrudge their services if they are not granted a subsistence allowance to save them from destitution".[54] As I pointed out in TID, the distribution of free time –on which the objective ability to exercise civic rights depends —was very unequal in classical Athens, following the unequal distribution of income and wealth. This is why, as I stressed, given that 'slave-ownership depended on the distribution of income and wealth, the rich, who owned many more slaves than the poor, had much more time at their disposal to exercise their civic rights' (p 192). In other words, the reason why the rate of participation in the democratic procedures was not equally distributed among classes was the very existence of classes, i.e. the fact that, as I noted in TID, classical Athenian democracy was only a partial democracy. This was so, not only because Athenian democracy was not a full political democracy in which all residents could take part in the proceedings but also because it was not complemented by an economic democracy as well. Despite the fact that the significance of income distribution as regards participation was recognised and compensation for the exercise of civic rights was introduced by Pericles (judicial salary for jury duty, assembly salary for participation in the *ecclesia*, salary for deputies, soldiers, etc.), still, the amount of compensation was just enough to induce the very poor to take part but surely not adequate to cover fully the income loss that participation in the proceedings implied for many Athenians. The conclusion is that there is no historical example on the basis of which we may assess the desirability or otherwise of an inclusive democracy, simply because there has never been in

History a full democracy of a similar kind. But, if this is so, the implication is that out of partial forms of democracy one can only make partial assessments on the desirability of full democracy.

Next, Latouche argues that the proceedings of direct democracy were not particularly desirable to the masses as shown by the 'fact' that "in Athens, 9 citizens out of 10 were more often than not absent from the debates, and, in spite of the fees paid for being there, public officers had a lot of trouble dragging the crowd from agora to ecclesia", as a result of which, in the Athenian democracy, decisions were finally taken "by less than 400 out of 200,000 inhabitants of classical Attica." I do not know Latouche's source of information but Mogens Herman Hansen —who has published a relatively recent classic text on Athenian democracy— using the research results of several other writers on the matter, draws very different conclusions. As regards the number of citizens involved, he states that 'the size of the population is unknown, but it can be deduced from the evidence that there were some 60,000 male citizens when Pericles was the leader of Athens in the fifth century and about 30,000 when Demosthenes was its leader."[55] Finally, as regards the rate of participation, Hansen gives a very different picture than that of Latouche:

> (O)ut of the 30,000 full citizens not more than 6000, as a rule, turned up for the Assembly and the People's Courts. The astonishing fact (is) that it was possible to collect, on more than one day in two, as many as several thousand citizens for the courts, and, several times a month, more than 6000 for the Assembly.[56]

It seems therefore that, despite the fact that this was a partial democracy, as mentioned above, and many people could simply not afford the loss of income (which was not compensated fully by the city allowance) that resulted from attending the democratic proceedings, still, as Hansen stresses, "political activity was regarded as a worthy expenditure of time in its own right and not just as a dreary duty".[57]

Latouche next stresses that 'we probably have to agree with Tocqueville when he sees "the principle of popular sovereignty at the bottom of all governments and hidden under the less freedom-prone institutions"[58]. However, general representation (as opposed to specific delegation) inevitably is, as Castoriadis puts it, 'in the concept , as well as in actual fact, alienation (in the legal sense of the term: transfer of ownership) of sovereignty, from the 'represented' toward the 'representatives'.[59] Similarly, one could hardly agree with the argument that "in this context, radical rejection of representative "democracy" is somewhat excessive. It is now part of our tradition, whether we like it or not. And it isn't necessarily the embodiment of evil'. But, this 'tradition' is only two centuries old or so, since the 'Founding Fathers' of the US constitution introduced representative 'democracy' in the last quarter of the 18th century, as the political complement of the *system* of the market economy that was introduced at about the same time. Furthermore, when Latouche asks 'all in all, is representation by elected officers less democratic than lazily or carelessly giving up the city's affairs to notabilities and demagogues?' he does not in fact compare likes with likes. This is because he compares, as I mentioned in a previous section, the *abuse* of the democratic system by notabilities and demagogues with the *normal* functioning of representative 'democracy'.

Direct democracy presupposes a high level of democratic consciousness and could indeed

lead to demagogue-cracy, in the absence of such consciousness. But, representative democracy deprives the vast majority of the population from exercising their political will —something that can only be done directly by the people itself— by definition, through its own institutions rather than because of a deficit in democratic consciousness or any other external factor. Therefore, when Latouche argues that 'improved representation, with recallable officers and direct participation in some cases (e.g. the participative budget in Porto Alegre), may constitute a satisfactory compromise' he seems not to realise that a representative 'democracy' is a completely different system from full democracy. A representation may indeed be 'improved' but surely this does not constitute democracy, which clearly is not a system that can be exercised *a-la carte* (as is the Porto Allegre case in which some decisions are delegated to democratic assemblies and others —which happen to condition the former— are left for representatives to take). Democracy, as Castoriadis[60] stressed, is not a set of procedures but a regime, which either exists or not. Finally, Latouche admits that the issue of the equal distribution of economic power is a key one and will indeed remain unsolved in the present system noting that 'it is somewhat illusory to envision solving it at a stroke with the magic wand of direct democracy'. However, in the ID prtoblematique, it is not simply direct democracy that will solve the problem of the unequal distribution of economic power but economic democracy, as a basic component of the inclusive democracy. And economic democracy, as was made clear in TID, does not only mean the institutionalisation of economic *processes* of a democratic nature (assemblies to decide how basic needs will be met) but also the institutionalisation of economic *structures* embodying equal economic power relations, which implies that the means of production and distribution are collectively owned and controlled by the *demos,* the citizen body, directly.

## *The need for a universalist project*

To my mind, all of Latouche's reservations have a common source which is revealed in his final comment:

> Lastly, I distrust any universalist project, even a radical or subversive one : I am prone to detect in it some residual smell of Western ethnocentrism. I already disagreed with Castoriadis about this. Reading Takis Fotopoulos strengthens my doubts. As Louis Dumont perfectly showed, the holistic imaginary of most human societies, if not unacquainted with some requirement of due consideration for dignity of individuals and attention to their will, is largely irrelevant to our egalitarian imaginary.

I think the above statement makes clear that Latouche is motivated by the postmodernist aversion to any kind of universalist project — the same aversion which has led to the abandonment, by most of the Left, of any problematique for a radical social change, and to what Castoriadis rightly called 'generalized conformism'.[61] Similarly, as I put it in my critique of postmodernism,"the postmodern emphasis on plurality and 'difference', in combination with the simultaneous rejection of every idea to develop a universal project for human emancipation, in effect, serves as an alibi for abandoning liberatory analysis and politics and conforming to the status quo.[62] As I tried to show in the same article, this is the type of 'oppositional' postmodern politics, which is advanced by Laclau and Mouffe, among others, and which, inevitably, ends up with a reformist politics (which does not challenge in any way the system of the market economy and representative 'democracy')

defined as 'radical democracy'. Furthermore, I think it is an exercise in double standards to talk about the 'smell of Western ethnocentrism' only with reference to liberatory projects based on democracy and autonomy and not seeing this 'smell' in the parody of democracy that is being exported all over the world today, which has also originated in the West! The same applies to the expressed 'distrust of any universalist project', conveniently 'forgetting' that the market economy system and its political complement in the form of representative 'democracy' does also represent the materialisation of a universalist project — something that implies that the overthrow of this system, obviously, would also require an alternative universalist project. Finally, to insinuate that a universalist project, like the ID, or the autonomy project, may 'not be acquainted with some requirement of due consideration for dignity of individuals and attention to their will, is largely irrelevant to our egalitarian imaginary', in fact, implies that to be consistent with our egalitarian imaginary we should assume that people do not wish autonomy i.e. freedom, but rather prefer the heteronomy of a representative 'democracy'!

Yet, if Latouche has strong reservations on the feasibility and desirability of an Inclusive Democracy this is not the case for those outside the traditional French Left like Jean-Claude Richard who, reviewing the book for the libertarian journal *Le Monde Libertaire* , classifies the ID project 'firmly within the libertarian ideal'. As the author rightly concludes in his insightful review,

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

Finally, I would particularly like to thank Jean-Claude Richard on this occasion, for his comment that in the book "the deliberately scientific or difficult jargon has been banished" and, as a result, the book "is absolutely accessible to everybody. The demonstrations there are clear, logical and coherent. A will to be understood by as many as possible is felt in each page". Given that the aspiration to express abstract ideas in an accessible way was in fact one of the basic aims of the French edition, the fact that people like Jean-Claude Richard recognise this is a significant encouragement indeed.

## *Civil society and the ID project*

Takis Nikolopoulos's perceptive review of the Greek edition raises an important question with respect to the ID's critique of the 'civil society' approach in effecting systemic change. He asks

> should there not be a starting point? Is it not the civil society, i.e. citizens themselves who will form the basis of local communities first, and confederal communities eventually? Are not these special citizens' movements, which will form the organic "systemic" parts of a wider movement for a radical change, aiming at the inclusive and genuine democracy? This being so, would they not have to fight against the existing market?

This question obviously arises from the basic thesis supported by TID that the civil society approach is both a-historical and utopian in the negative sense of the word in bringing about radical social change. Obviously, this conclusion does not deny the possibility that a relatively strong 'civil society' could bring about significant reforms for the 'deepening' and 'widening' of present representative 'democracy', as supporters of this approach suggest. However, such reforms, which become even less likely the greater the degree of globalisation of the market economy anyway, in the ID problematique, could never bring about a systemic change, i.e. the overthrow of the market economy and representative democracy which are the ultimate causes of the present multi-dimensional crisis. At most, they could result in some easily reversible improvements in both and perhaps in ameliorating the most extreme effects of the crisis.

Furthermore, the present civil society associations could hardly be the organic parts of a wider movement for an inclusive democracy. Although, 'objectively', this might be so, because it is indeed possible that some of the citizens taking part in these organisations might form part of the popular base for such a movement, 'subjectively', the radical democratic consciousness required for the creation of an antisystemic movement could not be created within reformist movements, like those constituting the civil sanitarian associations. As I attempted to show elsewhere,[63] the evidence of reformist struggles in the last century has clearly shown that reformist movements fighting for reformist demands could only lead to the creation of a reformist mentality. This is why the vast majority of those who supported social democracy in the past, in their effort to achieve radical social change through reforms rather than through antisystemic action, did not move to the antisystemic Left when the reforms adopted by socialdemocrats in the post war period were reversed in today's era of neoliberal globalisation. Instead, they either followed the old socialdemocrats in their present conversion into social-liberals, or they even switched to more conservative movements! As far as I am concerned at least, I am not aware of any cases of reformist movements which, frustrated by the present reversal of social democratic achievements, moved on to the antisystemic Left. Instead, even parts of the Marxist Left, which have switched to postmodernism after the collapse of 'actually existing socialism', have presently embraced the present system!

Therefore, on the basis of the existing evidence, it seems more likely than not that, even if civil society organisations fail in their effort to reform the present system, they will not, as Nikolopoulos assumes, begin to fight the market system itself but, instead, they will probably attempt to find ways to accommodate themselves with it.

## The ID project and Latin America

The reviewers of the Latin American edition are almost by definition, given their position at the very front of the neoliberal attack, in the best position to see the need for a new liberatory project, after the collapse of statist socialism in its soviet and social democratic forms. This is also the view expressed in various ways by Jorge Camil and particularly Rafael Sposito in his bright analysis of the rationale for a new liberatory project. The practical realisation of this theoretical insight was recently given by the Argentinian insurrection, brilliantly assessed by Guido Galafassi . Argentina, as the author shows, in the last twenty years or so, faithfully followed the path prescribed by the US 'big brother' neighbour for the entire Latin America area: replacing the military elites with the elites of professional politicians for the implementation of the free market principles required by

neoliberal globalisation. The illusion of 'democracy' was judged by the transnational elite as the perfect means to control the Latin American populations (as against the bankrupt military regimes of the past) and avoid the social explosions which loomed in the horizon, as a result of the huge acceleration of concentration of power to which neoliberal globalisation inevitably led. The game however was particularly risky for the elites since any social explosion could eventually challenge not just one elite versus the other but the very system of concentrating political and economic power at the hands of the political and economic elites. And this is exactly what has happened in Argentina since the insurrection of December 2001.

Although the watchword ***"que se vayan todos"*** (leave you all) used in the popular protest of December 2001 originally might have expressed the naïve demand for a change in the political personnel, it soon led, as in many similar insurrectionary situations in the past, to the creation of popular assemblies. First, neighbourhood assemblies, as a practical implementation of the need for the equal distribution of political power. Second, workers' assemblies —following the taking over of factories abandoned by their previous capitalist owners and their re-organisation on the basis of workers' control— as a practical implementation of the need for the equal distribution of economic power. In this sense, the sperms of three of the main components of an inclusive democracy were already attempted in practice in Argentina: direct political democracy (which both Galafassi and Camil, wrongly identify with participatory democracy that, however, in the literature has been defined very differently, as a mix of direct and representative 'democracy'), economic democracy, and democracy in the social realm. Furthermore, as Galafassi reports, it seems that issues relating to an ecological democracy have also been raised. It is for this reason that Galafassi rightly concludes that these movements represent the emergence of embryonic mechanisms of direct democracy which 'even extend their demands towards a new integral vision of society, very close to the project of Inclusive Democracy'. This is particularly so, he continues, when the confederal element is not missing either since, as he put it, 'a new form of confederal democracy is emerging based on nearby communities organised into a territorial network at a local and regional scale.'[64]

Of course, all this does not mean that an explicit attempt for an inclusive democracy has already been made in Argentina or that people were even aware of the ID project, or, for that matter, of any other alternative project out of those that were proposed in the last 10-15 years (libertarian municipalism, Parecon etc). What is significant however is the kind of alternative institutions that people attempt to set up —whenever the opportunity arises— as the only way out of the present multidimensional crisis. To my mind, the resemblance of the attempted institutions in Argentina to those that are required for an inclusive democracy is striking. This is of course not surprising because the Argentinian people simply followed the same old tradition that manifested itself in almost every insurrectionary period: from the Parisian sections of the early 1790s to May '68. Everywhere, citizens' assemblies (complemented sometimes with workers' assemblies) emerged as the nuclei of the attempted alternative society.

However, it was not surprising that the present attempt in Argentina seems to be failing at the moment. As I attempted to show elsewhere[65], the transition to an ID could only be a long process motivated by a mass movement with a clear program and transitional strategy, which should start being implemented not just during a social explosion but long before, or after it. In other words, as I mentioned in section 3, an Inclusive Democracy can only be

established after a long transition process of establishing institutions of political and economic democracy and in tension with the present institutions, (i.e. after the majority of the population have tasted what a genuine democracy is and are prepared to fight for it) rather than after a popular eruption in an insurrection. The reason is that only after such a long transition period could the subjective conditions (i.e. the massive democratic consciousness) for such a democracy be created at a massive scale. Otherwise, the traditional mainstream parties would redirect popular anger towards insignificant and easily reversible reforms, as is the case in today's Argentina, or was in May 68, whereas the traditional left organisations would redirect it towards old Left politics which, as History amply has shown, will either end up to eventual marginalisation, or —in case of success— to new authoritarian regimes.

Still, the signs are encouraging. Not only in Argentina but in Brazil, Venezuela and elsewhere forms of direct democracy are emerging at a massive social scale lately. Although in the cases of Brazil and Venezuela, unlike Argentina, the original initiative came 'from above', sometimes the original initiative was transcended by action 'from below'. This is, for instance, the case of Venezuela, where Hugo Chávez's government encouraged limited forms of local democracy, with the obvious aim to enhance the governments' electoral base so that it could face a concerted attack (including an attempted coup!) by the American elite and its local support. However, the movement soon spread beyond the original government plans. Thus, on top of the government-sponsored neighborhood groups responsible for fixing deficient water supply systems, organising volunteer efforts at local schools, launching recycling campaigns and the like, many self-convoked 'citizen assemblies' have emerged in the poor barrios of Venezuela "to talk about everything from neighborhood problems to national politics and to create local planning councils where municipal authorities will be required to share decision-making with community representatives".[66] The popular aims with respect to these assemblies were made clear by Carlos Carles, co-founder of Radio Perola, a community station that has become an axis of local activism in the barrio of Caricuao: "We don't want a government, we want to govern. We want to decide what is done, when it's done and how it's done in our communities.[67]"

This is perhaps the best justification of the demand for a systemic change like the one proposed by the ID project!

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[1] See Takis Fotopoulos, "Globalisation, the reformist Left and the anti-globalisation "movement"", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001), pp. 233-280.

[2] See *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (July 1999), pp. 383-394.

[3] Cornelius Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 107.

[4] See e.g. Jonathan Cook, "A Jew among 25,000 Muslims", *The Guardian* (27/8/2003).

[5] For a classic description of the medieval free cities, *see* Petr Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid* (London: CBS. V & V, 1902), .

[6] It should be noted here that my recognition that Pericles had an understanding of 'the merely formal character of political rights when they are not accompanied by social and economic rights' could hardly be taken as implying that a demand for an inclusive democracy had already been made by Pericles, as Levin asserts.

[7] April Carter, *Authority and Democracy*, (Routledge, 1979) p. 13.

[8] see Takis Fotopoulos, "Towards a democratic conception of science and technology", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (1998), pp. 54-86.

[9] See T. Fotopoulos, "The Global 'war' of the transnational elite", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (July 2002), pp. 201-240.

[10] Takis Fotopoulos, "Transitional strategies and the Inclusive Democracy project", *Democracy & Nature,* Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 2002), pp. 17-62.

[11] See Fotopoulos, "The End of Traditional Antisystemic Movements", *Democracy & Nature,* Vol. 7, No. 3 (November 2001), pp. 415-456.

[12] See, Fotopoulos, "Class divisions today: the ID approach", *Democracy & Nature,* Vol. 6, No. 2 (July 2000), pp. 211-251.

[13] Murray Bookchin, *Post-scarcity anarchism,* (London: Wildwood House, 1974), p. 191.

[14] C. Castoriadis' introductory interview in *The Castoriadis Reader*, edited by David Ames Curtis, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 26-27.

[15] Fotopoulos, "Globalisation, the reformist Left and the anti-globalisation "movement"".

[16] Castoriadis' definition of autonomy in *Philosophy, Politics Autonomy* [(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 164] as autos-nomos: (to give to) oneself one's laws, is identical with my definition of it TID p. 179.

[17] see my exchange with David Ames Curtis on the differences between the Castoriadian project of autonomy and the ID project, *Democracy & Nature,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999), pp. 163-188.

[18] Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics Autonomy*, p. 174.

[19] David Ames Curtis (ed), *The Castoriadis Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 30.

[20] Ibid., p. 21.

[21] Ibid. p. 168.

[22] David Ames Curtis (ed), *The Castoriadis Reader*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p.407.

[23] Ibid. p. 406.

[24] Ibid. p. 29.

[25] Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics Autonomy*, p, 144.

[26] Ibid. p. 163.

[27] Ibid. p. 153.

[28] Ibid. p. 25.

[29] Ibid. p. 107.

[30] Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics Autonomy,* p. 31.

[31] Ibid. p. 36.

[32] see his exchange with me, *Democracy & Nature,* Vol. 5, No. 1 (March 1999).

[33] Cornelius Castoriadis, *World in Fragments,* trans. and ed. David Ames Curtis, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 37.

[34] ibid. p. 39.

[35] Castoriadis, *Philosophy, Politics Autonomy,* pp. 37-39.

[36] Ibid. p. 164.

[37] See also my article on classes in *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (July 2000).

[38] Even Meghnad Desai, a life-long socialdemocrat with Marxist inclination (and a Labour member

of the House of Lords!), has recently recognised the end of statist socialism in a forthcoming book under the meaningful title *Marx's revenge, The resurgence of capitalism and the death of statist socialism* (London: Verso, 2004).

[39] Ulrich Rippert, 'Top German official demands "more inequality"', *World Socialist Web Site* (22 November 2002).

[40] *World in Fragments*, p. 61.

[41] "Modern Capitalism & Revolution" in Castoriadis, *Political and Social Writings*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), Vol. 2, p. 293.

[42] *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, p. 88

[43] Ibid. p. 133

[44] *World in Fragments*, p. 59.

[45] Ibid. p. 68.

[46] See C.Mouffe, "Democratic Politics Today" in C. Mouffe (ed.) *Dimensions of Radical Democracy* (London: Verso, 1995 & 1992).

[47] Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy,* trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (New York: the Free Press, 1962).

[48] See e.g. Audrey Gillan, "Public backing for Sweden's private success", *The Guardian* (29/5/2001) and Denis MacShane, 'Europe's left only wins when it rejects the state', *The Guardian* (17/9/2002).

[49] See T. Fotopoulos, "The rise of new irrationalism and its incompatibility with Inclusive Democracy," *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 4, Nos. 2/3 (1998), pp. 1-49 and also, *Religion, Autonomy, Democracy: the rise of new irrationalism* (in Greek) (Athens: Eleytheros Typos, 2000).

[50] See T. Fotopoulos, "Democratic or "objective" liberatory ethics?", *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Nov. 2002), pp. 361-396.

[51] See Takis Fotopoulos, "Globalisation, the reformist Left and the anti-globalisation "movement"".

[52] Aristotle, *Politics*, IV, 13, 1297 b 5.

[53] Ibid. V, 8, 1308 b 30.

[54] Ibid. IV, 13, 1297 b 10.

[55] Mogens Herman Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the age of Demosthenes*, (Oxford: Blackwell,1991), p. 55.

[56] Ibid. p. 60.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Souvenirs* (1942 edition), p. 220.

[59] David Ames Curtis (ed) *The Castoriadis Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 408.

[60] See Cornelius Castoriadis, "La démocratie comme procédure et comme régime" in *La montée de l' insignifiance* (Seuil, Paris, 1996), pp. 221-241.

[61] See Cornelius Castoriadis, "The retreat from Autonomy: Postmodernism as generalised conformism" in *World in Fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 32-45.

[62] Takis Fotopoulos, "The Myth of postmodernity," *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 2001), pp. 27-76.

[63] See T. Fotopoulos, "Transitional Strategies and the Inclusive Democracy Project."

[64] It was entertaining indeed to see an interview being staged recently in the Znet empire in which an applauder of Parecon was interviewed by Michael Albert, in an obvious effort to demonstrate that the Argentinian assemblies supposedly represent 'early forms of workers and consumers councils' —the cornerstone of the Parecon model, [see Michael Albert and Ezequiel Adamovsky, "Argentina and Parecon. Michael Albert Interviews Ezequiel Adamovsky" (August 04,

2003), http://www.zmag.org/ZNETTOPnoanimation.html]. Thus, the neighborhood assemblies, which in fact discussed general problems affecting citizens —the clearest example of ID's demotic assemblies— were found by Adamosvsky to have elements of Albert's 'consumers councils' (!) whereas the factory assemblies were resembled to 'workers' councils', so that they could both fit the Procrustean bed of the Parecon model!

[65] See T. Fotopoulos, "Transitional Strategies and the Inclusive Democracy Project."

[66] Reed Lindsay, "Venezuela's slum army takes over," *The Observer* (August 10, 2003).

[67] Ibid.