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Common Sense

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Mexico Is Not Only Chiapas Nor Is the Rebellion in Chiapas Merely a Mexican Affair

In January 1994, in the south eastern state of Chiapas in Mexico, news of the Zapatistas armed revolt composed mainly of Indian peasants, travelled all over the world bringing about an explosion of interest and information on Mexico because the rebellion was automatically connected with the Mexican revolution.

In this text we undertake an analysis of the class struggles in Mexico since the beginning of the century up until now, which includes a critical presentation of the guerilla movement of the Zapatistas. Among last year's events, a presentation of the 'National Democratic Convention' was decided upon, not only because its character transcends the boundaries of Chiapas but also because it is indicative of the political direction of the class struggle. More than a year later nothing has been concluded. Whereas the Zapatistas still constitute a considerable force, the recent devaluation of the peso and the attempted military repression of the movement, has created a deeper crisis of class relations in Mexico.

The following analysis is from a viewpoint which goes beyond the outdated anti-imperialist distinctions of a 'First World' and a 'Third World'. The Capitalist International, the only class unfortunately that has the clearest class consciousness, has seen to that. This class wouldn't have won until now if it hadn't imposed itself on 'underdeveloped' and 'developed' countries simultaneously. Because to every privatization in West Europe there corresponds a new wave of immigrants from East Europe; to every temp worker there's a former 'priviliged' one and to every homeless person in North America there's a landless peasant in South America. It is against this class that the Chiapas ejidatarios rebel, and their struggle has a universal dimension which transcends south east Mexico. It's in fact the same struggle that takes place everywhere already, with different intensity and forms, against immiseration and alienation. If we have managed to show this, then we think we have contributed not only to the Chiapanecos' fight, but to our own.

The National Democratic Concention (Convention National Democratica-CND), San Cristobal, Chiapas - Aguascalientes, Lacandona Jungle, 6-9 August 1994.

'Zapata vive, la lucha sigue!'
'Zapata vive y la lluvia sigue!'

In June 1994 in their Second Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle, the EZLN addressed an invitation to the National Democratic Convention for the purpose of introducing propositions about a transitional government and a new constitution. EZLN's sub-commander Marcos intensified his letter-writing mania inviting Mexican personalities within the left and center-left spectrum. Due to the Zapatistas' appeal to 'Civil Society' the range of those who finally participated was quite big: non-government organisations in general, leaders of peasant and Indian organisations, members of 'independent parties', a few academics, union delegates, feminists, a few businessmen, lesbians, homosexuals, members of organisations in defense of the vote and naturally journalists or fake journalists (like myself). The organising committee of the CND consisted of Zapatistas delegates and various other organisations (the 'Caravan of the Caravans', the 'Chiapanecos Assembly for Democracy' etc with a dominant view in favour of the elections).

On Saturday 6th of August in San Cristobal Mesas-workshops were formed to discuss the 'peaceful transition to democracy, the elections, the formation of a National Project and the defense of the vote'. In spite of the great majority of supporters of the oppositional PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) and the prevalent tendency in favour of the elections there was a general distrust of the parties and a minority (1) against the elections and in favour of the formation of a National People's Assembly -a Transitional Government- consisting of peasants, workers and Indians.

Among the demands of the Mesas (to which the majority agreed) the following ones were included: Salinas' resignation, expulsion of members of the PRI (Patry of Institutional Revolution, the government party) from administrative posts, mobilisation against a possible electoral fraud, political trial of Salinas, electoral reform for the representation of the Indians and all the ethnic groups, recognition of the EZLN as a belligerent force, breaking up the system of National Security, non-assumption of office of any candidates in case of high abstention, expulsion of the army from the states of Chiapas, Guerrero amd Michoacan and satisfaction of the 11 demands of the EZLN. All were almost devoutly accepted by the Mesas. The same atmosphere of confusion, recrimination, vexation and euphoria that prevailed on Saturday evening in San Cristobal with thousands of people bustling in and out of the Mesas and discussing in circles in the streets while songs were heard (and tourists were complaining about the sudden lack of rooms) would prevail even more intensely in the jungle.

6 or 7 thousand people -in hundreds of buses- in the drive towards Aguascalientes (2) passed through Mexican army outposts and then through regions controlled by the Zapatistas. Swarms of clapping and cheering Indians could be seen everywhere along the road, many of those holding posters of Zapata and placards with slogans in favour of fair elections.

During the descent to the jungle enthusiasm gave way to exhaustion (the last ones to arrive in Aguascalientes had journeyed for about 24 hours) and then the excitement on first contacting the Zapatistas at their outpost. At last in Aguascalientes Fitzcarraldo's Ship came into view: for 28 days, 600 Zapatistas had constructed this gigantic amphitheatre, made of tree trunks and covered by a huge tent, surrounded by hundreds of smaller tents. Above the stage two Mexican flags were hanging, behind it the honoured guests were seated and the place was full of posters with subjects from the Mexican Revolution. There was a colourful and diverse crowd from elderly, veteran co-fighters of Emiliano Zapata's original army, to young punks, to contemporary armed Zapatistas scattered all over, to reporters armed with cameras; all in an atmosphere of confusion, exuberance, turmoil and comings and goings beneath the hot tropical sun. Angry protests were caused when a mural appeared on the stage depicting Marcos and Zapata on horseback shaking hands and beneath them Cardenas with the bishop of Chiapas Samuel Ruiz (3). Protests from many sides led to the withdrawal of the painting.

Around evening Marcos' appearence on stage set off an outburst of chanting: 'Marcos, our friend, the people are with you!', 'Transitional Government and a new constitution', 'Long live Ramona and Ana Maria' (women Zapatistas), 'Long live Self-government by the Indians', 'Let the National Convention be an electoral force' but by way of a reply: 'All against the electoral farce'. Songs about Zapata could be heard as well as the guevarist anthem of the 70's 'Dressed in olive green, politically alive, comrade, you haven't died, we'll take revenge for your death'. Marcos announced the presiding committee of the CND and called upon commander Tacho to speak, who declared that the EZLN give Aguascalientes over to the CND. He also presented the people's committees of the EZLN, the civil guards, Indian women, men and children with scarves on their faces and staves in their hands -one of the most touching moments of the Convention. Afterwards, Marcos presented the EZLN army, whose gun-barrels had white bands around them, indicating that 'these guns are not to confront the 'Civil Society', but paradoxically, they wish to become useless'. Marcos' speech, a mixture of sentimentalism, patriotism, poetry and populism was received reverentially and in dead silence by the audience. After exulting at the large CND attendance, Marcos went on: 'thanks to the EZLN having mobilized parts of society which had until recently been sunk in apathy and inability to get over their localisms', he made clear that the EZLN, '(do not expect from the CND) a civil arm... a civil pretext for war...or for submission...nor the dubious

honour of a historical vanguard, of the numerous vanguards that made us suffer... We expect from the CND the opportunity to search for and find those to whom we will hand over the flag that we found deserted and forgotten in the palaces of power... To struggle so that all Mexicans will recognize it as their own, to become the national flag again, your flag, companeros... We hope that there will be enough maturity at this CND, so that this place will not be converted into a terrain for settling internal accounts, something sterile and emasculated... We are moving aside but we are not leaving. We hope that the horizon will open up so that we will not be necessary anymore, we the dead since always, who have to die again in order to live. We hope that this CND will give us an opportunity, the opportunity we were denied by those who govern this country, to return to our subterranean life with dignity after we have fulfilled our duty. The opportunity to return to silence, to the night out of which we came, to the death we lived in, the opportunity to disappear in the same way we appeared, one morning, without a face, without future. To return to the depths of history, of the dream, of the mountains...'

Amidst a deluge of applause, Marcos left the stage giving the Mexican flag to Rosario Ibarra (president of the CND and the FNCR, National Front Against Repression, a leftist organisation). These moments of patriotic effusions were soon followed by a real storm; a tropical rain storm that swept over everything. Despite the witticisms subverting the original slogans: 'Zapata lives, the struggle goes on' becoming, 'Zapata lives, the rain goes on' -and the few brave ones who half-naked were sloshing about in the mud- it meant the sudden end of the first day of the CND in the jungle. The next day after several participants gave speeches that were no more than greetings and a minimal agreement on mobilizations against a possible election fraud was finalized, there followed Marcos' press conference. Confident like a pop star and evasive like a politician, he answered various questions ironically. He expressed again the EZLN's wish for a dignified peace and to make efforts to contact other guerilla armies in the country. To his question if he would take off his mask, Marcos replied, 'Yes, if you want it. You tell me'. The cries of 'NO!' confirmed that the Marcos symbol should remain masked in order to preserve the legend and, in no way, becoming an ordinary, recognizable mortal.

So, in this mish mash of people; in this 'Civil Society' in a festive and tense atmosphere somewhere between a rave-up and a political meeting; in this National Convention that wasn't really much of a convention at all, there actually was confirmed a vague and abstract will for 'change', 'democracy' and 'peace'. It was a symbolic gesture just before the elections. A manifestation of patriotism and reformism, contradictory expectations and general promises amidst the loud 'Viva!'.

From the Revolution (1910-1920) ...

> 'You take Revolucion to the end,
> turn right and you are on Reforma'.
> Mexican joke referring to the streets one
> takes to reach Downtown Mexico City.

At the end of the previous century the Porfiriato, Diaz's dictatorship, combined an expanding capitalist growth with an oligarchic-dictatorial state. Capital's dominance through domestic and foreign monopolies, the centralisation of economy and political power on a national scale caused the gradual disintegration of the old traditional, feudal structures. The new bureucrats and technocrats (the Positivists and Social Darwinists) provided the ideology necessary for the concentration of capital and the coordination of local big landowners with central political power.

Agriculture, subsumed by capital was creating an increasing class of rural proletarians consisting of landless peasants, unemployed or farm workers alongside peons and immiserated Indian communeros. On the other hand, small-scale land owners became increasingly disadvantaged with the onset of large-scale units of production. The working class, concentrated in the north because of the high degree of investment there, consisted of independent artisans, the main body of the industrial proletariat and a relatively better paid skilled section. The artisans taking one blow after the another over a period of time gradually united with the rest of the workers who, in their turn, took to strike action or more violent revolts which were ruthlessly crushed.

The edifice of the Porfiriato started to shake due to a multiform discontent reflecting different and conflicting interests which later took the form of an armed revolt. The conflict within the bourgeoisie between its (mainly northern) industrial-financial sector and the more traditional, local big landowners, a conflict which represented the antithesis of the bourgeois-democratic project to oligarchy and authoritarianism; the discontent of the petit-bourgeoisie in the face of the monopolies; the rage of the proletariat and the communeros and the ambitions of the intellectuals who were suffocated within the repressive regime were the basic reasons for the explosion which followed.

Emanating from the modern industrial-financial bourgeoisie, Madero came to power supported by Villa, his initial admirer, and Zapata. The latter, an uncompromising fighter for agrarian reform, faced with Madero's 'betrayal' (i.e. his loyal adherence to his class) called for the continuation of the revolution, issuing in November 1911, his Ayala Plan (4). Against General Huerta's dictatorship (1913-14) a loosely united front was formed consisting of three forces: Zapatistas in the south, composed mainly of ejidatarios or landless peasants with a communal social tradition, Villa's army in the north composed chiefly of petit-bourgeois and proletarians and the

Constitutionalists who represented the middle-classes, some landlords and even some proletarians and peasants who believed in their socialist propaganda (5). The Convention at Aguascalientes in 1914, where these three armies met, proved the impossibility of their alliance.

Beside the legendary figures of a controversial Villa, and a fervent Emiliano Zapata whose indomitable proletarian consciousness combined a romantic nationalism with faith in a democratic government which would make real the popular vision of revolutionary change and agrarian reform, the internationalist, anarcho-communism of Ricardo Flores Magon stands out. Starting as a liberal, Magon gradually formed his anarchist ideas (which for tactical purposes he did not openly declare until 1910) and tried to turn the political revolution into a social revolution. Organizing strikes and revolts, influencing and agitating amongst workers and peasants mainly in northern Mexico (and having taken over the northern part of the state of Baja California) the Mexican Liberal Party (the PLM) founded by Magon, not only ignited many land expropriations and seizures of the means of production but also gave such actions a clear communist perspective, as can be seen in the 1911 manifesto.

The outcome of the class war was determined by the alliance made between the powerful workers' union, the Casa del Obrero Mundial (espousing an anarcho-syndicalist and corporate socialist ideology) and the Constitutionalists in exchange for promises of financial support and the satisfaction of some demands of the workers. Among the motives of the workers' class alliance one cannot ignore their discontent with Zapatistas' religiosity and Villistas' brutality, whose increasing militarism had turned them into professional soldiers.

After the crushing of the Zapatistas, the Villistas and the PLM, the 1917 constitution crystallized the dominant nationalist, anti-imperialist and socialist/populist ideology of the post-revolutionary Mexican state (6). Some of its reformist articles which provided for anti-clerical measures, agrarian reform and labour rights had constituted part of the 1906 programme of the PLM. It was the triumph of the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie over the peasants and workers and, ever since, it would make use of the content of the revolution in its own interests.

The enslavement of the working class by the state through limited concessions inaugurated a long practice of populism combined with repression and submission to the state. Alongside a defeated peasantry and a crippled working class an expanding petit-bourgeoisie started forming which benefited from state priviliges. During the Revolution military men, bureaucrats, intellectuals and union leaders emerged, who later staffed the new state mechanism. This new bourgeois-bureaucratic state was legitimized with 'Revolution' as its ideological banner recuperating and distorting its content. 'Revolution' as a myth became the unifying ideology of the

state domination in the 20th century.

...To the Modern State

> 'We want a liberal, democratic and nationalist government...the concesssions to labour are granted within the economic possibilities of the capitalist sector'. Lazaro Cardenas

When the sound of the last revolutionary guns had died away, the Mexican state faced the double need of its reinforcement and capitalist development. The problem of controlling foreign capital (setting up the Banco de Mexico was the first act of co-operation between Mexican and foreign capital) and the class struggle that constantly intensified in the face of state manipulation, together with the corruption of the official labour leaders and the 1929 crisis, meant things couldn't wait any longer. The still unfulfilled promises of the Mexican Revolution threatened the legitimacy of the successive governments and the state in general as a vehicle of its ideology.

With Lazaro Cardenas' 'socialistic' rhetoric and populist practises, in 1934 Mexico enters the period of state-regulated capitalism, a strategy already in use in America and Europe. The necessity of reformism which meant concessions to peasants and workers, nationalisations of selected sectors, redefinition of the conditions of the imperialist intervention, discipline of the recalcitrant unproductive landlords and 'comprador' bourgeoisie heightened the 'popular' role of the state. At the same time it satisfied the interests of the modern bourgeoisie.

The 'politics of the masses' consolidated the corporate state that absorbed 'Civil Society'. The strengthened national political party (7) has acted ever since as a powerful administrative committee organizing and dividing society into separate constituencies that depend on it; class struggle became 'legalized' through the recognition of the labour movement as an official, national one: the powerful until today CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers) was formed. CNC (National Peasant Confederation) was also formed and the 'popular sector' of the party consisted of state employee unions, women's and youth organisations.

The consolidation of the democratic-capitalist ideology of the 'common interest' became possible through the creation of a climate of 'national unity' thanks to Cardenas' 'anti-imperialist' politics. This climate reached its height when the mainly American and English-controlled oilfields were expropriated in 1938. The limited agrarian reform laid the basis for state-regulated capitalist agriculture. Land redistribution (through the expropriation of many unproductive latifundias) and the granting of state credits aimed at aiding small private farms so that the national market could be expanded. However, the intention was the support of the largest and most

productive landholdings under state regulation. In 1940, at the end of Cardenas' presidency, his 'socialist' politics had produced the following results regarding agricultural production: over 60% of the peasants were either landless or owners of inadequate plots of lands or ejidatarios trying to compete with big owners of fertile lands, capital and technology. Ejidatarios were forced gradually to let their holdings to those big landowners and work the land on their behalf. This led to the flourishing of neolatifundismo precisely in those areas of agrarian reform.

In general, during Cardenas' period the basis of the modern state was laid blunting class conflicts through the combined social-patriotic politics of concessions and repression. Starting in this period, the practise of populism and corporativism would form a historical continuity on the state and ideological level that holds until now.

Between the Scylla of Capital and the Charybdis of Ideology

Cardenas' reforms and the modernization of capitalist development soon bore fruit. The twenty year period (1940-1960), just before the tumultuous appearance of the first threatening radical movements, is the one with the biggest and most rapid capital accumulation. The role of the state becoming more and more authoritarian and technocratic is crucial to this concentration of capital. Industrialization took a different course from the still colonized economies of Latin America (8).

With the 'Green Revolution' there begins the modernization of agricultural production, which increaces six-fold between 1940 and 1975. The programmes of the 'Green Revolution' (a capitalist rationalization) financed by the World Bank (and initially by the Rockfeller Foundation) expressed the state's need both to control the fragile social relations in the countryside and to organize a cheap food supply for the hordes of the proletarians in the cities. This process took place not only in Mexico but also in other countries where the agrarian question was vital (India for example). Initially, regions in the north were selected where 'revolutionary' landlords possessed vast quantities of land (10). A series of loans to pay for modern technological input (from irrigation to chemical fertilizers) caused not only the intensification of cultivation and the increase of productivity but also the replacement of traditional crops with new ones for export. The onerous terms of credits for the aquisition of the means of production led ejidatarios or minifundistas (small-scale landholders) to immiseration or to bankruptcy. Many got forced off their land, becoming part of the 'surplus population' known since the first enclosures in history and always present when 'agrarian reform' takes place, becoming suitable for multiple purposes: as a reserve army, as an industrial proletariat, or, as land labourers. Besides the forced land expropriations, which added to the possessions of the landlords, another usual practice was the

periodical parcelization of ejidos. This functioned as an absorber of social unrest since it maintained the idea of revolutionary land distribution.

On the whole the state's ability to present itself as a guardian of the ideas of the Mexican Revolution explains the relative political stability of the decades after the 'pioneer' Cardenas' presidency as well as the recuperation of the social movements. The revolutionary heritage of the peasants and the workers was taught through the state educational system and the state invoked it as its own mother and that's why it assumed the role of its defender (10). When the proletarians did not content themselves with state recognition of their contribution to the making of a 'powerful, independent' state and showed vigorously their ingratitude they were turned automatically into 'enemies of the Revolution' and 'anti-patriots'. However, the systematic propaganda of the national-democratic advances gave results: many peasants, workers, petit-bourgeois believed that the big trade unions CTM, CNC and the 'popular sector' really represented them.

Interchanging with the unitary ideology of national interest, class harmony and populism other divisive ideologies dominate Mexican society: Indianism (Indigenismo) and that patriarchical Mexican inclination towards machismo. Saint, whore and cheap worker are the three basic roles the Mexican woman is called upon to assume (whereas Mexican capitalism promotes feminism, at the same time, sexism is reinforced -a common practice everywhere).

Indianism, the official recognition of the Indian heritage, was one of the contradictory achievements of the Revolution. It holds a central place in Mexican nationalism (all too often the invocation of the Indian heritage is overestimated as against the dominant mestizo composition of the Mexican people or conflicts with the more conservative, pro-Spanish religious tendencies). Behind the hypocritical ideological mask of the 'national heritage', that runs through Mexican history, there lies the state effort to destroy and assimilate the Indian culture within the national commodity economy. Since 1948, INI (National Indian Institute) serves as a channel for the legalization of Indians' exploitation by caciques (11), bosses, recruiters of migrant labourers, moneylenders, merchants, landlords and their thugs. According to anthropologist Marcela Lagarde 'INI programmes are directed and planned by anthropologists who proclaim themselves to be for the Indian, but whose end is that he cease to be one' (see Cockroft, p. 147-148).

Los Olvidados: Decomposition and Recomposition of the Proletariat

Rapid industrialization and domestic immigration after 1950 gradually meant the urban proletariat assuming a central role in class struggle increasing its industrial share to 25% of the economically active population. Altogether, the total of salaried

workers rose from 46% in 1950 to 75% in 1982. With less than a quarter of wage labourers unionized and with the 'comparative advantage' of extremely law wages (only after wildcat strikes in 1974, did wages manage to exceed to a great extent their 1939 level, only to come tumbling down again after 1976) Mexican capitalism reproduces accumulation at one pole and misery at the other. The first wave of strikes between 1958 and 1962 mainly in the public sector (railways, petroleum) sparked resistance in other sectors (education, agriculture) and ridiculed various marxist drivel about an 'underdeveloped third-world' proletariat. It also forced international capital to invest in new sectors (the auto-industry) initially in Mexico City and then in the north -in the same way Detroit had been previously abandoned- when it confronted the workers' insurgence in the 70's reinforcing the industrial zone of the maquiladora camps (12).

Through compulsory or 'legal' land expropriations landless peasants swarm into the cities, particularly the capital. A vast lumpen-proletariat composed of unemployed, underemployed and temporary workers is constantly moving within the agricultural, industrial, commercial and service sectors. While this perpetual mobility brings on the one hand workers in the black economy closer to the unionized ones, on the other hand, it undermines the benefits of the better organized industrial proletariat.

Olvidados (the forgotten ones), those crowded in the 'lost cities' of Mexico City, in the colonias proletarias (in the larger metropolitan area of Mexico City half the population lives in these slums), work mainly in small owners' workshops, in hundreds of thousands small sweatshops assembling furniture, and making shoes, clothing etc. Capital controls them both through the supply of raw materials and the sale of the finished products. These workshops are more profitable for capital because the wages are extremely low and the splintering of the workers does not allow for any organized resistance. In 1970, the World Bank programmes 'Investments in the Poor' tried through credits to further integrate these neighbourhood workshops into monopoly capital.

The state role in the geographical concentration of this lumpen-proletariat and in the organization of its political behaviour (manipulating the leaders of community movements) was always vital: it regulated its local markets, it organized a phoney petit-bourgeois network of petty-trade and it provided for rudimentary social services (state-run cheap food stores, minimal health care, schemes of land and housing distribution to the homeless etc).

However, the subjective dimension of the recomposition of the proletarians must not be ignored. A general class culture is constantly confirmed either through riots or other dynamic mobilizations. A relatively recent example is Tepito slum, in the centre of Mexico City: after the earthquake in 1985 the inhabitants formed autonomous organizations, occupied their rented houses and forced the government to withdraw its development plans aimed at

the gentrification of the area and consequently their evacuation. Tepitanos, known for their outdoor festivals, their everyday practical refusal of work, their solidarity and their communal traditions proved that the colonias proletarias are sometimes disfunctional for the state. That's why when the recuperative practice comes to a deadlock, BARAREM arrives (paramilitary assault squad specialized in driving off 'land invaders'). (13)

Insurgencia Obrera - Workers' Insurgency 1973-1977

At the end of the 60's, a student/youth rebellion began expressing a belief (to the very letter) in the nationalist ideology taught in schools and propagandized by the PRI. Zapata, Magon and Cardenas became symbols of a 'national change' which was made materially visible only in the form of statues and busts in plazas everywhere. The end of the student democratic movement came with the massacre in the Plaza of Three Cultures in Mexico City on the 2nd of October in 1968. The participation of many proletarians and peasants in that drenched in blood demonstration (perhaps there were about 500 dead protesters) was an indication of the insurgency that was soon to follow. Guevarism was also a very widespread ideology at the beginning of the 70's and was the basic inspiration behind many urban guerilla groups which by 1975 had been broken up.

Despite some limited populist reforms during the early Echeverria presidency (1970-1976) the industrial proletariat started turning against the state union leaders, the so-called charros. We are talking about relatively well-paid, militant workers concentrated massively in state industrial sectors, that formed the reformist 'Democratic Tendency' within the CTM. During this period the first independent unions emerged chiefly in the automobile sector (some of which were recuperated in the early 80's and their leaders became like a red rag to a bull for the coming radical rank'n'file movement). A series of wildcat strikes spread a spirit of struggle, on the one hand, in rural Mexico igniting land occupations and efforts at unionizing farm workers, and on the other hand, in metropolitan barrios inciting the marginal proletariat to angry mobilizations. In this period, with the 'Democratic Tendency' acting as its spearhead, the workers' movement was hit by the inconsistency of its militancy vis-a-vis their respect for the 'nation and the presidential institution'. Also the army repression, the lay-offs and the austerity measures imposed by the state and the IMF (through a loan in 1976) and the 100% devaluation of the peso, meant the workers' movement died down only to give way to something new. On the other hand, the PRI was forced to make political constitutional reforms in 1976 (legalizing the CP, increasing minority seats in the Chamber of Deputies to 100 and permitting opposition parties to participate in national elections) in its efforts to confine class struggle within the political arena and thus to disarm it.

The Unbearable 'Classnes' of Debt: Debt Crisis as a Crisis of Class Relations

Mexico was not of course the only field of class struggle in the 70's. In America and Europe (the eastern one included) wildcat strikes as well as the increasing refusal of work brought about the end of Keynesianism. The fuel of capital's counter-attack was oil, the so-called 'energy crisis' of 1973. The planned increase in the price of oil paved the way for the simultaneous decomposition of the working class (the curtailment of the welfare state, wages cuts, unemployment) and recomposition of terrestrial capital accumulation (profitting energy multinationals, finance capital and the oil-exporting states). The recycling of petrodollars financed later the capitalist strategy of automation and introduction of high technology in industries in the west, and what is of importance here, petrodollars were the capital for the loans that generated later the debts (14).

In the same period in Mexico capital flows in (through loans) for industrial expansion and the policing of the proletariat, especially after the massacre in 1968. The discovery of oil in Chiapas was of immense importance; Mexico becomes the Arabia of the Caribbean.

At the beginning of the 80's the resurgent class struggle in Mexico took on a more anti-state and anti-party character. Along with the loans working class demands for a slice of oil revenues increased. In early 1981, for the first time for many years, real wage hikes were gained that consequently led to a wider radicalization. Tensions within independent unions intensified and the official union leaders (charros) tried to outflank, though only verbally, the workers' militant demands. Threatened by the pressure of a rank'n'file movement they begged capitalists to give in stressing the importance of their role. 'If we change tactics or abandon the workers to their luck, employers won't have time to realize what will happen: imagine a mob let loose on the streets, out of control', says Velasquez, CTM boss, in March 1982. Just a few months later, in August 1982, the change in international capital's strategy would dispel his apprehension.

What's widely known as 'monetarism' or 'Thatcherism' is a capitalist restructuring not based on the previous decade's 'energy crisis' but on the 'debt crisis'. Interest rate increases, the investment strike and austerity measures in western economies bringing about a downturn in world trade as well as a decline in the price of oil after 1979, caused Mexico's debt (together with other countries) to increase astronomically. The Mexican government declared a moratorium on the repayment of debts inaugurating the international 'debt crisis'. The role of the IMF from Africa to Asia becomes decisive: the vicious circle of loans and debts (new loans for the repayment of the old ones) is accompanied with the World Bank's

'Structural Adjustment Programmes' which is the more decent name of the restructuring of class relations through privatizations, unemployment, austerity and immiseration. Between 1982 and 1984, 66 countries of the so-called Third World agreed to austerity programmes imposed by the IMF with a pretext about the 'restoration of the balance of payments'. In essence it is a new political strategy for the reorganization of the relations between international capital and nation-states and the international decomposition of the proletariat. The 'debt crisis' becomes a functional means for the control of national economies and capitalist discipline. The case of Mexico is a typical example, where the 'debt crisis' caused a chain reaction: IMF intervention; the implementation of austerity programmes, to which the PRI technocrats adhered eagerly; severe cutbacks of the welfare state and encouraging the growth of the maquiladoras zones. This last one helped many north American industries transfer to the south causing the decomposition of both the Mexican and the American proletariat (for example, General Motors in December of 1991 planned to fire thousands of its American workers while at the same increasing the number of its workers in the maquiladora zone, blackmailing its remaining American workforce into accepting longer hours and lower wages).

The integration of Mexican capital with international capital imposes a restructuring of class relations and proves that the 'debt crisis' is in effect a productive crisis and therefore, not an obstacle to capitalist development. Debt repayment which is presented as the objective is nothing more than an excuse for an attack on working class struggles and the violent restoration of self-sacrificial ethics in favour of 'the national cause', starting, for example with the donation of 1% of workers' salaries to the government, as the CTM asked for in 1982 in chorus with some leftist parties. This practice characterizes the entire 80's decade until today blackmailing the consent to undermining the welfare state, to unemployment and privatizations, all packaged as solutions to the national problem'.

The Theology of Neoliberalism

In the 80's, the prevalent technocratic PRI fraction implemented the IMF-dictated 'Structural Adjustment Programmes' to the letter. Over 500 state corporations were privatized and until the early 90's less than 400 had remained under state administration. Some of the most important moments of capital's assault were the subjugation of the independent union at Uramex (state uranium corporation) in 1984, the closure of DINA-Renault in 1986 (after strikes against its privatization), lay-offs at the state oil corporation Pemex, the sale of the state telephone company Telemex, the restructuring of the textile industry... The two sectors of particular importance for the state are the automobile industry in the north (which presents the most rapid development worldwide) and oil in the south. What is

notable about the class struggle during the 80's and the early 90's is the emergence of a young unskilled proletariat, not only because it became the main prey of restructuring plans but because of its struggle within some independent unions against the leadership. In Volkswagen, in 1992, a rank'n'file movement threw out the contract signed by the leadership of their independent union with management which had provided for new flexible work relations. A strike followed which after one month was finally defeated. The management had fired all 14,000 workers only to take them back on again minus 1,500 (who, 'accidentally', were the most militant ones) having managed to impose even more unfavourable conditions.

In an attempt to recuperate and check the resurgent movements Salinas' government introduced a policy of concertation (reconciliation) tempting some independent unions to return to the CTM, having substituted some 'particularly' corrupt charros, but resorting to violence as well, perhaps more than it wished to.

According to the same practice of recuperation and control, PRONASOL (National Programme of Solidarity) was introduced in the late 80's funded by the World Bank and through the sale of Telemex and other former state corporations. This model of 'restructuring with a human face' provides sums of money for cheap food, loans to peasants and women's micro-companies, funds for schools, university scholarships, property titles to urban squatters, construction of hospitals and funding infrastructure projects (roads, electrification, dams, draining of lakes etc). Especially Chiapas in 1993 received more than 100 million dollars in grants. Apart from PRI's electoral benefits through this 'decentralizing' methodology, the 'participatory' character of these projects was promoted -projects virtually creating the necessary infrastructure paving the way for modern capitalist development in accordance to NAFTA- whereby poor peasants and workers are forced to work at a minimum cost to the state, thereby temporarily alleviating the most painful consequences of capitalist restructuring. Through PRONASOL, a wide spying network was also organised to immediately deal with any possible agrarian movements as it was practised through previous World Bank programmes (e.g. PIDER, c/f next section). In general it's part of a long-standing tradition of recuperation/exploitation by the Machiavellians of the PRI -these scientists of manipulation and repression.

The course taken by the PRI integrating the Mexican economy with international capital undermines its own ideological legitimacy: in 1992, article 27 of the constitution, which protected, inter alia, the right to possess a holding on communal land, the ejidos, was modified. This modification of one of the most representative outcomes of the Mexican Revolution intensifies the ever constant proletarianization of the peasantry bringing with it the new enclosures.

Rural Mexico and the New Enclosures

'Banco Rural is our patron (boss). We're the workers
and we don't even get a wage or have a labour union'.
a group of ejidatarios in Michoacan, 1981

Within the peasantry, the ejidatarios take the brunt of the assault of capitalist restructuring and are at the centre of class antagonism (setting in motion, now with the Zapatistas, an organized armed struggle). Ejidos are communal lands, mostly Indian, belonging to the community and the village (the pueblo). Their farming is collective -or was so formerly (15). This ancient Indian communal system (in which the collective cultivation, irrigation, harvesting and the widespread mutual aid was a rule) existed before colonialism and survived within the context of feudalism which was transplanted from Europe. The ejidos were small tracts of land on conquistadores' estates and out of the latter, throughout the generations, creole landowners (the hacendados) emerged who increasingly encroached on large parts of Indian land turning the ejidatarios into peons. The communal system continued to exist after Independence and the Mexican Revolution but, on the other hand, the number of rancheros -the independent small-scale farmers- increased, too. The ejidatarios or communeros were the social base of the Zapata movement, a source of inspiration for Magon and a reference point for Kropotkin in 'Mutual Aid'.

Article 27 of the 1917 constitution protects communal land and forbids ejidos' alienation and mortgage. This article also provides that it is within the discretion of the state to nationalize the lands. It authorizes all Mexican states to set a maximum limit to the amount of land owned by an individual or a co-operative. Moreover it protects private land. Since the beginning of the century, the ejidos were already divided into family holdings (today, less than 10% is collectively cultivated). Given the expansion of the capitalist agricultural production with the help of all governments, capitalist competition, the lack of technology, debts, the brutal force of the landowners' private armies and state compulsion (through loans or 'modernization' programmes) the dwindling of the communal land is easily explained.

The various agrarian reforms have left the ejidatarios and the minifundistas with less than 30% of the cultivable land, mostly arid and less fertile. Of course, the official accounts raise the number to 43%. Today more than 80% of those who cultivate the 25,000 ejidos are, at the same time, self-employed, proletarians working as day-labourers for landlords, wandering about the country looking for a job, often forced into domestic migration or going abroad. At the same time there is a permanent rural proletariat that constitutes 12% of the workforce in the countryside.

The 'Green Revolution' in the south was relatively delayed compared with the north. Until the 70's, the plan for the south was

not development but maintaining less modern social relations whereby landlords were traditionally more interested in primary accumulation than pursuing one on an extended scale -rather reminiscent of the hacendados of the past century- and a mass of farm-labourers, peones, ejidatarios or small holders, often lived in abject poverty.

During the 70's, the World Bank initiated the 'Investments in the Poor' project. The PIDER programme (the Integrated Programmes for Rural Development) established big agri-businesses, using peasant labour and financial technical input. 'Traditional' Indian smallholders were subordinated to capital through a series of loans and the enforced cultivation of particular crops ready for cheap food processing for export. Their inability to pay off the debts led to the reduction of their land, while on the other hand they had to intensify their subsistence farming (16).

During the 80's, new World Bank programmes (LDA, SAM) approved by the state union of peasants (CNC) led to further expropriations of the ejidos by the large agri-businesses via promotion of the 'collaboration' between landlords investing capital in the means of production and ejidatarios providing land and labour.

In the early 90's the most striking feature of rural Mexico is proletarianization and the simultaneous maintenance of subsistence farming and self-employment. Most ejidatarios cultivate their own land to sustain themselves, or on behalf of rentiers and work at the same time as land-labourers or engage in domestic handicraft. They are virtually proletarians disguised as peasants. However, the reform of article 27 in 1992 shows that even this state of semi-proletarian employment does not satisfy capital's demands. The ejidos, only in theory belonging to the ejidatarios, are now virtually expropriated (17). With the acceptance of the production norms set by NAFTA, even the memory of the slogan 'The land to the tiller!' must be wiped out. The enclosures, which, according to Marx, constituted the basic process of primary capital accumulation marking the starting point of capitalism in England through forced land expropriations aiming at 'liberating' the peasants from the means of production and thus becoming 'free' wage workers, are still continuing. The new expropriators, the accountants of the IMF and the PRI, under the pretext of the repayment of the debts, dispossess the peasants of communal land rendering them landless and intensifying capitalist exploitation.

However, the state and capital wouldn't have been able to impose their control without the collaboration of caciquismo, the traditional system mediating social relations in the countryside. Caciques were the Indian leaders who cooperated with the colonialists. Nowadays, whether Indians or mestizos, they are usually political leaders or local magnates, intermediaries between the state and the peasants. The latter consider them as 'capable' leaders, 'servants of the people', and the caciques, giving out loans

or doing 'favours' using paternalistic and populist means, manage through political patronage and public relations to defuse or divert class antagonisms, obstructing the explosion of class consciousness and thus fostering state tutelage. Race often takes precedence over class (Indians against mestizos) sharpening internal antagonisms among the poor which are often worked on through the mediation of the caciques. Many agrarian movements and organizations promoting this ideology of 'popular interest' ended up as arms of the state, through the co-optation of their charismatic leaders, who took advantage of their representative power over the peasants.

More Facts on the State of Chiapas

Chiapas differs from the rest of Mexico only in the degree of poverty afflicting the ejidatarios and the minifundistas. Poverty worsened due to the state development programmes introduced to exploit the natural resources of the state (timber, oil). On the other hand, since the mid-60's, 150,000 landless Indians (Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Chol, Sekema and Tojolabal) were allowed to settle and they were given the right to cultivate land in the Lacandona jungle. These tracts of cleared forestland were later bought or forcetaken by the rich landlords and the ranchers, or abandonded by the Indians themselves because the soil was unsuitable for long term cultivation.

The expansion and intensification of cattle ranching, logging and oil exploration in the 70's aggravated the competition for land and tens of thousands of peasants were pushed off their holdings and were turned into land-labourers. The situation worsened since the landlords hired temporary land-labourers from Guatemala, with even lower wages (especially in the mid-80's with the arrival of 80,000 Guatemalan refugees).

Efforts at social organization and resistance have been made by the church, inspired by Liberation Theology, and by a broad, rank'n'file union movement of teachers, the hijos de campesinos , the children of the peasants. In 1989 a decree banned forest exploration and the government eliminated coffee subsidies -just two other causes that added to Chiapas' increasing social tension. The implementation of PRONASOL didn't really ease things, although Chiapas served as a model for this 'poverty alleviation' programme.

NAFTA, GATT and WTO:
Just What is Behind these Jarring Acronyms?

Perhaps nowadays we are closer to the verification of Marx's theory about 'the immiseration of the working class', 'the universal competition among workers', 'the expansion of the world market', 'the mobility of the capacity to labour and the fluidity of capital', especially if we examine what the above-mentioned initials mean.

GATT and NAFTA's declaration of the 'liberalization of trade' allows in other words, capital's unlimited liberty of movement and

increased political control. Gatt, like the World Bank and the IMF is a Bretton Woods institution. Bretton Woods was the post second world war meeting place in 1944, of capital's representatives from the US, Britain, France and the USSR. Its intention was to coordinate efforts to avoid crises like the one in 1929 and inter-imperialist wars. GATT, formalized in 1948, has been modified a lot since then and effectively functions in more than 100 countries. The 8th round of the Negotiations took place in Uruguay in 1986 adding to GATT provisions which were rather more than simple tariff reductions. They impose rules which override national laws that regulate domestic markets and labour (environmental restrictions, collective bargaining, agricultural products subsidies) considering them as 'trade barriers'. The multinational corporations enjoy even more favourable terms for investing in countries where labour costs are lower and the environmental laws less restrictive.

NAFTA eliminates state subsidies for agricultural products and it is estimated that in Mexico 2 to 12 million jobs in agriculture will be lost, which will add to the migratory flow northwards. NAFTA (now effective between Canada, US and Mexico and intended to include many Latin American and Asian countries in the future) is virtually completing the process of global capital integration. Side agreements were made to give NAFTA a democratic facade: there were formed trinational labour and environmental commissions of state bureaucrats, charged with the settlement of disputes regarding the implementation of NAFTA provisions. However, labour laws concerning collective bargaining, the right to strike and unionize are not subject to these commissions' jurisdiction.

In this rock bottom race, capital will flow into Mexico as surely as the deindustrialization of America will continue (especially regarding car, textile and food industries). The PRI has already paved the way for capital's welcoming reception through the dismantling of the welfare state, unemployment, flexible work relations and the recent devaluation of the peso.

This devaluation, that took place a few days after the deployment of the Zapatistas in 38 communities in Chiapas, cannot be explained irrespectively of the fear of class struggle spreading in other areas of Mexico, and above all it is essentially connected with the general crisis in the country as we have described it so far. Monetary issues are nothing but the mystified form of social issues regarding production and wages. Capital is cutting wages on a national scale by devaluating the currency. This move is at the same time defensive and offensive. Offensive, because wage reductions and the further privatizations demanded as precondition for new loans, plus a 40% increase in interest rates which will bring about the collapse of 30% of small and medium-size businesses, aim at creating better conditions for future investments. At the same time, the myth is spreading that state coffers are empty and that 'sacrifices are necessary' for the repayment of the new loans.

More than a year after the implementation of NAFTA in Mexico, the

process of restructuring is intensifying. 99% of the strikes in 1994 were declared either non-existant or illegal and in many cases lay-offs followed, mostly in the car, textile, iron and coal industries and in the maquiladoras sector.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is aiming at 'achieving a greater coherence in global economic policy-making', according to its founding document (1986), along with the World Bank and the IMF. Having a 'legal personality' the WTO will ensure the conformity and the integration of national economies within the global one according to the GATT rules.

Even talking about 'national economic planning' is difficult since what is known as the Nation-State undergoes a serious crisis caused by the agreements and institutions of the Capitalist International. The expansion of the commodity economy -as a result of the defeat of class struggles over the previous decades- brings about decomposition of an intense kind for the Mexican and American proletariat and, in the future, (if it hasn't already) could result in capitalism forcing the abolition of borders, undermining the Nation-State. However, this undermining is inevitably damaging the representative capacities of the political bureaucracies. For example the PRI has not remained in power for 66 years as an elected representative of capital, but as an elected representative of 'Civil Society', of the 'Mexican nation'. While pretending to be powerless to oppose the IMF and the World Bank it is forced to deflate its own nationalist blustering, to undermine its own nationalist foundation, to repeal gradually the constitution, the very source of its legitimacy. As a guardian of the 'achievements' of the Mexican Revolution (in reality, the defeat of the peasants and workers as they themselves found out later, at the same time as some rights and demands were statutorily secured) and the populist measures of Cardenas, the PRI should seek the consent of 'Mexican citizens' posing as providing for the 'common interest' (18). Yet being forced to do this in ways less and less persuasive -especially since the days of the 'debt crisis' and now with NAFTA- it is causing increasing disaffection. Within the PRI, the dominant technocratic faction, oriented towards integrating Mexican with global capital, is already being attacked by those factions hesitant about innovation; those that are 'traditional', 'corrupt' and 'backward'. The assasination of Colosio, who was in charge of PRONASOL, was followed by the assasination of Massieu, the general secretary of PRI -both close associates of the former president, Salinas.

Amidst these 'sordid family quarrels' as Marx described inter-capitalist antagonisms, an uprising that started more than a year ago is continuing, carrying with 'the wind picking up from below', all its weaknesses.

The Zapatistas Without a Myth

The difficulty of analysing a movement like the Zapatistas is not only due to the fluidity of the situation in Chiapas. The very meaning of their words and tactics was gradually unfolding before our eyes as we were trying to connect it with their strategy and Mexican reality in general.

As a national-liberation army, with their First Declaration from Lacandona Jungle in December 1993, they declared war on the Mexican government ready to advance to the capital claiming, as Indians and Mexicans at the same time, their historical continuity with all national and popular struggles since Colonialism. They published then the 'Revolutionary Laws of the Liberated Territories', their social and political programme. After the truce agreed by them and the national army on the 12th of January 1994, they sat down at the 'dialogue' table with the government presenting their 34-points-demands with an emphasis on political demands of a national character. In mid-March they walked out of the negotiations publishing their Second Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle, in which, addressing the 'Mexican people', they proposed a National Democratic Convention for the submission of 'propositions about a transitional government and a new constitution'.

The PRI under the pressure of the EZLN and the class struggle it had sparked off, suspended the Minister of the Interior and the governor of Chiapas and made a kind of electoral reform allowing for the presence of foreign observers during the elections held on the 21st of August. According to the official electoral results the PRI received 48% of the vote, the PRD 16% and the right-wing PAN 26%. In Chiapas, Eduerdo Robledo Rincon of the PRI 'won' with 51% of the vote and the PRD-supported Amando Avendano followed with 34% having adopted the EZLN's 11-points. After the PRI's electoral victory, the EZLN denounced the fraud and called on people to engage in civil disobedience and mobilize in peaceful protest. Avendano formed a parallel government in December supported by a large part of the peasants in Chiapas, the EZLN themselves and the majority of the National Democratic Convention, which at its second meeting in October, demanded the termination of the PRI government. Bishop Ruiz formed CONAI (National Commission for Mediation) in the same month to start new negotiations while land occupations in Chiapas by dozens of peasants' organizations intensified. On the other hand, the police as well as the big landowners' 'white guards' violently evicted people from occupied areas. On the 19th of December, the EZLN advanced over a wide part of Chiapas occupying 38 municipalities only to return again to the jungle. The national army, after having already tightened the noose around the zone liberated by the Zapatistas since autumn 1994, invaded it in mid-February 1995 in order to arrest their leaders. After large solidarity demonstrations in Mexico

City and lest class struggle should extend beyond Chiapas' boundaries, the army curtailed its advance and the government announced it was withdrawing its proclamation, characterizing the EZLN's leaders as 'outlaws' and that it was ready to start negotiations. Despite opposition to the hardline policy and the army repression, the army's presence remained suffocating and when it deployed terrorist tactics many peasants took refuge in the jungle. In the abandoned villages the government settled poor and landless peasants from other areas. Up till now the situation is still explosive and uncertain...

What we're attempting here is a critical presentation and assessment of the movement avoiding the trap of radical journalism or being just another uncritical solidarity committee. To anyone hastening to accuse us of callousness because of the escalation of the Mexican governments' violence, we will retort that our point of view leaves behind an over-emotional approach that forbids thought, as well as a temporary fascination with just another case, the Zapatistas this time, which will move us for a while to pass onto something else later. We want to approach class struggle from an internationalist angle. We try to analyse how it is mediated by abstract democratic politics and what are the obstacles the insurgents themselves put in their way. Precisely when class struggle becomes intense one must attempt a critique that leaves behind glorification and uncritical identification. This is the best contribution to a rebellion that simply cannot be confined within Chiapas' or Mexico's boundaries. So, let's get down to the essentials:

The EZLN constitutes now the most organised political form of class struggle in Mexico and has helped in an explosion of land occupations in Chiapas and to resurgence of antagonism around the social question in this state. There is a great tradition of peasant movements in Mexico that's led to this outburst and, of course, it's not down to the intelligence of the EZLN's much publicized leaders, Marcos or Tacho, who have become the idols of leftists, 'progressive thinkers' and the mass media. Since Colonialism many Indian guerilla movements (Mayas in Yucatan, Yopes in Guerrero, Chichimeca in the north, Yaquis in Sonora, Mixtec in Oaxaca, Tzeltal in Chiapas, Huasteca in Veracruz, Hidalgo and San Luis Potosi) resisted land seizures, and thus becoming slaves or wage labourers, regionally rather than nationally. During the Mexican-American war resistance was conducted with guerilla tactics by agrarian and worker movements, whose aims ranged from social banditry, land takeovers to free peasant communities. After the Mexican Revolution, in the mid-40's until 1962, Ruben Jaramillo's movement in the state of Morelos -once Zapata's co-fighter and member of the CP- propagated 'Land and Liberty' by deed. In the early 60's guevarist marxists, peasants, workers, intellectuals, artists and liberal politicians rallied around the agraristas, peasant militants demanding land reform, forming MLN (Movement for National Liberation) for the revitalization of the Mexican

Revolution. Later, many peasants, ex-members of the MLN organized a guerilla army in Guerrero under the leadership of the teacher Vasquez. In the 70's dozens of urban and peasant guerilla groups emerged, mainly of guevarist ideology (the 'Party of the Poor' of Lucio Cabanas etc) and now several armed peasant movements are active in rural Mexico (in November 1993 a meeting of 52 armed groups took place in Guerrero under the auspices of the 'Guerilla General Coordinate'!).

One of the basic reasons that the Zapatistas as a guerilla movement monopolize attention and sympathy, apart from the coverage they get by the media, is the re-adjustment of their former guevarist ideology and the adoption of the dominant, nowadays, democratic pluralistic ideology:

'The EZLN was born having as points of reference the political military organizations of the guerilla movements in Latin America during the sixties and seventies...political-military structures with the central aim of overthrowing a regime and the taking of power by the people in general...(the indigenous people) needed military instruction, and we needed the support of a social base...', says Marcos in his interview by the Mexican anarchists Amor y Rabia and goes on 'We are proposing a space, an equilibrium between the different political forces in order that each position has the same opportunity to influence the political direction of this country...This is why we propose democracy, freedom and justice -justice in order that certain material conditions are satisfied so that people have an opportunity to participate in the political life of the country...we are talking about a democratic space where the political parties, or groups that aren't parties, can air and discuss their social proposals'.

However, he adds enigmatically '...We are saying that yes, we do have our idea of how the country should be', something that is repeated in their Second declaration '...the EZLN has a vision about the country. The EZLN's political maturity as the expression of the feelings of part of the nation lies in that it does not wish to impose its vision on the country'. Trying to guess what this vision is, is quite pointless, so let's see something more unequivocal by EZLN, a part from their 'Revolutionary Laws of the Liberated Territories'. According to their 'Revolutionary Agrarian Law':

'...Third: All poor-quality land in excess of 100 hectares and all good-quality land in excess of 50 hectares will be subject to the revolutionary agricultural law. The landowners whose lands exceed the aforementioned limits will have the excess taken away from them and they will be left with the minimum permitted by this law. They may remain as small landholders or join the cooperative peasants' movement, peasant societies, or communal lands.

Fourth: Communally-held land and the land of popular cooperatives will not be subject to agrarian reform, even though they exceed the limits mentioned in the third article of this law.

Fifth: The lands affected by this agrarian law will be distributed to the landless peasants and the agricultural labourers who thus

request it as collective property for the formation of cooperatives, peasant societies or agricultural production/livestock collectives. The affected lands should be worked collectively.

Sixth: The collectives of poor, landless peasants and agricultural labourers, men, women, and children without land title, or who have land of poor quality, will have the right to be the first to request land.

Seventh: In order to better cultivate the land for the benefit of the poor peasants and the agricultural labourers, the expropriation of large estates and agricultural/livestock monopolies will include the expropriation of means of production such as machinery, fertilizer, stores, financial resources, chemical products and technical expertise. All of these means should pass into the hands of the poor peasants and agricultural labourers, with special attention given to groups organised in cooperatives, collectives and societies...

Tenth: ...When a region doesn't produce some product, it will trade justly and equally (sic) with another region where it is produced. Excess production can be exported to other countries if there is no national demand for the product.

Eleventh: Large agricultural businesses will be expropriated and passed to the hands of the Mexican people, and will be administered collectively by the workers of those businesses...

Sixteenth: The peasants that work collectively will not be taxed. Nor will the ejidos, cooperatives or communal lands be taxed. From the moment that this revolutionary agrarian law is implemented, all debts...are forgiven'.

Such an agrarian programme -the most radical piece EZLN has published until now- does not oppose private property nor market economy and put in the overall context of the 'Revolutionary Laws' which provide for:

– respect for a 'freely elected' representative government,

– co-management of prices and wages,

– stocks to workers in proportion to the number of years they have worked,

– nationalizations of unproductive industries and businesses,

– dual power, with the Zapatistas as self-proclaimed supervisors of the revolutionary process, its participatory, social-democratic character appears more clearly.

In juxtaposition, we will remind the anarchists and libertarians who rushed into embracing EZLN uncritically, Magon's anarcho-communist programme, and in particular some excerpts from PLM's Manifesto of 23rd of September 1911 about generalized expropriation (19):

> 'Thus humanity remains divided into two classes whose interests are diametrically opposed -the capitalist class and the working class...Between these two social classes there cannot exist any bond of friendship or fraternity, for the possessing class always seeks to perpetuate the existing economic, political and social

system which guarantees it tranquil enjoyment of the fruits of its robberies, while the working class exerts itself to destroy the iniquitous system and institute one in which the land, the houses, the machinery of production and the means of transportation shall be for the common use... Expropriation must be pursued to the end, at all costs, while this grand movement lasts...acts of expropriation must not be limited to taking possession of the land and the implements of agriculture alone. There must be a resolute taking possession, of all the industries by those working in them, who should bring it about similarly that the lands, the mines, the factories, the workshops, the foundries, the railroads, the shipping, the stores of all kinds and the houses shall be in the power of each and every one of the inhabitants, without distinction of sex... Everything produced will be sent to the community's general store, from which all will have the right to take what their necessities require, on the exhibition of proof that they are working at such and such an industry. The human being aspires to satisfy wants with the least possible expenditure of effort, and the best way to obtain that result is to work the land and the other industries in common. If the land is divided up and each family takes a piece there will be grave danger of falling anew into the capitalist system... Of course there will be enough for each to have his own house and a ground plot for his own pleasure... Let each, according to his temperament, tastes, and inclinations choose the kind of work that suits him best, provided he produces sufficient to cover his necessary wants and does not become a charge on the community... It is for you, then, to choose. Either a new governor -that is to say, a new yoke- or life-redeeming expropriation and the abolition of all imposition, be that imposition religious, political or of any other kind'.

Despite its reformist, social-democratic character, the EZLN's agrarian programme is opposed to Chiapas' big landowners, as well as to the strategy of international capital, since communalism, small-scale ownership or nationalizations (especially giving NAFTA's existence) are obstacles in its way. In this law, as well as in the EZLN's other laws about women's equality, labour, industry and commerce, the explosive potential of social revolution is inherent in an alienated form, and however limited to Chiapas and to the ejidatarios, this revolt expresses the universal demand of the uprooted individual separated from true community, human nature.

Deprived of human community by the Mexican state and international capital through the New Enclosures, the ejidatarios reaffirm community anew occupying land and expropriating the means of production -something they did before the EZLN's existence and now with the help of the latter's armed struggle, carry on doing so even more dynamically. If we consider that the New Enclosures constitute an attack against the communal control of the

means of subsistence, then, they are not aimed only at Chiapas' ejidatario or generally the peasants of the so-called 'Third World'. They affect the 'First World' as well, intensifying the mobility of labour, fostering emigration and causing social-democracy to retreat almost to the point of capital's total domination. In this respect, the rebellion in Chiapas, 'the expropriation of the expropriators' has a universal dimension that transcends the local social uprising of the semi-proletarian peasants. However, at the same time, while the EZLN wishes to give to this rebellion a supposedly more general and wider character, it limits it, on the contrary, within national and political frames. In their First Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle they made clear that they struggled for the right to '...freely and democratically elect our political representatives...' and went on to mention that through their struggle they applied article 39 of the constitution which reads: 'National Sovereignty essentially and originally resides in the people. All political power emanates from the people and its purpose is to help the people. The people have, at all times the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government'. This article, part of the constitution of every modern Democracy, inspires the EZLN who want to apply it to the very letter.

In their 34 points-demands addressed to the government they demanded inter alia: 'Free and democratic elections with equal rights and obligations for all political organizations contending for power, true liberty to choose one or another proposal and respect for the will of the majority. Democracy is a fundamental right for all Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Without democracy there can be no liberty, justice or dignity and without dignity there is nothing'. In their Second Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle, the EZLN reject the government's electoral reform because '...it perpetuates the seizing of the popular will', and they repeat their wish for '...a political solution which could lead to a peace with dignity and justice' and address an invitation to the 'independent and progressive ones for a national dialogue, for a peace with democracy, liberty and justice', they talk about '...Civil society (which) assumed the responsibility to protect the country' and stress the fact that '(we should provide)...so that those who govern, govern obeying'. So they address 'Civil Society', proposing to 'all the independent political parties to condemn the limitation and deprivation of people's civil rights during the last 66 years and to demand the formation of a transitional democratic government'. The EZLN's pluralistic, national-democratic and populist ideology reaches a climax when they declare that 'Within the framework of the new political relations, the different propositions about the system and the orientation (socialism, capitalism, social-democracy, liberalism, christian-democracy etc [!]) should convince the majority of the people of the correctness of their programmes'.

One would suppose that the EZLN's language is completely outdated if the Mexican state, an authoritarian democracy, wasn't

patriarchical and populist and if, particularly in Chiapas, backward structures, longtime organized political and economic gangs didn't still survive, which the dominant modernizing tendency within the PRI wants to get rid of, too. The Mexican state, even in its present form, seeks to win voters' consent and as for the electoral fraud, its indisputable existance does not refute the success of the PRI's cooptation politics (Allianza Civica, a coalition of non-gonernment organizations, which observed the electoral process, reported anomalies which didn't however alter the outcome of the present elections).

However, what is of interest from the standpoint of social revolution is the context, the essence, the meaning of democracy (whether of the Mexican or European type) and of 'Civil Society'. Democracy, the democratic state is not a timeless idyllic state of things above history, but the political outcome of class struggles since the French Revolution. In Mexico, through the Revolution of 1910-20, the basis of the democratic state was laid, which resides in the 'sovereign people' satisfying legally some of the peasants' and workers' demands after having trodden on their dead bodies.

The basis and the content of democratic 'political society', this 'spiritual, heavenly community' is none other than the society of private individuals, of real people with their private and competitive interests, of class society. This real competitive society called the 'Mexican people' or the 'Mexican nation' is unified abstractly in the Mexican state. 'Man in his immediate reality, in civil society, is a profane being', says Marx in *On the Jewish Question*. 'Here, where he regards himself and is regarded by others as a real individual, he is an illusory phenomenon. In the state, on the other hand [in the 'political society'], where he is considered to be a species-being, he is the imaginary member of a fictitious sovereignty, he is divested of his real individual life and filled with an unreal universality'. Mexican 'Civil Society', which includes ejidatarios, workers, businessmen etc, will probably be able to liberate itself politically, modernizing and liberalizing the political system and abolishing the one-party rule. However, it cannot abolish its immediate alienating reality. Because this battle is fought by the ejidatario repossessing communal land and by the proletarian against flexibility and immiseration, whereas the EZLN's national-democratic ideology urges them to fight as 'citizens', namely as members of an imaginary community.

No government, neither the one that 'governs obeying' nor any other, will ever liberate human beings, since it will always re-unify them abstractly as citizens retaining simultaneously their class divisions, even by force. Because, naturally, no 'people' in any democracy, even the most liberal was ever convinced by, or, has ever chosen to be governed by capitalism! With their persistence in pursuing 'clean elections', the Zapatistas actually favoured the PRD and its leader, 'citizen engineer Cardenas' -to use one of their expressions. And now many peasants in Chiapas recognize

Avendano, the PRD's candidate, as 'their own man' who expresses their will. In their 17/12/94 communique, the EZLN state, among other things:'EZLN recognize the social forces rallied around engineer Cardenas and the CND, as an honest, civil and peaceful opposition against the government's impositions; for this reason, the EZLN addresses themselves to citizen-engineer Cardenas and the National Council of Representatives of the CND to ask them, irrespective of their political affiliation and party commitment (sic), to convey the EZLN's voice to Mexican society and to the personalities in the political life of the nation that they consider to be competent, presenting them the means which would render a stable truce possible:

1. Satisfactory solution for the conflicting parts after the elections in the states of Veracruz, Chiapas and Tabasco.
2. Recognition of the transitional democratic government in the state of Chiapas.
3. Recognition on the part of the federal government of CONAI as a neutral organ which can make possible the political solution to the conflict. The EZLN recognize the effort of citizen-engineer Cardenas and the CND for a peace with justice and dignity'.

Generally, the EZLN's relationship with the PRD and the CND (which consists mainly of PRD members and cadres) is one of partners-allies against the common enemy the PRI and the one-party state. A partnership wherein each part wants to retain its autonomy.

In an interview in *La Jornada* (7/12/94), Marcos made clear that the 'return' to guns after the second meeting of the CND was the continuation of the EZLN's democratic politics by other means. In fact, the Zapatistas never considerd the electoral process and the use of guns as two incompatible activities. In the same interview, Marcos was quite clear:'The guns ought to open up space again, spitting lead enables politics to be exerted again'. For this very reason, we do not limit our attention in this text to the EZLN's partial tactics but we try to point out the essential content of their politics on the whole.

Closely related to the EZLN's national-democratic ideology is their social-patriotism. 'We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation. We, the dispossessed, are millions and we thereby call upon our brothers and sisters to join this struggle as the only path, so that we will not die of hunger due to the insatiable ambition of a 70-year dictatorship led by a clique of traitors who represent sell-out cliques and the most conservative elements', they said in their First Declaration from the Lacandona Jungle and in their communique of the 6th of January, they made clear that '...we try to unite the Mexican people and its independent organizations so that through all forms of struggle, a national liberation movement can be formed which will enable the presence of honest and patriotic social organizations for Mexico's progress'. In their Second Declaration, they refer to 'the plunder of national wealth', to the 'government's

persistence in implementing an economic plan that increases poverty in our country for the benefit of the foreigners' as a reply to the EZLN's demand for a revision of NAFTA. Marcos, in the interview with Amor y Rabia explains the extent of the EZLN's 'internationalist' politics:'...as far as international politics is concerned, we have nothing more than our appeal for solidarity to the Mexican and latino community in the USA, to help us as a fraternal nation'. This nationalism that traps class struggle within state borders or seeks out people of similar ethnic descent without regard to class, sabotages the modern dimension of the rebellion against NAFTA. Precisely now, when it's pointless to refer to Mexicans in general when it's Mexican as well as American proletarians (Chicanos or otherwise) who are being hit hard by capital's world integration, precisely now, when the social question cannot be limited to Mexico's borders, the Zapatistas intensify class struggle whilst holding the national flag as their banner against the 'sell-out' government and 'foreign capital'. They foster the false vision of socialism in one country again and they (together with a fraction of the Mexican bourgeoisie threatened by capital's integration) fill the ideological gap opened by capital's internationalization in the Mexican government's propaganda apparatus. Whereas the PRI in dismantling the welfare state is forced to tone down its nationalistic demagogy, now, it seems, social-patriotic and nationalistic slogans emerge on behalf of the proletariat -another fact indicating that what happens in Mexico is not soleley a Mexican affair. Do not the protestations of trade unions in several European countries calling privatizations of nationalized corporations 'sell-outs' wrap up class struggle in a social-democratic, nationalist language? Or, don't references to the 'threat against our cultural heritage' from european integration signify the false identification of popular culture with the nation?

> 'Do not be misled into supposing that the quarrel between Madero and ourselves is a quarrel between Mexicans, which Mexicans should be left to settle for themselves. It is not. It is the old, inextinguishable quarrel between bourgeoisie and proletariat; between monopolists and disinherited; between those who wish to live peacefully under the existing system and those who know that under the present system there is no peace...This quarrel therefore, is yours. Without playing the traitor to the great international cause of the emancipation of labour you cannot ignore it... We do not appeal to you to help US. Our appeal is that you leave no stone unturned to help YOURSELVES by utilizing the magnificent opportunity of forwarding the common cause which the Mexican Revolution affords.' (20)

The Zapatistas are therefore criticized in the context of

international class antagonism which their nationalist ideology does not promote and not of course because they 'do not make the revolution'. The dimensions of the social question in Chiapas and Mexico in general transcend their ideology, even if they were the ones who escalated class struggle and are keeping it up to a great extent. The attacks against proletarians in Mexico and the States during the last decade have generated new struggles. In California, Proposition 187, which denies 'illegal' immigrants access to health care, education and social care in general has become a law, after a referendum with 59% for and 41% against (21). On the other hand, they reduce the length of time on welfare benefit and lower the age at which children can be tried as adults from 16 to 14...among other things the 'Republican Revolution' has accomplished. The first reaction last October was the largest demonstration (over 100,000) in L.A. for several decades. There were also student walk-outs, rallies and sit-ins and there are a lot of indications that maybe the outbreak in 1992 (the big L.A. riot) will happen again. Perhaps the hiring of 3,000 new cops was no coincidence.

As a reaction to NAFTA, transnational networks have already been formed linking activists in the USA, Mexico and Canada. Labour unions, women's groups, farmers, environmental, religious and intellectual organisations -about sixty in all- have formed transnational coalitions demanding a 'revision of NAFTA', 'democratization of the IMF and the World Bank', 'equitable, sustainable and participatory development', a new 'global Keynesianism', redistribution of wealth between 'poor and rich countries', 'a civil society without borders...for a participatory and sustainable global village'. This new social-democratic vision without borders, that brings together dissimilar social groups of limited class composition (from the petit-bourgeois to labour unions leaders, from feminists to academics) is forced by the internationalization of capital to get over any idea of exclusively national action. It is precisely this new strategy of capital which, although it precipitates the collapse of the social-democratic parties based on a Keynesian national development, generates a new social-democracy in the form of grass-roots movements of a transnational orientation. It is certainly a positive fact that in this transitional age, one of global restructuring of social relations, neo-Keynesianism recognizes the international character of capital's attack and stresses global solidarity. However, it is not only that this multicultural reformism is undesirable; it is also questionable whether permanent reforms are possible any longer.

Not an unimportant role in the division between Mexican and American proletarians is played out in the ideologies of the 'bad gringos' and the Mexican 'traitors' who in migrating to the USA 'forgot' the nation and the Raza. Against these so-called pochos, the old anti-imperialist hatred rages again vehemently, something that makes the identification of second and third generation immigrants with Chiapanecos or Mexican proletarians in general almost

impossible. On the other side of the borders ('al otro lado') racism against immigrants intensifies, especially after its legislative consolidation.

While the New Enclosures are imposed globally through the pillaging of communal land, privatizations, the war on rents, the decline in wages, the destructuration of the welfare state, immigration, 'working in the black', developers destroying the countryside (construction of huge motorways, airports etc), the struggles everywhere against all of this, cannot as yet, go beyond their partiality. While the internationalist vision appears nowadays as an urgent necessity and not as a mere abstract principle, new barriers of nation, race and localism rise up to annul it.

If the Zapatistas, limiting the rebellion in Mexico to a political, national affair, assign us, at best, the tasks of just a solidarity committee, we can only feel for ourselves what is ours in this struggle. Contrary to the PRD which organizes solidarity campaigns for the Zapatistas in Europe gathering signatures from academics, artists and sympathizers in general, our practical solidarity to the ejidatarios and proletarians in Chiapas will be to continue squatting, to struggle against privatizations and the alienation of everyday life, aiming to develop these struggles into the creation of a world human community.

KATERINA, Athens -March 1995

Notes

1. Marxist-leninist organizations mostly, the so-called 'extremists', arousing suspicion from many sides that they are PRI agents -such suspicions and accusations in Mexico are quite common, since the spectacle of terrorism and spying is perfectly organized and adds to confusion.
2. It is the name the EZLN gave to the jungle meeting place where the convention met referring symbolically to the convention of representatives of Villa's, Zapata's and the Constitutionalists' armies in 1914, in the vortex of the Mexican Revolution. However, comparing these two conventions the only resemblance seems to be the name.
3. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the leader of the PRD, is the son of Lazaro Cardenas, the reformist ex-president. An ex-member of the PRI and ex-governor of the state of Michoacan, gathered round him the 'democratic current' within the PRI. Now with the PRD he represents the nationalist, social-patriotic tendency. Gaining 31% in the elections in 1988 he was considered to be the actual winner, although the PRI came to power again through blatant fraud. It's worth mentioning that the abstention then amounted to 50%.
4. The Plan de Ayala, a concise, fiery outline of the Zapatistas' objectives was written by Zapata and his comrade and former school-teacher, Otilio Montano.
5. Zapata emphasized 'land and liberty', that is, restitution of stolen lands, water and pasture rights and the restoration of village democracy. Not that the Zapatistas lacked a proletarian consciousness -on the contrary, they seized all the means of production; fields, mills, railway stations, and distilleries. They set

up liberated zones, basing themselves on communal traditions of village self-government. Zapata's was a classic 'people's war', fought in guerilla fashion, and his forces enjoyed great popular participation and support. First Diaz, then Madero, then Huerta, and eventually the Constitutionalists launched scorched-earth campaigns of terror against the Zapatistas, indiscriminately killing any civilians in their path, but so long as their charismatic leader lived, the Zapatistas resisted the demoralization that these barbarous attacks sought to provoke.

In the north, Villa's forces were less homogeneous than those of Zapata. In addition to former bureaucrats of the Madero regime, who helped administer the immense expanses of territory liberated by Villa's army, the top ranks of Villa's followers included more cowboy *caudillos* * (vaqueros or charros), rancheros, and petty bourgois storekeepers than it did communal peasant farmers; the foot soldiers were usually miners, migrant farmworkers, railway workers, and the unemployed. The aims of the Villistas were thus more worker-orientated or petty bourgeois than they were pro-peasant: as foremen of large estates, vaqueros, or independent ranchers, cowboy caudillos had commanded peasants but had not experienced land hunger at first hand. Workers were more interested in gainful employment than in farming for themselves. Thus lands seized by Villa's army were held by the state, not given to the peasants.' J. Cockroft 'Mexico. Class Formation, Capital Accumulation and the State'. NB: * strong regional (mostly military) leaders.

6. US intervention through the invasion of Veracruz not only gave the Constitutionalists a military advantage but also helped them claim credit for 'throwing out the yankee invaders' and pose as 'anti-imperialists'.

7. Founded in 1929 as the PNR: National Revolutionary Party it was renamed PMR: Party of the Mexican revolution in 1938; we are talking about the PRI, which is still in power.

8. Nevertheless, foreign (mostly US) capital has always had a strong presence in Mexico, especially in industry. According to a study in 1970, of the 2,040 companies with the largest profits, foreign capital controlled 36% of the income of the largest 400 companies and participated in another 18%, while Mexican private capital and the Mexican government controlled 21% and 25% correspondingly.

9. We are referring to politicians and army officers, who during the Revolution amassed vast quantities of land for themselves, which they kept later under state support.

10. Walking the streets of Mexico City, one is immersed in Mexican history and especially the period of the Revolution: subway stations, streets, squares etc. bearing the names of militants assassinated by this very state that later declared them 'national heroes'. After the student uprising in 1968, even Magon was pronounced a 'hero', although formerly he had been condemned as 'anti-Mexican', due to his internationalism.

11. Local bosses, more information in the section 'Rural Mexico and the New Enclosures'.

12. Both Mexican and foreign (mainly US), these labour-intensive assembly plants were first established in 1964 along the borderline by the Mexican government. The maquiladoras run under extremely favourable terms for capital accumulation (no duties are imposed on parts imported from US and similarly there are no duties on the assembled products exported to the US). The workers are mostly landless peasants (especially very young women) from the same region, so that the management (Mexican or not) can better exploit them through traditional, paternalistic methods such as donations to the village, being godparents (compadrazco) etc.

13. See in 'Midnight Notes' #9 H.Cleaver's article: 'The uses of an earthquake'.
14. See 'Midnight Oil' by Midnight Notes, especially chapters 'Oil, guns and money' and 'Audit of the crisis'.
15. Ejido means exit since the communal land usually lay on the outer edges of the village.
16. It is highly interesting to examine the methodology followed in those programmes. The emphasis was laid on the 'participation' of the peasants in their exploitation, which presupposed regional 'information' about the peasants' behaviour. Usually a spying network was set up to track down the leaders of agrarian movements and then followed the implementation of the programme and the death squads for those peasants disagreeing with development. Both the time -in the 70's- and the place -Guerrero and Oaxaca, states with a tradition of agrarian movements and especially armed ones- were not selected accidentally for this exchange of funds for 'information' necessary for disbanding agrarian organizations and the peasants' subsequent subordination to capital (see Caffentzis, 'Let me speak of the end of the World Bank and IMF').
17. Already since the 60's leasing ejidos, although prohibited according to the constitution, was allowed after certain amendments were made. Ejidal Bank and Banco Rural, both in the interests of big landowners, acted as collective owners and controllers of the ejidos.
18. However often it resorts to electoral fraud, repression and violence, the Mexican state has also promoted and refined its recuperational practice. As we have already shown, it knows how to use both the rifle and money; to give away scholarships amply or publish Bakunin's collected works and assassinate political opponents. We may then speak of an authoritarian but democratic state.
19. References to Magon (here and below) serve two purposes: first, to show to what extent the anarcho-communist movement during the Mexican Revolution and the existing Zapatista movement differ, as a response to an attempt by Greek anarchists to present the latter as a direct continuance of the former; second, to highlight the content and perspectives of that defeated movement at the turn of the century which can be very inspiring today, even though the historical context is quite different. Namely, the communist, internationalist perspective and the rejection of all political party manipulations.
20. *Regeneracion*, PLM's newspaper, from the 'Appeal to members of the [American] Socialist Party' of 29/4/1911, later included in the article 'Labour's solidarity should know neither race nor colour'.
21. The case was brought to court by the L.A. School Board, immigrant rights groups and civil liberties advocates disputing Proposition's 187 constitutionality. As for the referendum, the white/Anglo electorate voted for Prop. 187 by a 63% to 37%, Blacks against, 53% to 47%, and although the Latinos also voted against by 77%, 23% voted for it. Among the latter two communities those in favour of the Prop. thought that they protected themselves against the threat of the undocumented workers depressing wages and monopolizing unskilled jobs (info from 'News and Letters, vol. 39, no 10).

Sources

For this text, except for those sources already mentioned, the following were also 'expropriated':

-P. Newell, 'Zapata of Mexico'
-'Land and Liberty, Anarchist Influences in the Mexican Revolution, R.F. Magon'
-K. Dawkins, 'NAFTA, GATT and WTO', Open Magazine Pamphlet Series

-'The other side of Mexico', # 34 and 36
-Wildcat, #60
-Marc Cooper, 'Zapatistas, Chiapas, Mexico', Open Magazine Pamphlet Series

Excerpts from EZLN's declarations and communiques were mainly taken from 'Love and Rage', vol. 5, issues no 1, 2, 3.

Dignity and the Zapatistas

John Holloway

1. It was dignity that rose up on the first of January 1994. Or, at least, that is how the zapatistas themselves present it:

'Then that suffering that united us made us speak, and we recognised that in our words there was truth, we knew that not only pain and suffering lived in our tongue, we recognised that there is hope still in our hearts. We spoke withourselves, we looked inside ourselves and we looked at our history: we saw our most ancient fathers suffering and struggling, we saw our grandfathers struggling, we saw our fathers with fury in their hands, we saw that not everything had been taken away from us, that we had the most valuable, that which made us live, that which made our step rise above plants and animals, that which made the stone be beneath our feet, and we saw, brothers, that all that we had was DIGNITY, and we saw that great was the shame of having forgotten it, and we saw that DIGNITY was good for men to be men again, and dignity returned to live in our hearts, and we were new again, and the dead, our dead, saw that we were new again and they called us again, to dignity, to struggle'.

What is this dignity that distinguishes us from plants, animals and stones? It is not a concept that has been used very much either in political theory or in Marxist theory. Almost certainly, it was not part of the theoretical baggage that the original group of revolutionaries took with them when they went into the jungle in 1983. Dignity was forged in the jungle. There was a process of learning which the zapatistas describe in terms of listening. EZLN. The original EZLN, the one that is formed in 1983, is a political organisation in the sense that it speaks and what it says has to be done. The indigenous communities teach it to listen, and that is what we learn. The principal lesson that we learn from the indigenous people is that we have to learn to hear, to listen.'

2. The idea of a revolution that listens, the idea of a struggle to convert 'dignity and rebellion into freedom and dignity' (as the first Declaration of the Lacandona Jungle puts it) poses a theoretical challenge.

The idea of dignity implies in the first place a critique of liberal theory. Within the framework of liberal theory it is not possible to

discuss the idea of dignity seriously. It is not possible because liberal theory accepts as its point of departure the existence of the market, and the functioning of the market is based on the opposite of dignity, that is to say the active and daily exploitation, dehumanisation and humiliation of the people, as we know from our own experience and as we witness palpably every time we stop at a traffic light in the city of Mexico. To speak of dignity in the framework of liberal theory, that is to say in the framework of the acceptance of the market, is a nonsense.

For just the same reason, the idea of dignity implies a critique of the state and of state-oriented theory. The state, in the sense of a political sphere distinct from the economic also presupposes the existence of the market. States (all states) are integrated into the world market, into the global network of capitalist social relations, in such a way that their only option, whatever the complexion of their government, whatever the form of democracy that they proclaim, is to actively promote the accumulation of capital, that is to say, humiliation and exploitation. That is why the revolt of dignity cannot have as its aim to take state power or to become channelled through state forms. The zapatista struggle has been profoundly anti-state since its beginning, not in the superficial sense of proclaiming war against the Mexican state, but in its forms of organisation.

Much more interesting is the fact that the concept of dignity implies a critique of the orthodox Marxist tradition (and by orthodoxy I refer to the whole tradition that has its roots more in Engels than in Marx - I am thinking of the Leninist, Trotskyist, Gramscian and to some extent the autonomist traditions).

A central problem of that tradition is the way in which the concept of alienation or fetishisation is understood. The Marxist critique of capitalism is that capitalism is characterised by alienation or fetishisation: in capitalism people are alienated from themselves and the social creativity that makes them human, and part of this alienation is that relations between persons do not appear as such, but in the form of things.

There are two ways of understanding this alienation. The more common way is to understand it as something closed, a fait accompli: people are alienated, social relations are impenetrable to the ordinary consciousness. Therefore revolution can only be thought of in terms of the intervention of a group who have succeeded in breaking the fetishism of social relations, a group which can be conceived either in terms of a vanguard party or in terms of an elite of critical intellectuals (ourselves, of course).

The important thing about this conception is the relation that it establishes between alienation and disalienation. The people are alienated now; in the future, after the revolution, they will be disalienated. Or, to say it in zapatista terms: now the people are humiliated, in the future they will have dignity.

Obviously this conception has important consequences for how

one thinks about revolutionary organisation, consequences that are formulated with impressive clarity by Lenin in What is to be Done?, but which are implicit in the whole orthodox tradition (and which have much to do with the Engelsian conception - so different from Marx's - of what is scientific). If the revolution depends on the intervention of the enlightened, then it is not possible to have complete confidence in the opinion of the common people. The organisational form of the revolutionary movement must give special weight to the enlightened - and we all know the problems that have resulted from this conception.

3. The zapatista expression about struggling to convert 'dignity and rebellion into freedom and dignity' suggests that they have a different conception of alienation – a conception that seems to me much closer to Marx's own and to the dispersed tradition of subversive Marxism linked with the names of Pannekoek, Bloch or Adorno, among many others. If the struggle is to convert dignity and rebellion into freedom and dignity, then that implies that the starting point is the present existence of dignity – obviously not in the sense of the dishonest and grotesque fantasies of liberal thought, as something established, but rather as the present struggle against the negation of dignity. Dignity exists as the negation of the negation of dignity, not in the future, but as present struggle. Or, in more traditional language, disalienation exists not only in the future but as present struggle against alienation. Dignity, as the struggle against humiliation, is integral to humiliation itself.

This concept of dignity has enormous implications for how we think of revolution and the forms of political organisation. If the starting point is the dignity of those in struggle (and we are all in struggle, since we are all humiliated), then the struggle of dignity must be a struggle that is defined by the people in struggle. Hence the practices associated with the zapatista slogans of 'command by obeying' ('mandar obedeciendo') and 'asking we walk' (preguntando caminamos). Revolution is not a talking but a listening or, perhaps better, a listening-talking, a dialoguing, a setting out rather than an arriving.

Therefore there is no transitional programme and there can be no transitional programme. The concept of dignity, as revolutionary principle, necessarily implies that the revolution is made in the course of its making, that the path is made by walking, not for lack of ideas, but as a matter of principle. Revolution is undefined and, above all, revolution is anti-definitional, a revolution against definition, a revolution against identification, against the imposition of identities.

In contrast with the engelsian tradition which develops in terms of definitions and crucially in terms of the definition of the working class (so that dignity, if mentioned at all, is a dignity confined by the limits of alienation), the zapatista emphasis on dignity places

the unlimited at the centre of the picture, not just the undefined but the anti-definitional. To define is to limit, to deny the openness of creativity. Dignity is a tension which projects beyond itself, beyond limitation, definition, identification. Dignity, therefore, does not imply a politics of identity, but just the opposite: the affirmation and simultaneous transcendence of identity. Dignity is and is not: it is the struggle against its own negation. Dignity implies a constant movement against the barriers of that which exists, a subverting and transcendence of definitions. (That is why we cannot talk in terms of identities: identity is always a superficiality, a lie: identification, like alienation, like fetishisation, is always a process, the struggle of Power.)

Dignity takes us, then, to other grammatical tenses. For liberal theory there is a present, a future which is understood as an extension of the present and a past which has passed. The grammar of the engelsian or leninist tradition is not very different: there is a present (capitalism, alienation, the realm of necessity) and a future which is not the extension of the present but its negation, but which does not thereby cease to be the future (communism, disalienation, the realm of freedom). But in zapatista discourse, and in Marx's theory, the grammatical tenses are different. The present is replaced by a sort of subjunctive, an antagonistic tension between what is and what is not but perhaps could be: I cannot say 'I am', but only 'I am-and-am-not, I am but I am full of projects, of fears, of dreams of another world which is not and perhaps never will be but which could, perhaps, be'. The whole Marxist construction and the whole zaptista discourse is based on this other grammar, a grammar that is very close to our daily experience, but very far from the language of the social sciences.

These two concepts (which are one concept), that is to say the idea of revolution as being anti-definitional and the change of tenses, come together in a phrase from a communique of Marcos in May 1996, where he puts words in the mouth of Power, and Power says 'I am who am, the eternal repetition', and says to the zapatistas 'Be ye not awkward, refuse not to be classified. All that cannot be classified counts not, exists not, is not.' The rejection of classification and of the grammar of the eternal present is expressed in the whole zapatista discourse, in the poetry, in the jokes, in the mockery of the state, of the left and of themselves - in all those elements which at first shocked those educated in a more austere left tradition, but which in reality are not adornments of the revolution but central to the conception of what a revolution is. The zapatistas dance, they dance on every possible occasion, they even took their marimba with them when they fled to the mountains after the intervention of the army. But it is not just they who dance, their categories dance too, and that is what we have to learn from them.

Note

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Lavori in corso

Riccardo Bellofiore

Editorial Introduction
Ricccardo Bellofiore's article supplies a critical assessment of *Appuntamenti di fine secolo* [Meeting at the end of the century], edited Pietro Ingrao and Rossana Rossanda, with essays by Marco Revelli, Isidoro Davide Mortellaro and K.S. Karol. 284pp. An expanded version of the book has appeared in German (VSA, Hamburg, 1996). An English language version is not available. Despite this Bellofiore's critique will be understandable. The main arguments of the book are summarised at the beginning of his review. Furthermore, the book's main focus is familiar: Fordism, its crisis, Post-Fordism, globalisation and the New Times of left social and political practice. These themes have, time and time again, been advanced within the British context, by the reformist Left, especially those associated with the former *Marxism Today*. In this context we refer to R. Gunn's review 'Communist Party: *Facing up to the Future*' (published in CS no. 6) and F. Gambino's 'A Critique of the Fordism of the Regulation Approach' (published in CS no. 19), as sources for further critical reading of mainstream Left proposals.

Bellofiore's article is based on a talk at the Associazione dei Lavoratori e delle Lavoratrici Torinesi (ALLT) in Turin on 24 November 1995. The article retains the original conversational style. We have also retained the Italian title: Lavori in corso means 'work in progress' but might also be translated as 'road work in progress'. We have cut the section where the author speaks about specific Italian conditions associated with the academic growth industry on the Third Italy. Those interested in this issue are advised to consult the German-language version, published in *Wildcat Zirkular* no. 27, Juli/August 1996. As far as we are aware, an Italian version has not been published.

Translation: Werner Bonefeld and Ed Emery

1. Introduction

In a book published in the early 1980s I came across a cartoon. It showed a man meeting Karl Marx on a cloud in heaven. The man says to Marx 'I've read your book.' Marx replies: 'Oh really? And how does it end?'

Now we are in the 1990s and all sorts of people seem to think they have the answer to the question how the history of Marxism, and of communism - the history of that political thought and political practice which had raised the banner of the emancipation of labour -

has ended. The book by Ingrao and Rossanda moves into the opposite direction: it stubbornly insists that an analysis of, and a judgement on, capitalism has to advance *also* by inquiring into the contradictory dynamics of the capitalist mode of production. In short it places the question of labour once again at the heart of things. The book needs to be taken seriously and this means, of course, examining its theses in a thorough manner. Apart from the circle close to Ingrao and Rossanda - those who are either present as contributors, or who took part in the debate in *Il Manifesto* after the book's publication, and who, so to speak, are part of the family (for example, Lunghini, Mazzetti, Ravaioli) - a thorough appreciation of their work has, as far as I am aware, not taken place. Most other comments on the book indicated an unwillingness to discuss: they were characterised by disgust, foreclosure, prejudice, and rejection. Commentators who dogmatically refuse to listen have nothing to say.

In what follows I shall try to express a dissenting viewpoint. However, first I would premiss both a note of caution and my own position. The note of caution is the recognition that it is a risky matter and far from easy to attempt to synthesise and argue with Ingrao and Rossanda. This is because of the richness and complexity of the volume, as evidenced in its very structure. The theses of the introductory essay, written by both of them, are already intricate and complex, and this appears further in the collection of letters between Rossanda and Ingrao which make up the second part of the book. These letters are full of disagreements and unanswered questions. Furthermore, their theses enter into fertile exchange with the essays by other authors contained in the third section. I am thus conscious that my critique of *Appuntamenti di fine secolo* is subject to the inevitable riposte of having over-judged a theoretical development which is very much still under construction. However, if you want to start a discussion, you have to begin somewhere. So I shall try to extract the main bones of Ingrao and Rossanda's position, to see whether and to what extent their arguments hold up.

Let me now turn to my second premiss, that is my own position. The focal point of the book is the question of communism. The two authors declare at the end of their introductory essay that they still have this word in their vocabularies. It was undoubtedly this brave and rather unfashionable statement which gave rise to the whirlwind of criticism that promptly descended on them in the mainstream press. The considerations that follow, and these will not be indulgent, start from the same 'question' as that posed by the authors: communism. To cite Rossana Rossanda (p. 128) 'the challenge as to how to liberate everybody, and not to allow one person to be a slave either of another person or of needs that are so primary that he can't even question himself on the meaning of his existence here on earth. How to regulate power, how to guarantee one's freedom without cancelling out that of others, how not to reduce the other to a slave or a commodity or a mere function of himself.' With the same frankness, however, I must state that, at

least if for none other than generational reasons, my evaluation of communism as an 'answer', as it constituted itself in the form of the state during the twentieth century, is far less positive than the by no means sympathetic evaluation offered by Ingrao and Rossanda.

2. Appuntamenti di fine secolo

So let us turn to the main arguments contained in *Appuntamenti...* which I shall put together with the - albeit in some respects dissonant – theses advanced in the essay by Marco Revelli ('Economy and Social Model in the Transition from Fordism to Toyotism'). The book's argument can be summarised under four main headings:

i) During the 1970s the *Taylorist-Fordist-Keynesian model* went into crisis. This model was based on the scientific organisation of labour, on the rigid technology of the assembly line, and on an interventionist state which 'mediated' social concerns. This mediation involved support to business through demand management, the guarantee to workers of high levels of employment and of a *welfare state*. Ingrao and Rossanda don't say much about the origins of this crisis. For Revelli, the crisis was caused by a decline in the rate of economic growth and thus economic instability. The 'Fordist' mass consumer durable goods markets had become saturated and, as he seems to suggest, powerful ecological considerations had emerged. The crisis appears to have come from the outside and appears somehow 'natural'.

ii) The subsequent phase is defined principally via the category of *globalisation*, the globalisation of capital. The search for flexibility, and thereby for lower costs through a reduction of the minimum size of enterprises, unleashes a global and highly aggressive competitive struggle among individual capitals, hunting for markets wherever they can find them and relocating different parts of their production processes at the global level. Globalisation thus gives rise to a crisis of the national state, which is definitive for Revelli, and certainly serious for Ingrao and Rossanda. Aided by the liberalisation of the movements of capital, there is a growing importance of the financial component in the profits of big business. In addition to a 'renewed domination' of the North over the South (the Gulf War), there can also be detected an 'ordering omnipotence' of the organs of world government (G7, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Maastricht Treaty).

iii) Concerning the issue of work, globalisation and the crisis of Fordism translate, on the one hand, into precarious work and exclusion and, on the other, into 'mass technological unemployment'. Work becomes increasingly less guaranteed, less stable, and lower paid, while anyone expelled from the labour market finds it harder to

get back in. The number of workers in the industrial sector of the developed West declines, and those made redundant are left with no means to find work elsewhere. This liberation from work means that, within the capitalist universe, there is a *reduction of living labour in real quantitative terms*. In the new post-Fordist phase, capital has less need for the waged worker: what we see is the 'tendential end of the relationship of commensurate growth between the production of goods and employment' (p. 71), as Ingrao and Rossanda maintain; and a 'systematic destruction of employment' (p. 198), according to Revelli.

iv) The present phase of capital in the *post-Fordist* era is characterised, apart from the aspects outlined above, by the much stronger integration of the workforce into the relations of production. This fourth point, as the first, is more pronounced in Revelli's contribution than in those by Ingrao and Rossanda. On the basis of an analysis restricted mainly to the automobile sector, Revelli seems to deduce an almost complete alienation of the workers (employed in this sector in ever fewer numbers), and an expulsion of conflict from factories which have by now become pacified because the 'soul' of the workers has been conquered. This, at least, is what we gather from pp. 185-94, although this is contradicted - and, in my view, rightly so - on pp. 195-6.

This understanding of capitalist development is widespread amongst the majority of the radical left in Italy and has become more or less its vulgate. We have only to recall the analyses, each with their own pecularities, of those who wrote contributions for *Il Manifesto* on the Ingrao-Rossanda volume. From this understanding derive, obviously, suggestions for political action. If it is true that within capitalism the socially necessary labour expended is tending ineluctably to diminish, the question of 'what is to be done' becomes reduced to a handful of options. The notion of a citizen's income, proposed specifically by authors such as Gorz and Aznar, finds little favour with Ingrao and Rossanda. There is also Lunghini's proposal to expand the area of 'concrete' socially useful labour, decommodifying the sphere of social reproduction in order to compensate for the reduction of 'abstract' capitalist work. Furthermore, there is the idea of using the increases of productivity with a view to redistributing the smaller amount of work among everybody, as Mazzetti and Ravaioli (and, before them, Napoleoni) propose. In addition, there is Revelli's proposition - although, to be frank, he is not very clear on this - that 'antagonistic subjectivity itself [like post-Fordist capital] leaps over the relations of commodity exchange and thereby beyond the commodity form of labour, and the contract that sanctions it; and that it thus goes beyond the alienated relations of wage labour' (p. 193).

3. On a Fordism that never was

The framework outlined above obviously grasps some real aspects of capitalist development. However it seems to me that it is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of contemporary developments and that it supplies a view that is so one-sided that the implied periodisation of capitalism is quite wrong. This is because it rests on distorted data.

Let's begin with the crisis of the Taylorist-Fordist-Keynesian model. I have to say that, to begin with, I regard this putting together of terms as highly problematical. *Taylorism*, that is the increase in the intensity of labour at a given level of technology, when it was introduced into the United States in the early part of this century, *failed* because of the conflict which, understandably, it aroused among the craft workers. A different fate was suffered by *Fordism* in the strict sense. Fordism sought to increase the productivity of labour through a *revolution in the machine system*, replacing the craft worker with the mass worker. It was only by virtue of this change that it was able successfully to incorporate the new organisational innovations of the early part of the century, which included, but not exclusively so, Taylorism. However, success at the level of production was confronted with the discovery of the *limits* of *markets* - the increase in productivity, combined with a relatively stagnant demand for consumer goods and, because of other factors, a weakened demand for investment, was one of the causes of the Great Depression (a far cry from the claim that Fordism means unlimited markets!). Only the Second World War and, it is suggested, *Keynesian* state intervention opened the era of the swift growth of income, a growth assisted by a politics of deficit demand management. This was Fordism in its broad sense, a mode of regulation which dominated right through to the early 1970s.

But is this really how it was? One might legitimately dispute it. When we look at the data and the most convincing interpretations, we find that the golden era of capitalism after the Second World War was characterised from the early 1960s onwards by the following elements: A world economy that had been *unified* under the leadership of the United States because Europe and Japan needed a leader country, not merely for economy reasons – particularly reconstruction – but, also, for political-military reasons. For this reason we also had a single currency, the dollar (one should say that if there ever was a global capitalism, it was perhaps this). A *stable demand for private investement* was sustained by high profits and, of course, on rosy expectations because there were certain convictions associated with the proclamation of Keynesian principles, and there were central banks who were ready to function as lenders of last resort (thus not a model of development based on consumption, as suggested by the agreeable conception of Fordism-Keynesianism). Nevertheless, state budgets were essentially balanced; the growing percentage of expenditure in relation to GNP was compensated by a

growth in taxation levied principally at the expense of labour. Were one to conceive of the Keynesian era as if it had been characterised by the pursuance of economic policy within the boundaries of national states and by the accumulation of deficits, one would be left with no more than a caricature. In particular, growth of capitalist income was *faster* than the growth of real wages, although these increased too thanks to the marked expansion of commodity production.

Why did this model go into crisis? Essentially because it was *unstable*: during its development it undermined its own foundations. In particularly, its international foundations fragmented: the catching-up of Japan and Germany (with Europe coming up behind) pushed the USA out of its undisputable central position and led, during the 1960s, to a sharpening of inter-imperialist rivalry. Then the monetary foundation was undermined: in the same decade, the global monetary system that was based not only on the dollar but also on the dollar's tie with gold, began to wobble and finally collapsed in 1971. Above all, in those same years, industrial conflict began to grow to the point where it exploded at the end of the decade: after years of 'full employment', why on earth should the workers in manufacturing not have done what economic theory teaches night and day - in other words, exploit a favourable position in the labour market, a market that was then favouring the seller? More serious than that, as well as asking for higher wages and less pressure at work - demands that in abstract terms are not incompatible with the capitalist model - at the heart of working-class antagonism was the rejection of 'factory discipline' itself, and capitalist command over production as a whole. All this had been perfectly foreseeable; in fact, it was foreseen by Kalecki in a well-known article dating from 1944. In the 1970s, budget deficits increased - not only, and not so much, because of the social pressure that was demanding reforms but also because of the attempt by the state to continue a Keynesian response to the difficulties, and to tame and circumvent the problems posed by social conflict in the big factories. In addition to this conflict at the 'heart' of the crisis-ridden development, and also intra-capitalist conflict, there was, for a time, a conflict with the producers of raw materials, of oil in particular. Over a period of a few years, profit expectations worsened with the decline in profitability, the time-horizon of investments contracted, and investments fell. Strange as it may seem, it was the return to the fore of monetarist economic policy - symbolised in the coming to power of Reagan and Thatcher - which led in the United States, but also elswhere, to an explosion of deficits and public debt, precipitating the more or less ferocious subsequent attempts at reducing them. In regard to Italy, for example, Di Cecco characterised the Italian model in the 1980s as 'delinquent Keynesianism'. Not only in Italy, despite this 'Keynesianism', investment is having a hard time getting under way again.

The reason for all this is not at all mysterious. If what I say is

correct, then the crisis of the old model derives not from some rather vaguely defined crisis of growth, but from a far more *material* emergence of fundamentally *internal* conflicts over the creation and distribution of wealth. Other precise consequences follow from this. The political right's critique of the Keynesian era is inconsistent: it did not fail as a result of a spendthrift and unproductive state (which, as I have said, is doubtful that it ever existed). The Keynesianism of those days had little to do with the Keynesianism that is peddled by academic circles and the media. The crisis of the so-called Fordist model was crucially due to social conflict, and so its transcendence, which is still under way, inevitably has to pass through a radical redefinition of existing conditions in the labour market and the labour processes. The fact that investment is not lifting off after two decades of defeats of the working class is perhaps testimony to the *radicality* of the challenge to capitalist power which was more or less consciously pursued, and of the *fear* that followed from it that every upturn in the economy would reactivate conflict. A testimony, in short, that the dismantling and restructuring of all parts of the capitalist valorisation process is still in full motion. And one can again ask: if things are as I have said, does it make sense to compare, as the authors of the volume do, 'Post-Fordism' with a - however defined - conception of 'Fordism', a conception which appears increasingly as a *parenthesis* in the history of capitalism? Is it really impossible, if not rather simply improbable, to repropose a Fordist/Keynesian settlement, a settlement that combines a sort of global regulation with income and employment policies based on a negotiated settlement of a new Toyotist organsiation of labour? In this respect, we might have to set aside the desirability of such a settlement from a Left point of view, to which I would give a negative response. That this reproposition is, as I suggest, improbable derives from the fact that there has not yet appeared on the horizon an 'objective' crisis such as that which struck Fordism narrowly defined at the end of the 1920s. This is because, in our time, there is hardly a 'subjective' critique of the contradictory constitution of Post-Fordism which does not propose a hasty 'exit' from it. Such a critique is entirely powerless to confront Post-Fordism's real contradictions.

4. Uneven Globalisation

The thesis of the globalisation of capital also deserves to be re-examined. We have seen that, in some respects, the capitalism of the Keynesian era was more, not less, global. We could add that the capitalism of the golden age of the gold standard, that is the period which ran from the last quarter of the nineteenth century through to the First World War, was also at a high level of globalisation. The present growth of trade integration merely carries through to completion the recouping, begun after the Second World War, of the terrain lost in the years of mercantilism between the two wars. It is

certainly true, on the other hand, that the contemporary greater dependence on export markets is a consequence of the lesser weight of internal investments. It is also true that, as regards manufacturing and most particularly traditional manufacturing of mass consumer durable goods, the quota of imported goods has effectively increased. On the whole, then, industrial competition has indeed increased dramatically, and the globalisation *of production* in this area of the economy is a fact. However, the phenomenon of global competitition in manufacturing goes hand-in-hand, as the economists should know, with the reduced importance of this sector for the creation of income and employment. This reduction is compensated by the growth of sectors that are protected from imports. This development which strikes at all the classic locations of the organised strength of the labour movement, is not generalisable to all sectors of production. And the sociologists, for their part, should know that the post-Fordist reorganisation of labour, to which I will turn below, cuts *right across* both protected and non-protected sectors.

The globalisation of commercial flows is, however, another of those sirens which we should not allow to bewitch us. If anything, in the crisis of Fordism in its broader sense, the tendency towards the *regionalisation* of capitalism *into* the three areas of America, Europe and Asia seems to predominate. Ingrao and Roassanda note this, but they do so as if this phenomenon operates merely as something that puts a limit to the predominant tendency towards globalisation. In fact, and importantly, the notable characteristic of these three areas is that they are 'closed' economies, in the sense that their openness to trade does not seem to have grown in any dramatic sense. This is true, in particular, for Western Europe as a whole - not, of course, for single countries given the process of trade unification within Europe itself. It is thus understandable that the thesis of the globalisation of capital appears, for example, plausible from the Italian viewpoint – that is of an economy which was relatively more closed than others, more dependent than others on a traditional manufacturing sector which was hit particularly hard by openings to the outside.

It is equally wrong to argue, as Ingrao-Rossanda and Revelli do, that we should see the globalisation of production, and the present reality of the global character of commodity production, as something definitively new and imposed by neoliberalism, as part and parcel of the tendency of capital to seek lower wage costs, less regulated conditions of labour, and countries that are more compliant with the desires of companies. Those who take at face value the thesis of a single path of capital after the Fordist/Keynesian era, lose sight of the *plurality* of capitalist models in the 1970s and 1980s, and the *disunited* nature of capital today. Alongside the Anglo-American model of breakneck deregulation - a deregulation, however, that is never carried to its extreme logical consequences - we have had another model taking shape in Germay, Japan and South-East Asia.

In some cases, the German case in particular, this model has been compatible with high wages and relatively restricted working hours. Even South Korea, we should remember, has seen - albeit from a starting point of a particularly low level - rates of growth in real wages never seen before in the history of capitalism. This model was based, as in Japan, on the protection of the highly qualified sections of the work-force, at the expense of its more peripheral sections. At the heart of this model there was a state and a banking system which regularly broke every neo-classical wisdom, every suggestion of the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. This has meant practising the kind of support policies for national industry which are heresy for neo-liberalism: a concern for the quality of local factors of production, and not only their cost, selecting credit flows, and controlling its own capital and its domestic labour. It has been this type of capitalism, which we might call *Schumpeterian*, that up until now has obtained the best results, and not the sort of capitalism propagandised by the supporters of deregulation. The countries of Latin America have learned that lesson, and the countries of South East Asia are also learning it fast. Both these groups of countries have enjoyed, more than enough, the guidance by proponents of neo-liberal anti-statism. Clinton himself came to power with a programme which proposed intervention in the quality of local factors of production, and not with a programme that argued the case for a subordination to the ideology of globalisation. And the variously-labelled experiences of the 'Third Italy', of the 'Adriatic backbone', of the North-East of Italy, have they not perhaps also been contructed on this basis, namely on a combination of flexibility and qualification of labour? But when reading the *Appuntamenti*, we often have the impression that the ideology propagated by international organisations is confused with understanding of the real developments.

As with the questioning of the Taylorist/Fordist/Keynesian model, the questioning of the thesis of globalisation has enormous political consequences. Just to mention two: the Gulf War would appear at least as much, if not more, marked by the conflict within northern capitalism as by conflict between North and South; and the same should be said of what is happening in Eastern Europe after the collapse of real socialism. However, let me stay with the thesis of globalisation, in order to sum up. I have left to one side one characteristic, the most striking, of global capitalism, and that is the exponential growth and autonomisation of speculative capital in financial markets. This is something which one would have to be blind not to see. However it is hard to understand why this should be seen by the whole of the Left, even the less conformist groups among them, almost as a natural given fact, rather than as a product of *choice*, or at least of the omission of possible actions. We shall never find out whether 'global' financial capital really is uncontrollable unless we try to control it - and the subjects of this control, given what I have just said about 'regional' capitalism,

inevitably have to be found at an intermediary level between the national level and the (for good or ill) Utopian level of a world government. To state just one: honestly reformist proposals which strike at the speculative movements and not the productive movements of capital have been on the table for a while. The new information techologies, whatever one might wish to say about them, increase rather than reduce the possibility of control over monetary flows. Events like those following on from the crisis of the 'irrevocably' fixed exchange rates of the European Monetary System confirm that the much-vaunted death of the autonomy of national monetary policies has been announced prematurely. In short, it is possible to act.

5. Too much work

The so-called globalisation of capital is thus a phenomenon which is far from new. What we have been seeing in recent years is rather a redefinition on the part of capital of the national and international conditions of accumulation, which has not yet run its full course, and which is best understood through the categories of regionalisation and plurality, a plurality of capitalisms. Because Ingrao and Rossanda analyse the general tendencies of capitalism differently from me, their analysis of mass unemployment, which they share with many other well regarded commentators, is also quite different from mine. I have to confess that my perplexity with their analysis of this issue is even more marked.

The clearest and most rigorous exposition of the thesis that capitalism has transformed from that of Fordist/Keynesian full-employment into a post-Fordist 'future without work' ('too many commodities, very little work') is probably that of Giorio Lunghini in *L'Eta dello Spreco* ('The Age of Waste'). The structural change of recent years is said to consist in the fact that the increase in unemployment in periods of recession is crystallised by technological and organisational restructurings, so that when the economy revives employment does not rise. The quantity of living labour employed by capital is thus, it is claimed, tendentially destined to fall. In this circumstance too, however, a close look at what is happening in different areas of capitalism reveals a quite different picture.

First of all, right until the end of the 1980s, aggregate employment continued to grow everywhere, and it is too early to know whether the dip which has been seen subsequently in some economies is permanent or temporary. In any case, the employment figure as a percentage of the workforce has remained stable for decades. Secondly, the tendency to reduce living labour affects manufacturing, and in particular the large factories. However, in the terms in which this process has really taken place, it had already taken place in the USA during the 'Fordist' phase itself. This does not seem particularly unnatural since otherwise the capitalist

reproduction would remain stuck in a specific commodity-configuration. Thirdly, within this sector, it is not clear to me why there is never any reference to the capitalism of the newly industrialised countries - those of South East Asia, for example. It is in these countries that we see a continued input of new labour power into the processes of valorisation and powerful waves of urban migration. The omission is all the more serious because it is in Asia that the accumulation of 'global' capital is, again, resuming most vigorously. One of the more striking weaknesses of the analysis of imperialism up until the 1960s was the forecast that it was impossible for those countries which were then called the Third World, to take an active part in capitalist development. It is this Third World which today is pushing the diverging thrusts of inclusion and exclusion which have their cause precisely in the lift-off of capitalism. Finally, it is as well to bear in mind that unemployment presents peculiar characteristics in the different capitalist regions, with notable variations also in their midst: with all the necessary caution regarding the reliability of statistics, it is obvious that the unemployment levels of little more than 2% in Japanese statistics, and the oscillation of United States statistics at around 6% (euphemistically called 'full employment'), indicate a far different situation from rates of European unemployment, which range from 10% in Germany to 25% in Spain, with Italy somewhere in between. If the statistics on unemployment are sometimes underestimated - and this is certainly the case in Italy - it is also true that the main body of precarious and unstable employment is invisible.

We thus have to offer differentiated explanations of the different experiences. In the United States, the relatively more important factors are the deregulation of the labour market and the growing imbalance in the distribution of wealth. This has made possible the creation of insecure, low-skilled employment that, more often than not, maintains these workers in poverty. At the same time, the central position of the USA in the international division of labour permits also the creation of skilled and highly paid employment. In the European case, a greater role is played by the lesser downward flexibility of real wages. Thus the circumstance that restructuring penalised unskilled labour and led to an uneven position of Europe in the international hierarchy. So, although labour-time is declining in the area of unskilled or simple work employment of the traditional sectors of the older industrial-capitalism, there is good reason to maintain that the capitalised *total* labour time is increasing hugely.

The true structural break of the last fifteen years has been the interruption of the more than century-long tendency towards the reduction of individual labour-time. Instead of this, there has been the *lengthening* and *intensification* of the effective working day. To this has contributed, to greater or lesser extent in the various countries, the fragmentation of the labour market to which I referred earlier. This has led to the re-emergence of the 'working-poor' and

precariousness of employment. In addition, there has been the 'slimming-down' of big companies and the externalisation of parts of the production process, to which Ingrao and Rossanda, as well as Revelli, draw attention. This externalisation weakens the central and strongest swathe of guaranteed employment and offloads the pressure of competitiveness onto subcontractors where the weaker regulation of the conditions of labour can be exploited more easily. As Sergio Bologna has reminded us untiringly for years, this externalisation is in large part responsible for the expansion of self-employed labour, a labour which in reality has nothing to do with 'self-employment' but which is rather labour that is commanded by, more often than not, a single contractor. The 'strong' area of the labour market is reduced while the 'weak' area is expanded. From this point of view it seems reasonable to state that the characteristic of our epoch is that of 'too much work', and not of 'too little work'.

If the first reason has to do with the conditions of the labour market, the second reason relates to the characteristics of the capitalist reorganisation of production. In the central areas of accumulation a crucially important role is played by the production of commodities which are rich in terms of information and which require a labour-force that is able to exploit knowledge and experiences accumulated over a long time. In Marxian terms, *the labour time incorporated in these commodities is a multiple of that contained in the products of simple labour*. In the meantime, the less-skilled labour involved in the traditional production of mass consumer durables has been relocated to areas that were once peripheral. These two phenomena explain the circumstance that, in Europe, there is a *simultaneous* growth of total labour time and non-labour time, permitting the continued existence of long-term structural unemployment - a development that should not surprise a Left which argues on the basis of Marx. There should, however, be no surprise that such a radical re-definition of the concrete nature of the valorisation process at a global level demands a higher mobility of the transfer of surplus value: it is inherent in 'capital' that it seeks to push its mobility forward with as little control by the state as possible.

There is also a third reason for the lengthening and intensification of the working day, a reason so obvious that I would not even raise it were it not for the fact that nobody seems to pay attention to it. The transition from the high growth of the Fordist/Keynesian model to the reduced growth of the subsequent years has seen a *reduction* not only of relative wages, but also of *real wages*. The reduction of real wages is obviously a powerful factor that increases one's willingness to work much more intensively and for longer hours.

In the face of this reality, Left-wing intellectuals have allowed themselves to be taken in by the ideology that capital is driving inexorably towards a reduction, and in the end to an elimination, of labour. The exhaustion of capital's capacity to create employment of

which we hear so much nowadays has led some to rejoice and others to lament. The view that capital's capacity to create employment is exhausted amounts to a fairytale. I have to say that if there is a period in the history of capitalism that, for me, confirms the Marxist thesis of the centrality of 'abstract labour' in the organisation of social life, it is precisely this one. Particularly if one takes account of the fact that today the very instruments of information technology which are revolutionising production are also revolutionising consumption; and that the distinction between labour time and non-labour time is rendered increasingly arbitrary.

If this is how things stand, then it is easy to see the limits of the proposals against mass unemployment which we mentioned at the start of this paper. All of them make the same mistake. Namely, they start from the mistaken assumption that in the present phase of capitalist development demand for labour is declining rather than increasing. In other words, the proposals against mass unemployment are not based on a correct appreciation of the facts. Since real wages are falling, the reduction of hours of work at parity wages would lead probably to the extension of *de facto* hours of work, to double work and to work in the black economy. The promotion of socially useful work would probably translate itself into a dualist segmentation of the labour market which, contrary to the intentions of those who propose it, would involve the devaluing of 'concrete' jobs and reduce these to the role of a simple shock-absorber in relation to the difficulties faced by those employed in the area of commodity production. At the same time, those employed in this area would be left to their fate and this because of the mistaken conviction that we are witnessing the problematic but 'tendentially' assured euthanasia of capital. Nor am I convinced by the schizophrenia of those who portray the post-Fordist labour processes as a place of total alienation and who, for this reason, hope to find and look for the emancipatory potential beyond capital in the sphere of reproduction as well as in [autonomous] spaces. I am not convinced of this, probably I am still too much imbued by the old materialism, because I do not see how this could be rendered possible. These are all proposals which start, like Gorz and a number of French intellectuals, from the assumption that society is *divided* into two parts, one, the declining part, is seen to be subordinate to capital, and the other, the increasing part, is seen as one of freedom. It is hard to disagree with Bruno Trentin's *Il Coraggio dell'Utopia* ('The Courage of Utopia') when he says that individuals who accept the mutilation of themselves during a part of the day are marked throughout the whole of their daily activity. There is no reason to assume why this should be different for the whole of society.

If we want to talk again about the reduction of labour time, then we have to do it: in the concrete processes of production and in relation to the whole range of life, and we have to debate it in such a way that we secure a reduction of labour time not only, regarding the labour markets, on the side of demand but, also, and importantly,

on the side of supply to obtain flexibility and choice. And there should be no doubt that such a demand can only be realised through 'artificial', that is political interventions, interventions that go *against* the natural tendency and mode of motion of capitalist accumulation. This demand poses not only a quite different dynamic in the distribution of income but, also, an active political intervention at the level of macro-economic industrial policies and labour policies. Therefore, the conflict *within* capital and *within* the state can not be left behind; rather it needs to be taken up. The sooner we abandon the thesis that the capitalist tendency at the end of this century is to reduce labour time, the better.

6. In search of the phoenix: Post-Fordism

In the book by Ingrao and Rossanda there is much talk of post-Fordism - a word which has been fashionable for some time. It is not at all clear what exactly is meant by this and, unfortunately, the phoenix remains as such even in the essay by Ingrao and Rossanda. Fortunately, Revelli's essay is an exception, but it does leave a strange sensation. First because post-Fordism is here defined in opposition to Fordism in the broad sense. While Fordism is seen as being founded on unlimited growth, *economies of scale*, conflictual factory-relations, and a national state and a domestic capital, post-Fordism is seen as having limited world markets, a lean and hegemonic factory, a deterritorialisation of the enterprise and the crisis of the national state. I have already expressed doubts on some of these defining elements: here I limit myself to express my doubts whether it makes sense to define post-Fordism simply as a counterpoint to the Keynesian era, without broadening one's gaze to a wider and possibly more meaningful span of time. Were one not do this, might there not be the risk of attributing to post-Fordism elements of pre-Fordism? Ingrao and Rossanda seem to share my doubt (p. 43) and the problem cannot simply be resolved by identifying the one with the other, as Revelli seems to suggest (pp. 792-3).

The most attractive part of Revelli's article, however, is that on the changes in the organisation of work. Unfortunately I cannot here give it the space it deserves. Nevertheless it is quite striking that in order to describe post-Fordism such massive recourse is made to marketing manuals, a resource from which the suspicion of ideology is not far removed. There is also a lack of any reference to the copious literature on the subject, which is often dedicated to the innovations in that selfsame automobile sector on which Revelli focuses his attention: here we have only to recall the contributions by Parker-Slaughter, Jacob, Kern-Schuman, Pollert, Jürgens-Malsch-Dohse, Kennedy-Florida and Appelbaus-Batt. These authors supply a far more contradictory picture than that proposed in this volume. Given the lack of space, I shall content myself with suggesting that a

typical characteristic of the present phase is that the unifying element of capitalist strategy is the attempt to bring to an end the process of re-forming the working class. This process which *might* perhaps combine flexibility, precarious conditions and skilled work, does *not* cancel out conflict, even though it does render it more difficult (when it comes to it, Taylorism and Fordism themselves were, in their own time, presented as the prelude to the disappearance of conflict), which makes the individual place of work more flexible, while rigidifying the global production line and thereby making it *more* fragile.

It appears to me that the whole Left which has over the last thirty years concerned itself with the analysis, and the future, of work, has premised its analysis on the same cardinal error - a mistake which appears also in the recent writings of Bruno Trentin. This mistake consists in the *primacy* accorded to *Taylorism*. Let's take the Taylorist-Fordist-Keynesian model with which we began. Current interpretations look at Keynesianism through the eyes of Ford, and at Ford through the lenses of Taylor. In this view, capitalist exploitation of labour exhausts itself in, and is no more than, the 'pressure' brought to bear on labour. From this it follows that post-Fordism would amount to no more than the extension of this pressure from the body to the brain - or even, more spiritualistically, to the 'soul' of the worker.

There is, I believe, a serious historical reason behind this mistaken conception. The cycle of struggles at the end of the 1960s, centred as it was on struggles over the extraction and organisation of labour, followed on from a phase, starting in the mid-1960s, of real and proper Taylorist regression in Italian industry. At that time, domestic producers reacted to the wage conflicts at the beginning of the 1960s by accumulating capital without comitting new investments and thus by intensifying labour on the basis of the given technical composition of capital - yet another example that Taylorist means of extracting surplus value lead inevitably to conflict. However, the widespread interpretation by the Left turned the real sequence of capitalist development, as Marx understood it, onto its head. There is an inherent tendency in capital to effect *technological* change, to control the extortion of labour through the *revolutionising* of the system of machinery. The direct and personal control over labour that is typical for the extraction of absolute surplus value, is 'governed' by the indirect and impersonal control that is typical for the extraction of relative surplus value.

Marx posed the hypothesis that revolutions in the organisation of the labour process do not precede the innovation of the labour process but rather *follow* it; and that it is through the dynamic of competition that individual capitalists are compelled to revolutionise the labour process. The dynamic of competition imposes upon individual capitals the requirement to reorganise work. Were one to start one's analysis from the opposite end, and were one not conscious of the force that impresses itself upon the individual parts

of the accumulation process, then one is easily led to confuse the break with Taylorism with the opening of automous spaces for employed labour. Trentin makes this mistake when he conceives of the crisis of Taylorism as bringing about conditions of work that are less and less focused on rigidly performed tasks. Revelli's analysis, although he describes the situation quite differently and arrives at opposite political conclusions, starts on the same basic assumptions. For him, Toyotism amounts to an intensification of Taylorism and thus to a strengthening of Fordism. As he puts it, there is 'once again a form of focused pressure on one's own labour power, on the management of labour time, on the performance of work' (p. 182).

For Revelli, the epochal break resides in the circumstance of a completed reduction of the worker to a thing, to a commodity among other commodities. Again, capital's *impossible* dream is confused with reality. However, were one to argue with Marx, the question that needs to be posed would be quite different. The question would then not be whether the post-Fordist production method serves to conclude the restructuring of the labour processes and the labour market that has moved into all directions with the complete automatisation within big industry. Rather, and against the background that this has not functioned in real and proper Fordism, one would have to inquire about the points of rupture of this so apparently omnipotent mechanism.

6. What is to be done?

Our critical assessment of some of the essays contained in *Appuntamenti*, will probably be accussed variously as operaism, industrialism and productivism. There is no doubt that my analysis is fundamentally different from that on which the Ingrao-Rossanda essay is based. Strangly, though, this difference appears less fundamental if one looks at some of their practical conclusions at the end of their joint essay. There they ask - as I have done above - if it is not premature to abandon 'labour' and the state as areas of social and political action. On this issue, it seems to me, that Ingrao and Rossanda are, *thank godness*, less coherent than authors such as Gorz, Aznar and Latouche, but also Revelli and Longhini, Mazzetti and Ravaioli who, each in their own way, appear to say that the 'civilisation of labour' as well as the 'statism' of the 'short century' is coming to an end.

I find it easy to share, in particular, the observation of Rossana Rossanda in the letters part of the book. She writes: 'I have never thought that the sum total of a person exhausts himself *in his relation of and with production*. Outside of that area a whole set of fundamental experiences, beginning with perceptions of life and death, of the other, of one's own sex and that of others, of love, of fear, of growing, of dying, of good and bad, of the sense of one's own being, wounded or matured by experience. Of literature, of history,

of memory, of art, of thinking and counting, of play, which to a certain extent cut across the life of every man and woman' (pp. 100-1). Although one might disagree with what Rossanda has to say afterwards, namely when she states that the movement born from Marxism has never been Labourist. Marx was certainly not Labourist when he stated in the *Holy Family* that 'if it wins, the proletariat does not become the absolute side of society; in fact it wins only by transcending itself and its opposite'. However, to me it seems undeniable that not only the Marxism of the Second and Third Internationals, but also that closer to our time, of the old and the new Left, that was present right up until the mid-1970s in workplaces, always based themselves on a belief in the *centrality of production* - and this even then when working-class struggles were taking place *against* the primacy of production, and despite this claimed a higher dignity than that accorded to other conflicts. For this reason, amongst others, the labour movement has been placed in the defendant's stand by the so-called 'new movements', foremost amongst them the feminist and the green movements. Here, I believe, we find an almost logical misunderstanding upon which the contemporary difficulties of a Left politics are based. For anyone, like Ingrao-Rossanda and myself as well, who still believes that the contemporary 'conditions of social autonomy' is founded on the 'position within the system of production of goods or services and the access to the system of exchange' (p. 101), conflict over and within work inevitably has to remain - to use again that expressions which Rossanda does not like - at the centre. However, this *social* centrality of labour within capitalist accumulation, which is in turn at the heart of this society, can *not* be translated into a *political* centrality of labour in the sense of establishing a hierarchy between the different subjects, which would accord more weight to the working class. Or, again in the sense of defining the characteristics of the future society, according to Hanna Arendt's reproach against Marx: communism as a society of workers without wage labour. The challenge to create an anti-capitalist movement in which different subjects pay attention to each other and recognise each other's equal dignity, is in fact still not solved. Rossanda herself recognises this when she says that 'within the new subjects there is a temptation to substitute one totalising view with another' (p. 126). This misunderstanding is almost logical because the different 'communes' that have been created through the struggle against capital - that force which 'dissolves into thin air all that is stable' - tend to regard themselves as permanent. Perhaps this 'subjective' difficulty is the most material of all, and its overcoming the key to an authentic theory and practice of 'transition' which will truly examine the questions raised by the Greens and, in particular, the women's movement.

The dichotomy between Ingrao and Rossanda's analysis and their practical recommendations has a high price: their insistence on the centrality of labour, deprived of any reference to the authentic

dynamics of the daily explosiveness of labour, are tinged with idealism (can work still be a *value*?, p. 71); and their recourse to an alternative sort of statism and an alternative public sphere with which they wish to transform the 'things' from above, has to appear inevitably politicist.

On the other hand, even if my considerations should be vindicated - that is that capitalist accumulation is not moving into the direction of reducing labour, and that interventions into the relations of labour inevitably has to pass through economic policy - there would still obviously remain the dramatic difficulty that this volume addresses: how to *organise* the restructuring of capital? Whatever the answer, I do not believe that it will be helped by analyses that are incorrect and replies that are consequently illusory. Perhaps one of my friends was right when he said that Marxists have hitherto changed the world: now it is time to go back to interpreting it.

Globalisation and Democracy: An Assessment of Joachim Hirsch's *Competition State*

Werner Bonefeld

Introduction

Post-Fordism and globalisation have become organising terms of political-economic inquiry since the mid-1980s. Indeed, since the start of the crisis of capitalist accumulation in the late 1960s, new research agenda and new organising terms such as risk society, post-modernism, disorganised capitalism, post-industrialism, and post-Fordism and globalisation, have been introduced ostensibly to supply an adequate understanding of contemporary changes. This paper is not concerned with the political economy of this innovative agenda-setting. The focus is on Hirsch's contribution to the debate on 'globalisation' and the political implications of his approach.

Hirsch's work has always been of major importance and significance. This is true for his contribution to the state-derivation debate of the 1970s, the debate on *Modell Deutschland*, the analysis of New Social Movements, and post-Fordism. His recent book, *The National Competition State*, is no exception. It supplies not only a revised version of his earlier conceptualisation of the state-form, but also an analysis of the crisis of Fordism, the political economy of globalisation and its impact on the national state. Furthermore, and importantly, he reconceptualises a politics of emancipation by raising the significance of globalisation for the future development of democracy. Moreover, Hirsch's book integrates much of today's globalisation discourse. He argues, as do Harvey (1989) and Strange (1991), that the global credit-structure entails a dominant power structure over production and national states. He emphasises that globalisation has brought about a distinctive 'knowledge structure', a point made by Giddens (1990) and Strange (1988). With Giddens (1991) and Beck (1986), he argues that globalisation leads to a greater transnationalisation of technology and 'greater' risk. With Strange (1991) he insists that multinational companies dominate the

global economy. With Held (1991, 1995), Hirsch sees globalisation as a force that a) hollows out national democratic systems of accountability and b) determines the politics of national states – these are seen to have been transformed into competition states (Cerny, 1990). His argument, then, agrees with the view of globalisation orthodoxy that governments and workers alike are virtually powerless to withstand global capitalist demands. He concurs with Held that a left strategy has to consist in democratising political power within and beyond the national state so as to make global economic forces accountable to democratic demands. In short, Hirsch's book brings together the main tenants of globalisation orthodoxy. The paper, then, supplies an assessment of 'globalisation' through the lenses of Hirsch's contribution.

The paper is divided into three main sections. The first introduces and assesses Hirsch's view of globalisation and his conception of the national competition state. The paper charges that his analysis is based on a schematic view of capitalist development, a view that serves to obscure a potentially insightful analysis. The second section examines his proposal for a radical reformism. It will be argued that his reconceptualisation of a politics of emancipation amounts to no more than the acceptance of bourgeois ideology. The last section concludes the argument and supplies a partisan assessment of globalisation orthodoxy and its politics of democratisation. The aim is to open space for critical debate.

Main Themes and Arguments

Hirsch's argument can be summarised as follows: Globalisation emerged as a neo-liberal strategy to solve the crisis of Fordism. Post-Fordism and globalisation are internally connected. The deregulation and flexibilisation of capital has led to a global restructuring process of capital that appears to have left the national state behind: the post-fordist state is not founded on a 'protected' national economy and has, instead, to cajole globally unregulated capital on to its shores. He defines the post-fordist state as a 'competition state'. The globalisation of capital has let national states to hive-off the welfare guarantee of the fordist state and to adopt neo-liberal policies instead to mobilise society in the economic war for capital investment. The casualties in this development are not only workers and those dependent on welfare but, also, the democratic system itself: globalisation undermines democracy in the classic sense. The democratic state is seen to be replaced by an 'efficient' state that emphasises market-criteria in its regulation of social demands at the expense of democratic values and democratic obligations. Thus his concern with renewing democratic influence on capitalist development domestically and internationally is very much concerned with making the transition to post-Fordism, and post-Fordism itself, a 'much more democratic and human form of

capitalism' (pp. 9, 197).[1] He sees the neo-liberalist politics of globalisation as internally contradictory and charges it with leading to a system of global apartheid. The renewal of democratic influence is thus seen as a 'question of survival' (p. 10). In short, while globalisation itself is argued to be inevitable and irresistible, its precise 'shape' is still undecided.

The crisis of Fordism and the transition to Post-Fordism

Hirsch identifies the capitalism of the Twentieth Century as Fordism. There is no need here to detail his analysis of Fordism, suffice to say that it follows his earlier work on this topic closely (see Hirsch/Roth, 1986; Hirsch, 1991).[2] In the context of this paper, the connection between the crisis of Fordism and the emergence of globalisation is crucial. Fordism is said to have been undermined by the emergence of a 'structural' crisis in the late 1960s/early 1970s (p. 84). The core of this crisis is identified as a combination of a structural reduction of capital profitability in metropolitan countries, a growing destabilisation of international mechanisms of regulation, which impressed itself upon and reinforced the crisis of individual national states (p. 84). The crisis of fordist capitalism is also seen to be a crisis of credit and finance. The excess of financial liquidity has, according to Hirsch, been caused by economic stagnation (p. 85). He argues that the fordist technology was exhausted leading to the 'tendency of the rate of profit to fall' at the same time as fordist countertendencies were too weak to reverse the fall in the rate of profit. This exhaustion led not only to a decline in the rates of profit but, also, to an increase in finance capital (pp. 84-5). This finance capital forced, with the help of neo-liberalism, the deregulation and flexibilisation of global financial markets, and supplied the finance for productive capital to move around the globe in search for profitable locations, undermining the integrity of national economies (p. 86).

Hirsch's analysis is not concerned with the contradictory constitution that the dissociation between monetary accumulation and productive accumulation presents. For him, the neo-liberal project of globalisation appears as no more than a sharpened struggle between different capital 'fractions' to achieve dominance. The crisis-ridden dissociation between monetary accumulation and productive accumulation is not appreciated.[3] Capitalist crisis is thus only seen as a functional moment of capital's resolutions to its crisis ridden tendencies and as a period of reconstruction of society required by valorisation (pp. 88, 180).[4] For Hirsch, the contradiction is not that between labour as the source of value and monetary accumulation of wealth, an accumulation that credits the future exploitation of labour with debt because the exploitation of labour does not supply the values relative to the accumulation of wealth represented by monetary accumulation. Rather, the dissociation

between monetary accumulation and productive accumulation 'is seen as an increase in the power of capital, [and not] as a manifestation of capital's incapacity to subordinate labour' (Holloway, 1995b, p. 142). Although Hirsch maintains that an analysis of capitalism is an analysis of class relations (p. 132), the crisis of Fordism is not seen as one of class and thus class struggle but as a crisis caused by structural contradictions. Hirsch's work lacks a critique of the political economy of financial capital. Financial capital and productive capital are merely seen in terms of a competitive relationship whose common foundation, the productive and disruptive power of labour, falls outside his conceptual work.

'Globalisation' is seen to provide a solution to the crisis of Fordism. 'The logic of the new, post-fordist regime of accumulation, consists essentially in rationalisation and flexibilisation effected through globalisation' (p. 90). Thus, the liberalisation and deregulation of the international relations of money and capital is seen to have provided a push towards globalisation that has changed the 'face of capitalism' (p. 7). Globalisation, he argues, undermines the state-centred form of accumulation and regulation under Fordism: capital has left the constraints of the national economy and has thereby lost its national character which it is said to have assumed in the era of Fordism (p. 89). Fordism is seen as a type of capital defined by the predominance of a national, state centred, regulation and the accumulation of capital within the framework of national economies. Post-Fordism is defined by its contrast to Fordism: the post-fordist accumulation of capital is global. Hirsch argues his case against the background of the German political and economic arena. This has obvious limitation for his conception of globalisation. Looking, for example, at the 'British national economy', 'globalisation' has always been its main characteristic and, in his own view, the 'era' of Fordism was based on the global reach, or hegemony of the United States of America. It seems, thus, that his characterisation of Fordism as a national project of capitalist accumulation and of post-Fordism as a global project of capitalist accumulation is not only schematic but, also, in contradiction to his own conception of Fordism. Were one to espouse the notion of Fordism in an uncritical fashion, one would have to conclude, as indeed he does, that it was in fact a global system based on the global reach of American production methods, American-based multinationals and, of course, the US-American currency: the dollar. Indeed, the term Fordism, at best, indicates 'globalisation', namely of fordist principles.

For Hirsch, globalisation undermines the potentials of the fordist state to regulate the economy through money and law (p. 199): governments are seen to have become apparently helpless in the face of capital's global extension and its search for profitable conditions beyond the national state (p. 7). The undermining of the capacity of the state to regulate the economy, as it was allegedly the case during Fordism, begs the question if the fordist state was in

fact able to regulate its 'national economy'. Of course, the capitalist state 'regulates' the 'economy' through law and money. But it does so only in a contradictory fashion, reproducing the contradictions of capital in a political form (Clarke, 1988, 1992; Bonefeld 1992; 1993). Hirsch's account on the impact of globalisation on the national state entails a rigid contrasting between Fordism and post-Fordism: while, in post-Fordism, the ability of the national state to regulate the economy is hollowed out, the fordist state is characterised by its ability to regulate the national economy. This overestimates the extent to which the capitalist state, fordist or not, is capable of controlling the capital relation.[5] At the beginning of his book, Hirsch makes a good case why the form of the state is, in his terms, structurally incapable of regulating the capital relation. His definition of post-Fordism and Fordism, however, falls back beyond this insight.

Following Hirsch, globalisation means that 'the state' becomes increasingly subordinated to the dictate of securing the national space as a location for productive capital (*Standortsicherung*). This is seen to reduce the room for manoeuvre of the national state (pp. 139, 196) and to undermine the foundations of the liberal-democratic institutions that characterised the social-democratic era of Fordism (pp. 7, 196). Hirsch defines the post-fordist state as a national competition state. This characterisation echoes an insight provided by Cox (1992, p. 27) who argued that globalisation entails the 'subordination of domestic economies to the perceived exigencies of a global economy. States wily nilly become more effectively accountable to a *n ebuleuse* personified as the global economy; and they are constrained to mystify this external accountability in the eyes and ears of their own publics through the new vocabulary of globalisation, interdependence, and competitiveness'. For Hirsch, the competition state is an extension of the fordist security state (p. 110ff).[6] The competition state seeks to supply, in competition with other states, the right conditions for capital in order to cajole globally mobile capital on to its shores and to keep it within its national territory.[7] Thus, the 'competition state' appears to collide with conditions of democratic government. Instead of a democratically accountable regulation of 'capital', the competition state is subjected to capital demands and preferences, so allowing global capital to exploit comparative advantages. Thus, the competition state mobilises all and everything so as to prepare its national territory and its people in the economic war for capital investment (pp. 109, 155).

Resistance to this development is seen to be remote: the new social movements are seen to have first of all hastened the crisis of Fordism (p. 143) and then, through their gentrification, have become a pillar of the post-fordist transformation of capitalism (pp. 154-5). The labour movement is as a victim of the crisis of Fordism. He emphasises that post-fordist globalisation amounts to a 'class society without classes' (p. 132). The labour movement has disappeared as an

historical actor (p. 181). Despite continuing social conflicts and working class resistance to restructuring, these struggles are fragmented in character and heterogeneous in their aims (p. 181). The crisis of Fordism is seen to have intensified social fragmentations undermining a 'solidaric' conception of social development (p. 181), a conception that, by implication, appears for Hirsch to define Fordism. Hirsch's argument echoes Anderson's (1992, p. 366) view that 'the new reality is a massive asymmetry between the international mobility and organisation of capital, and the dispersal and fragmentation of labour that has no historical precedent. The globalisation of capitalism has not drawn resistances to it together, but scattered and outflanked them'.[8] In similar fashion, Hirsch conceives of globalisation as a force that deepens political, social and cultural fragmentations which he characterises as racism, sexism, nationalism and, in the end, social apartheid (pp. 181-2). The post-Fordist transformation of capital intensifies and exploits 'social antagonisms' (p. 181). He argues that globalisation is not confronted by a revolutionary subject in the classic sense (p. 182): all and everything is much too diverse and fragmented to render an all-comprehensive, universal, and international proletarian revolutionary class-subject possible (pp. 173, 181-82). Hirsch construes an image of a revolutionary subject that invites ready dismissal. The continued espousal of the revolutionary cause by the radical left is thus dismissed as anachronistic. His claim that a revolutionary subject is absent involves more than just a statement of fact, however well- or ill-conceived this view might be. His claim performs an important function namely that of legitimating his radical reformist stand. Since their is no revolutionary subject, the best the left can do is to adopt a reformist programme. Connected with this legitimising function of 'fact' is the denunciation of negative critique as an inherently 'unpolitical exercise' (p. 10). It appears that theoretical questions are rendered acceptable only if they make constructive proposals for capitalist reproduction.

The political economy of globalisation and the competition state

Hirsch sees globalisation as the economic-political project of neo-liberalism (p. 9). This project is said to have started in the USA after the breakdown of the system of Bretton Woods in the early 1970s. US-capitalism is said to have set upon liberalising international trade and opened up new spaces for investment to regain competitiveness particularly in relation to Japan (p. 85).

For Hirsch, Fordism was characterised by a relatively contained economic and social space, and by a welfare state that allowed some sort of social security and equality and, in comparison with other capitalist periods, a state premised on the possibility of democratic development (pp. 94-5). Since during post-war reconstruction of the 1950s conditions were dire (p. 83ff), and since Fordism went into

crisis by the late 1960s, Hirsch appears to suggest that the golden era of Fordism was the 1960s. However, the 1960s were based on the liberalisation of the global relations of exchange and trade. The laissez-faire principle of the post-war world was realised only gradually during the 1950s: full convertibility of other currencies with the dollar, one of the pillars of the Bretton Woods system, was achieved in 1958; and, under Kennedy in the early 1960s, GATT negotiations to reduce commercial tariffs, that is to liberate international trade, became the centrepiece of international economic policy. Furthermore, Hirsch argues that post-fordist globalisation is, to an extent, based on multinational companies who are said to have become determining actors, forcing national states to adapt to their demands and requirements. However, there already had been a major increase in the internationalisation of trade, investment, and finance capital in the 1950s and 1960s (see Murray, 1971). It was in the 1950s that the total outflow of private and official capital reached a peak. The expansion of US-based multinationals declined during the so-called golden age of Fordism. This, however, was compensated by the greater inter-nationalisation of European and Japanese firms from the mid-1960s onwards (Brett, 1985). It was not only productive capital that 'internationalised' during and before the golden age of Fordism. Banks also 'globalised', particularly US-American banks during the 1960s. British banks were already operating on a global scale since the colonial period of British imperialism. Trade liberalisation, as Brett reports, began in earnest during the 1960s. These developments led Murray (1971) to argue about a growing 'territorial non-coincidence' between an increasingly inter-dependent global economic system and the national state. Others posed the question whether 'the national state is just about through as an economic unit' (Kindleberger, 1969, p. 207). Kindleberger's view appears to echo Hirsch's conception of the post-fordist competition state. However, Kindleberger's focus is on the 1960s which for Hirsch appears to present the golden age of Fordism.

The argument, then, that the collapse of the Bretton Woods system led to a new form of capitalism, that is globalisation, is misleading. Following on from the 'war economies' during the second world war, 'globalisation' had already occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, recouping the terrain lost during the period of war.[9] Within this context, the notion of a national economy amounts to a myth (Radice, 1984). The Keynesian period, or Fordism, was thus not less global than today's so-called globalised capitalism (Bellofiori, 1997). Furthermore, the post-war boom occurred against the background of stable demand for private investment, backed up by the national states as lenders of the last resort. In other words, the so-called fordist era was not characterised by the political planning of national capital accumulation and deficit financing associated with Keynesianism. Keynesianism understood as a policy of deficit financing of demand occurred from the 1970s onwards, especially

during the 1980s – variously characterised as military or delinquent Keynesianism. It obtained thus during the period where, according to the schema of Fordism-versus-post-Fordism, it was not scheduled to have appeared.

What remains of 'post-Fordism' when Fordism is found out to be without foundations in reality?[10] Hirsch defines post-Fordism as the opposite to Fordism. Post-Fordism is like a crystal ball (cf. Gambino, 1996) that provides, at best, a fractured image of the past. Furthermore, the definition of post-Fordism as 'not-Fordism' seems to be informed by 'pre-fordist' conditions (cf. Bellofiori, 1997). The uncritical understanding of the period post-1945 leads to two conclusions: Firstly, post-Fordism is said to pose the question of survival in earnest, leading to the portrayal of Fordism as a golden past that, however, never was. Secondly, the image of a post-fordist future seems to rely on 'pre-fordist' conditions: Neo-liberalism's struggle to resolve the persistent contradictions of the world economy against the background of an accumulation of unserviceable debt, mass unemployment, social dislocations, low investment, etc, provoked social upheavals that led, in some cases to barbaric regimes. This is, in brief, how Polanyi summarises the conditions of the early 1930s. Hirsch supplies an image of globalisation that is quite similar to Polanyi's view of the 1930s. Would it be too far-fetched to argue that Hirsch portrays the tragedy of the 1930s as the farce of the 1990s?

According to Hirsch, globalisation undermines the democratic foundation, regulative capability, and restricts the political sovereignty of the national state (p. 95). This view not only overestimates, as argued above, the ability of the state to 'regulate' capitalist social relations it, also, contradicts Hirsch's research agenda: the notion of the competition state entails an 'active' and strong state seeking to make its territory 'ready' for capital investment. The difference to the competition state of the pre-fordist era seems to be that the post-fordist competition state is subjected to global capital's demands as a territorially fixed entity whereas the old - pre-fordist - competition state sought to travel with capital by expanding its territory through war and imperialist conquest (pp. 107, 169). For Hirsch, however, post-fordist globalisation does not by-pass the national state because, for him, it is 'the state itself' that adopted neo-liberal policies of globalisation (p. 90). In contrast to Hirsch, this would imply that the state's 'regulative' ability has not been made redundant but that it is, rather, emphasised. Hirsch's argument is blinkered: Fordism is identified as being politically regulated by a national state. Insofar as post-Fordism is construed as the opposite to Fordism, the post-fordist political regulation is merely characterised as a strong state that provides a forceful backup to the operation of the free market. However, this back-up 'function' of the competition state should not be identified, as Hirsch appears to argue, with a loss of the state's so-called regulative ability. Hirsch himself argues that the

competition states seeks to mobilise the resources within its territory, including its people, to comply with the dictate of 'global' capital's search for profitable locations. However, for Hirsch, this sort of mobilisation stands rejected because it does not summon a just and fair, that is a socially and ecologically responsible capitalism. It is as if the world is analysed according to the normative demands of a well meaning text-book rather than the other way round: from the world of exploitation into the text book (cf. Marx, 1973, p. 90).

For Hirsch, globalisation leads to the creation of a new social-political system of political power *(Herrschaft)* which he defines in terms of 'totalitarianism at the level of civil society' (p. 161). This system is seen to reinforce the relevance of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man.* Indeed, this Man is, following Hirsch, the foundation of the development of the post-fordist form of society (p. 161). Thus, not only is there no alternative to the capitalist system (p. 88), there is also a thorough proletarianisation of human existence insofar as human practice amounts to no more than one-dimensionalism (p. 181). This would imply, as indeed he argues, that humanity has become nothing more than an appendix to, or a human factor of, the impersonal forces of global capital (p. 181).

While social relations between people are rendered one-dimensional appendixes to capitalist reproduction, globalisation has shown capital's inherent ability to overcome crisis of productivity (p. 180). Whether the crisis of productivity has really been overcome is, of course, still a very contentious issue and it might well be argued that Hirsch is guilty of confusing capital's self-presentation with reality. There is no doubt that the 'bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society' (Marx/Engels, 1974, p. 70). Hirsch seems to confirm this insight. However, in contrast to Marx, Hirsch's argument is one-sided because his research agenda is based on the assumption that 'living labour power as a whole [is] inescapably subjugated to the unstoppable march of accumulation: in short, in the medium and long term capital's stately progress is destined to continue, while its aporias melt on the horizon' (Gambino, 1996, p. 44). Class struggle, for Hirsch, is 'primarily the struggle between particular capitals and 'fractions' of capital ... By contrast, the outcome of the struggle between capital and the working class [is] already presupposed, the only issue being that of *how much* welfare and *how much* repression might be needed to secure the subordination of the working class' (Clarke, 1991, p. 16). In short, Hirsch's assertion that 'capital' is able to overcomes crises of productivity follows conventional wisdom. In contrast, however, to Marxism's critique of capital, his research agenda is only interested in the permanence of the economic and political structures through which the exploitation and domination of labour subsists.[11] Labour's productive and disruptive power that – however perverted[12] – constitutes the capital relation remains

untheorised and unacknowledged. An understanding of 'capital' as some-thing that depends upon labour stands rejected because, for him, the capital relation is fundamentally a relation between capital and capital and not between capital and labour. Thus, strikes and other expressions of working class discontent are of less significance for the development of capitalism than the conflict between different capital 'fractions'. He charges, thus, proponents of the 'labour question' as a question of class struggle with misunderstanding the structure and dynamic of post-fordist capitalism (p. 173). His book not only presupposes the insignificance of the 'labour questions' for the contemporary development of capitalism it, also, shows great trust in capital's impossible dream.

However, while globalisation appears to have solved the crisis of capitalist accumulation, the precise degree of 'social repression' is as yet not decided. This is the basis for Hirsch's proposal that the left should adopt the strategy of 'radical reformism'. This strategy is directed against neo-liberalism's project of globalisation that fosters a process of de-democratisation (p. 170). The globalisation of capital and the consequent 'economic war' between states to attract and maintain production within their territory, entail the creation of a lean democracy, or a low intensity democracy (p. 169). Fordism's 'democratic constitution' is thus assumed against all the evidence supplied by those who showed that democracy had in fact been hollowed out during the post-war period, including the golden age of Fordism (Agnoli 1967/1990). Hirsch's argument is inconsistent: in his writing on 'Fordism' he endorses Agnoli's view and thus argues that its 'democratic' character was rather 'limited'. However, when portraying the effects of post-fordist globalisation on democracy, he alleges that Fordism was a period when capitalism allowed itself to develop democratically (pp. 94-5)! There seems to be no way out of the mysteries of Fordism.

Neo-liberalism is seen as a project of de-democratisation effected through globalisation (p. 99). Hirsch argues that national governments themselves did unleash the capitalist globalisation offensive in order not to dissolve national states but to destroy Keynesianism and therewith the state-centred mode of fordist regulation (p. 90). This destruction permits national governments to claim that the social-political room for manoeuvre is constrained by globalisation, allowing a selective integration of social interests thereby undermining Fordism's extensive social integration through a comprehensive social-economic programme of regulation (p. 181). In his words, social conflict is too pluralistic and fragmented to make a democratising impact on capitalist development (p. 181). Thus the neo-liberal strategy of globalisation aims to solve the crisis of Fordism not only by renewing the foundations of capitalist profitability but also by restricting the economic costs of democracy. The neo-liberal conception of democracy is based on market-criteria such as efficiency, effectiveness and economy. Thus his notion of a low-intensity democracy: democracy in the competition state is

merely concerned with filling out the detail in an effective manner, leaving the grand design of social-political development to the market. Flexibilisation and liberalisation/deregulation are thus seen as means of effecting a world-wide restructuring process that secures appropriate conditions for exploitation (p. 104) and subordinates the national state much more effectively to the dictate of the market (p. 139). The world market becomes thus a means by which national states, on their own initiative, are compelled to establish low-cost democracies. The new totalitarianism of civil society can thus be supplied with 'legitimacy': there is no alternative to cost-cutting, unemployment, deregulation and wage restraint. Nobody can be blamed for deteriorating conditions as everything appears to derive from the invisible hand 'personified' by globalised capital. In sum, the mirror image of neo-liberalism's project of an individualised social market where the elbow speaks regardless of the cost, is the competition state that accommodates to conditions of global apartheid by imposing apartheid upon its population in order to be successful in the 'economic war'.

Emancipation as Democratic Renewal: New Times for the Left

Although, as he argues, no alternative to capitalism exists at present, the task of intervening into the post-fordist transformation of capitalism is nevertheless urgent. Intervention has to ensure the humanisation and democratisation of post-Fordism (Ch. V). Hirsch is thus concerned with the conditions and institutional foundations of democracy beyond the neo-liberal competition state (p. 9). He offers his conception of a 'radical reformism' as the political alternative to the radical left's supposedly unpolitical embrace of a negative critique of capitalism. His concern is to transform the negative critique into a constructive, positive, critique to make a real impact on the development of capitalism (pp. 9-10).[13] Thus his question: who can do what in order to create conditions of relatively reasonable, just and free social relations beyond the neo-liberal project of a totalitarian civil society (p. 9). The anticipation of new forms of 'inter-nationalised' democracy is conceived as a question of survival (p. 10).

While Hirsch sees post-Fordism as inevitable and irresistible, he stresses that the neo-liberal version of post-Fordism is not. Indeed, he claims that a convincing post-fordist mode of regulation at a national and an international level has so far failed to materialise (p. 174), a post-fordist hegemonic bloc has as yet not emerged (p. 184), and the post-fordist structure remains unfinished and can still be shaped by social conflict (pp. 183; 186). Thus, as he argues in chapter V, the coercive force of the world market, together with the creation of a post-fordist competitive state, is not as sharply developed as his forgoing portrayal of a catastrophic development

suggested (p. 196). While his earlier analysis emphasised that the national state has had it as regulative power (pp. 10, 94ff), he now insists that much writing on the undermining of the regulative capacity of the national state amounts to propaganda (p. 196)! The national state, then, remains the basis for democratic renewal and new forms of international democracy have to be based on national democratic projects.[14] Furthermore, neo-liberalism's post-fordist transition is not stable (p. 169). For Hirsch, then, the neo-liberal project of unfettered market forces does not present a solution to the crisis of Fordism because it is inherently weak (p. 170). Neo-liberalism fails to generate and mobilise, on a global scale, social acquiescence to and compliance with a politics of apartheid (p. 173). In this context, he refers to the Zapatistas to support his view that the idea of revolution is out of date, that neo-liberalism is inherently weak, and that democratisation is urgently required - for Hirsch, the Zapatistas exemplify what a democratic movement might look like (pp. 204-5). [15]

What, for Hirsch, are the forces and where is, within his conceptual framework, the radical reformist agency that is capable of shaping capitalist development in a democratic manner? Hirsch avoids a direct answer and supplies, instead, a long list of what radical reformism has to achieve in order to secure global survival. For Hirsch, the crisis of Fordism and the transition to post-Fordism have led to deep social fragmentations and, as he sees it, the social antagonisms of racism, sexism, nationalism and that antagonism represented by the capital-labour relation, have resulted in a confusing web of social forces who, for structural reasons, fail to agree on concerted action. Instead, he argues, they appear to relate antagonistically to each other (pp. 130-31). He charges that radical reformism has to go beyond these fragments. In the face of a multitude of social antagonisms, he concedes that the task of construing a viable programme that satisfies the various claims at the national and global level is most difficult (p. 190).

According the Hirsch, radical reformism includes extra-institutional and institutional politics and struggles (p. 199). The aim of radical reformism is to recreate forms of political control and to reform the social and political framework within which the capitalist dynamic of accumulation might unfold in a relatively stable way (pp. 183, 195). The task of radical reformism is essentially to politicise the economic and to repoliticise the political (p. 204). Indeed, Hirsch goes so far as to argue that the programme of radical reformism has to go beyond the 'configuration' of the state (p. 194). In sum, radical reformism appears to propose to go beyond the bourgeois separation between the political and the economic. While this proposal belongs without doubt to the revolutionary tradition, the trouble with Hirsch's demand is that this 'revolutionising' is charged only with reforming the institutional structures which oversee the exploitation of labour. Radical reformism merely proposes a reconfigured framework through which capitalist

accumulation might subsist (p. 195). Thus, radical reformism is, in fact, not concerned with overcoming the bourgeois separation between the political and economic. It only wants to rearrange the structures: his proposals are silent on the issue of private property and capitalist command over labour and fail to address the issue of social autonomy from an all embracing, all-penetrating state. Indeed, within capitalist social relations, the politicisation of state and economy would imply that 'social autonomy' has to be sacrificed in favour of an all-embracing mode of regulation.[16] In essence, Hirsch reformulates social-democracy's gradualist concept of an evolutionary transformation of capitalism where social relations are lovingly - but no less firmly - regulated from the cradle to the grave.[17]

This gradualist conception of historical change supplies some hints about the organisational structure of radical reformism. Globalisation, he argues, has led, on the one hand, to a greater importance of science: society has become much more based on science than ever before (*Verwissenschaftlichung der Gesellschaft*) (p. 199). This means, on the other hand, that the traditional means available to the state to regulate social relations through money and law are no longer sufficient and effective. In order to be effective, the 'scientification' of capitalist reproduction requires the active participation of the population in the shaping of social-economic development (p. 199). For Hirsch, active participation is, however, constrained in that globalisation and post-Fordism is founded on human relations as relations between things in the most complete form (pp. 161, 181). Would the effective regulation of post-Fordism depend on the ingenuity of a *One-Dimensional Man?* Or might it be the case that the science based regulation of capitalist reproduction allows only those with scientific expertise to escape one-dimensionalism enabling them to tackle the 'irrationality' of capitalism in a just and fair manner? It appears as if the science-based reproduction of society posits the possibility of achieving a more rational, human, organisation of capitalist reproduction. However, would a more science-led social reproduction avoid the creative destruction of monetary accumulation without the unemployment of real workers, the destruction of communities, and the further devastation of the environment?

Hirsch supplies a complex list of the essential requisites required for democratisation: a truly democratic constitution that emphasises concrete, positive, constitutional values in contrast to predefined formal, abstract declarations of intent and merely negative rights; a constitution that emphasises the sovereignty of the people as an open process; the revision of some basic principles with a view to revising the existing system of representation and its institutional apparatuses in order to achieve maximum participation. Furthermore, democratic renewal has to define institutional rules and procedures that encourage the participation of all relevant social groups through, what appears to be, a form of social corporatism. This conception is summarised as a politics of 'round

table discussions' (p. 201). Lastly, he demands constitutional and institutional safeguards to ensure social cooperation through decentralised, federal political structures (p. 203). In short, Hirsch calls for 'a new constitution' (p. 202). Only on this basis will the traditional separation between human rights and the rights of citizens be overcome with a view to redefining their relation to each other in a fresh and democratic way (p. 203). The notion that radical reformism should provide a redefinition of the borderline between the rights of citizens and human rights, entails that the separation between the political and economic is not to be overcome. It is merely to be rejigged. Against this background, his silence on the most democratic experiment of democracy, that is council communism, makes sense. For Hirsch this profoundly democratic tradition does not even deserve to be acknowledged. His demand for positive proposals focuses merely on those democratic traditions that presuppose the separation between the political and the economic. In sum, Hirsch's radical reformist proposals focus merely on the rearrangement of the structures through which exploitation subsists. As he puts it, the task of radical reformism is to 'expand political control and to revise the social conditions of the capitalist accumulation dynamic' (p. 195).

Hirsch's rejection of negative critique in favour of a positive contribution does not lack a certain irony: negative critique is rejected as unpolitical because there is, at present, no revolutionary subject. For this reason, he proposes a radical reformism. Unfortunately, the radical reformist movement appears to exist in the same way as the revolutionary movement: it is absent. According to Hirsch, all that is required to make radical reformism viable is a comprehensive, radical democratic movement beyond the national state system (p. 204). Like those who are criticised by Hirsch for looking for a new revolutionary subject, Hirsch is looking for a democratic movement that would make radical reformism its own. In the absence of a democratic subject, Hirsch's radical reformism appears indeed like an endorsement of *Zeitgeist*. While *Zeitgeist* amounts usually to cheerful leaps into the spiritual, Hirsch's endeavour to make constructive proposals to overcome neo-liberalism seem visionary. The radical reformist programme is there and the only thing missing is a democratic movement that would force it upon political power (p. 204)! However, since post-Fordism is the capitalism where the one-dimensional man comes to his own, would it not appear that only those who professionally have a deep understanding of the scientific foundation of society are able to take on the task of sitting at round tables?. Hirsch's argument rather than showing the power of Marxist analysis, vindicates Weber's conception of politics as a vocation, this time for those whose spirit has not been corrupted by the power of post-fordist one-dimensionalism. [18] In short, the social antagnomism between capital and labour is levelled out to an empty conceptual shell and replaced by a 'field of tension' between, on the one hand, laizess-faire neo-

liberalism and radical reformist regulation, on the other. The question who regulates whom, and for what purpose, is not posed.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that capitalism has changed during the last thirty years since the wave of unrest that culminated in May 1968.[19] These struggles are, however, not to be found in Hirsch's work. Although he emphasises the significance of the class struggle for the development of capitalism, his argument remains essentially reductionist in its method and sociological in its conception.[20] Reductionist because Hirsch conceives 'capital' in an a priori manner; he assumes a capitalist subject whose existence and power derive from principles beyond critical judgment. Hence his sociologism: outside of 'capital' there is the really existing world of a fragmented humanity. While capital reigns supreme, relations between people are merely those of group-specific interests. Human endeavour is thus merely conceived in terms of a sociology of conflict. Hirsch translates, paraphrasing Adorno (1975), dialectical concepts, such as labour, into concepts of sociological classification, creating the belief that historical development is based on a universal subject; capital. In other words, 'capital' is not seen as an antagonistic social relation. Labour is only conceived in the form of wage labour determined by its economic position (p. 133), that is in terms of the fetishistic conception of a labouring commodity defined by its source of income.[21] Thus, the class struggle is already perceived in terms of a pluralist conception of social relations, a conception well criticised by Marx in his Trinity Formula: capital generates profits, land gives rent, and labour produces its wage (Marx, 1966, ch. 48).

Furthermore, the understanding of labour in the perverted form of wage labour leads, with logical force, to a catalogue of social antagonisms such as racism, patriarchy etc.[22] There is no doubt that these are of great importance and Hirsch is right to emphasise their significance for the reproduction of capitalist social relations. However, in Hirsch, the pluralist conception of social conflict already presupposes its resolution: capital reigns supreme. For Hirsch, social conflicts are derived from the structural contradictions of capital and are thus firmly constituted by, and embedded within, the structural framework set by capital. Hirsch's work depends on the Althusserian emphasis on structural determination of social action: 'It is always capital itself and the structures which it imposes "objectively", on the backs of the protagonists, that sets in motion the decisive conditions of class struggle and of processes of crisis' (Hirsch/Roth, 1986, p. 37). Such a view leads easily to the one conclusion that is not precluded: struggles against capitalist development have no future. Gambino's (1996, p. 45) claim that, 'for the regulationists, strikes, campaigns and conflicts at the point of

production are seen in terms of a pre-political spectrum which ranges between interesting curiosities (to which university research cannot be expected to pay attention) and residual phenomena', is well founded. It is, however, misplaced: Hirsch has time and time again emphasised that 'we have to bid farewell to some anachronistic conceptions of politics and class struggle, and that theoretically we have to complement Marx with Weber' (see Hirsch, 1984). Thus, Marx's critique of capitalist social relation has to be combined with Weber's endorsement of the principle of rational organisation - as if Marx's critique amounts merely to a critical analysis of the irrational elements of capitalism that can be overcome by good, rational, organisation.

In sum, as Clarke (1991, p. 49) has shown, Hirsch's research agenda has always been faithful, 'both politically and theoretically, to the "sociological approach" of the Frankfurt School [as represented by Offe and Habermas] with which he began'. Furthermore, since, for Hirsch, it is always capital which sets in motion the decisive conditions of class struggle, it is not surprising that his portrayal of the neo-liberal project of the post-fordist competition state appears as if it has been read off marketing books and managerial magazines. However, Hirsch's work should not be dismissed - indeed it needs to be taken seriously: the projection of post-Fordism as a global system of apartheid is indeed a frightening possibility. This is not because of 'globalisation' but because it is 'inscribed' in the capital relation from its inception. The barbarism of primitive accumulation is not only capitalism's presupposition it, also, constitutes its reproduction through the expanded accumulation of capital[23]: capitalist social relations depend on the separation of labour from the means of production and subsistence and their social constitution as private property. Hirsch's work makes clear the urgency of halting the 'sacrifice of "human machines" on the pyramids of accumulation' (Gambino, 1996, p. 55). However, for Hirsch the task so formulated is unpolitical. This makes his work and that of globalisation orthodoxy in general interesting as a study that vindicates, paraphrasing Adorno (1973), capitalist jargon as a manifest destiny.

Reassessment

Before focusing on Hirsch's notion of globalisation, it is important to note that the capital-relation subsists, from its historical inception, as a global relation. According the Marx, 'the world market ... forms the presupposition of the whole as well as its substratum' (Marx, 1973, pp. 227-28). There is nothing new about the global character of capitalist social relations. An early characterisation of the 'state' as a 'competition state' can be found in the writing of the classical political economist Ricardo. He insisted as far back as 1821 that the state should not try to protect jobs by interfering with investment because, 'if a capital is not allowed to get the greatest net revenue

that the use of machinery will afford here, it will be carried abroad', leading to 'serious discouragement to the demand for labour' (Ricardo, 1995, p. 39). Marx echoed this view in his critique of political economy when he showed that bourgeois society is concentrated in the form of the state and that the world market is the conclusion, the substratum, of bourgeois relations.

Furthermore, the 'globalisation' of competition is seen not only to have created the world market but that it, also, 'produced world history for the first time, insofar as it made all civilised nations and every individual member of them dependent for the satisfaction of their wants on the whole world' (Marx/Engels, 1974, p. 78). It is through the global dimension of the capital relation that the hard-hitting hand of the value form is imposed upon national states, so determining the class character of the state. 'The immediate implication is that the nation state cannot stand above capital, since capital is a global phenomenon. This means that it cannot stand above the law of value, to impose an alternative "political" form of regulation on capitalist production, as Hirsch [argues] it can, because the law of value is imposed on individual states, just as it is imposed on individual capitalists, through international competition' (Clarke, 1991, p. 54). Thus, the critique of political economy can not go forward from the perspective of the national state and its national economy as Hirsch argues. Following von Braunmühl (1976: p. 276), 'each national economy can only be conceptualised adequately as a specific international and, at the same time, integral part of the world market. The nation state can only be seen in this dimension'. The national state relation to 'society' has always been constituted as a relationship between the national state and the global capital relation, that is the class antagonism between capital and labour. It is this global dimension 'in which all contradictions come into play' (Marx, 1973: p. 227). Global capitalist relations, far from being a new phenomenon, have been a constituting moment of the 'state' from its inception (Burnham, 1995).

Hirsch's notion of - post-fordist - globalisation is conventional: the basis of globalisation is seen to be technology advancement, including communication systems and means of travel; economic globalisation in terms of an international flexibilisation of 'capital'; political opening of capital and financial markets; and, lastly, growing regionalisation (p. 103). Furthermore, the world-wide movement of capital is said to create and reinforce a 'multitude of national capitalisms' (Hirsch, 1989, p. 92 my emphasis; see also Hirsch, 1995, Part I). Thus, the national state is not conceived as a node through which the global relations of production acquire political definition and meaning. Rather, there are different national capitalisms bound together to different degrees and with divergent implications in relation to global 'capitalism'. Despite 'globalisation' the national state remains Hirsch's central point of reference. This neo-realist view reinforces an understanding of the separation of the political from the economic: the political is

perceived as domestic and the economic as global. National states are, however, not insulated from each other but subsist through the accumulation of capital on a global scale (Holloway 1995). This view is premised on the understanding that the political and the economic are 'distinct-in-unity' (on this: Bonefeld, 1992). In contrast, Hirsch's approach is based on the erroneous conception that the capital relation exists in a structurally preconditioned separation of the political from the economic (Clarke, 1991). His pluralist conception of a multitude of national capitalisms, and his pluralist fragmentation of the class antagonism between capital and labour into a sociology of antagonisms, only serves to reinforce the view that his proposal of a 'radical reformism' is ill-equipped to comprehend the vast implications of the crisis of capitalist accumulation over the last quarter century. The limitations of radical reformism, and of Hirsch's book as a whole, is that it accepts the fetishisation of class struggle into distinct economic and political channels, that it therefore envisages the possibility of transforming society by the mere conquest of political institutions. It is characteristic of reformism, in short, that it accepts bourgeois ideology.[24]

Postscript

The attraction of 'reformism' lies in its constructive endeavour to make the world a better world without destabilising the relations of exploitation. However, 'in the misery of our time, we find the "positive" only in negation' (Agnoli, 1992, p. 50). For Hirsch, such a view is profoundly anachronistic. What would his response be if revolts break out; or if workers merely go on strike to demand better conditions? Would their strike be deemed anachronistic and indeed unpolitical and thus counterproductive to the radical reformist project of democratising state intervention, including the democratic regulation of law and order? His denial of reason's 'historic role of, at any given time, provoking insubordination and destroying horrors' (Agnoli, 1992, p. 44) is indeed disturbing. Attempts to dismiss negative critique in favour of constructive democratic proposals for a just, socially responsible and balanced exploitation of labour find themself confronted by the paradox that the effort of 'humanising' presupposes inhuman conditions. Humanising of inhuman conditions amounts not only merely to tinkering but, also, to the endorsement of the *status quo*.

Notes

1. All page-references are to Hirsch (1995).
2. For a critique of Hirsch's work see Bonefeld (1991); Clarke (1988/1991; 1991); Gambino (1996); Holloway (1991); Pelaez/Holloway (1991) and Psychopedis (1991).

3. On this: Mandel (1987), Narazzi (1975), Bonefeld (1993, 1995), and Bonefeld/Holloway (1995).
4. Hirsch's approach supplies a mirror image of orthodox Marxist accounts that saw the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall as a law of capitalism's inevitable collapse (Grossmann 1929/1992). For Hirsch, it is merely a vehicle for the inevitable reconstruction of capitalist exploitation and domination.
5. For a critique of the periodisation of the 'state form' according to 'regulative functions' accrued by the state see Clarke (1992).
6. On this see Hirsch (1980, 1991a).
7. Hirsch conceptualisation is, at least, inconsistent. In his theoretical chapter on the form of the capitalist state, he argues that the function of the state is to ensure the political conditions for the well-functioning of capitalist accumulation. Since that is, according to Hirsch, the functional determination of capitalist state, his warning that the competition state will be faithful to its functional determination makes no sense.
8. See the volume edited by Bonefeld and Holloway (1995) for a class based analysis of this insight. There the argument is that labour, rather than being bypassed, is at the root of capital's troubles because of its continued insubordination.
9. On the global operation of capital in the second half of the 19th Century see Clarke (1988)
10. On this: Clarke (1988/1991; 1991b); Bonefeld (1991); Bellofiori (1997).
11. See footnote 1.
12. On this: Bonefeld (1995b).
13. The characterisation of conflict as a constructive conflict is intrinsic to the notion of a pluralist society and has been influential in the study of a variety of fields such as industrial relations and theories of parliamentary democracy. The understanding that conflict is endemic in a pluralist society does not mean that conflict should be provoked. It means that rules, procedures, and laws are invoked which regulate conflict and through which conflict can express itself in constructive forms. A theory of the functionality of conflict is presented, for example, by Coser (1956) and has been developed within the Marxist framework by Poulantzas (1973) upon whom Hirsch depends. On this see Agnoli (1990, 1992).
14. For clarification see Held (1991, p. 158): Democracy 'can no longer be elaborated as a theory of the territorially polity alone, nor can the nation-state be displaced as a central point of reference'.
15. Hirsch alludes to the Zapatistas as a post-modernist form of resistance (p. 204). This view is symptomatic. Post-modernism's treatment of resistance as 'empty significance' (Laclau, 1994) stands as a reminder that, for the regulationists, 'capital' is the only significant subject.
16. Of course, 'autonomy' is a highly unclear concept. Nevertheless, within Hirsch's own conceptual framework, social autonomy is important. This is not because he projects autonomy in terms of a revolutionary demand for social autonomy, and thus the abolition of the form of the state. His conception of autonomy is construed in terms of a social autonomy within capitalism. This is entailed in the term 'statification' which implies that there is something outside the state's regulative supervision and that this something is more and more subjected to the loving embrace of an extended security state. It appears as if radical reformism's quest for politicisation seeks to replace neo-liberalism's 'evil' statification of society by the 'good' regulation of the new citizenship.
17. See Naphtali's (1928/1969) concept of industrial democracy and social-democratic visions of a just and fair capitalism based on citizenship rights for the whole of society. Such 'politicisation' battled against revolutionary disintegration and sought, instead, to subsume the potentially subversive under

the obligation of responsibility. Would Hirsch's conception of a 'politicised economy' not subsume workers under the same obligation, thus transforming their potential discontent into the responsible acceptance that efficient exploitation of their labour power is required in order to weather global capitalist competition?

18. See Weber (1984, p. 330) on the proper role and function of intellectuals: 'The state ... expects from special social groups guidance for its economic and political disposition and support for its policies. And since researchers belong to the ruling segment of society ... they have a natural interest in a system which privileges them' (my translation).

19. On this see: Bonefeld/Holloway (1995); and Negri (1988, 1989, 1992).

20. See Clarke (1991); Psychopedis (1991); and Bonefeld (1992).

21. For a critique of such a view see Bonefeld (1995b) and Holloway (1995c).

22. Hirsch's sociology of social antagonisms denies the insight that theoretical mysteries find their solution in the human practice and in the comprehension of this practice (cf. Marx). In classic political economy, society was understood in terms of its economic constitution. On this, the classic statement is provided by William Robertson (1890, p. 104) who argued that 'in every inquiry concerning the operation of men when united together in society, the first object of attention should be their mode of subsistence'. While this contention might strike some as utterly reductionist, it is nevertheless true to say that without food, shelter, clothing and other material pleasures, post-modernist inquiries into the non-existence of definite social relations would be quite impossible. Paraphrasing Bertold Brecht, the order of things is bread first post-modernist sociology later.

23. As Marx (1972, p. 272) saw it, capitalist 'accumulation merely presents as a continuous process what in primitive accumulation appears as a distinct historical process, as the process of the emergence of capital'.

24. This paraphrases an insight borrowed from Holloway and Picciotto (1976).

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Marxism and Subjectivity: searching for the marvellous
(Prelude to a Marxist notion of action)[1]

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Introduction

> Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. It is, rather, the subject that is missing in desire (Deleuze and Guattari).
>
> But the thrust of Capital is to reveal that under seemingly abstract, impersonal, economic categories, a great human drama is taking place (R. Bernstein).
>
> Politics is the realm of the material imagination (A. Negri).
>
> The imagination is not arbitrary, it is revealing (E. Ionesco).

Altered States, a movie produced in the late 1970s, was a striking movie. Its significance lies in the bizarre attempt of the protagonist to "come back" to the beginning. Throughout his journey, he experiences the extremely odd sensation - long forgotten - of the (un)consciousness of his own boundaries; and explores his own capacity to transform himself into something else by challenging the form of his materiality. In this way, he achieves the objective of de-integration: he becomes merely a large ball of radiant energy. Like the Great Houdini, he de-codifies himself by becoming both nothing and everything, challenging space and time. Nevertheless, in order to exist, he had to recover his boundaries, he had to recover a body, i.e. a form and a content, with the help of other people. However, he is not the same man he was before going through the experience of abandoning himself to the obscure forces of life energy. Nor are the others.

As in physics, social energy is permanently being transformed. Modern times (and post-modern times?) symbolise the fragmentation of individual energies. Therefore, thousands of words have been written about how to agree, consent, connect, concede, associate,

congregate, converge, organise, and so on. However, the isolation that we create could be an idealisation: "...quantum mechanics allows us to idealise a *photon* from the fundamental unbroken unity so that we can study it. In fact, a photon seems to become isolated from the fundamental unbroken unity because we are studying it".[2] There are some fundamental questions here: how do we recover the immanent energy which is, at the same time, ours and everyone's energy? How do we dissolve the boundaries between the self and the social? How do we de-codify ourselves and achieve a different way of being? How do we transgress? Regarding both the mind-body problem and the relationship between the self and the social, these questions are addressed by inquiring about the subject.

These issues and the debate around them have been basically explored in many different ways by liberal individualism (with either methodological, epistemological or ethical emphasis), by dialectical communitarian approaches and by poststructuralist-postmodern positions.[3] As far as Marxism is concerned, although there are some seminal works on these issues,[4] it still lacks a proper and renewed interrogation about the subject of class struggle. Specially, as Cleaver puts it, "...Marxism still fails to grasp the *particularity* in the attempt to theorise the whole". Thus, what is required is "an ability to grasp simultaneously the nature of the totality that capital has sought to impose, the diversity of self activity which has resisted that totality, and the evolution of each in terms of the other" (Cleaver, 1993:35). Cleaver's question about "how Marxism can explain the particularity and the whole at the same time" is entirely political and demands an exploration of the particularity, both as a component and as a fragment of the social.[5] In view of the collapse of the communist regimes it emerged quite clearly that another reality lurked so that the failure might also be found in the impossibility for workers of becoming a concrete revolutionary subjectivity, and that the conception of what "revolutionary" should be cannot be theoretically determined regardless of workers" experiences. It is still necessary to grasp capitalist social relations of production as constituting our-selves i.e. as a contradictory process of constitution of subjectivity.

Within Marxism, studies and research on the "subject" were in general labelled "culturalist". This would not be a problem if this had not been done with the intention of underestimating the issue as being a minor theme compared to, for instance, the study of the laws of capital accumulation or the crisis of the state. Nevertheless, Socialist Humanism did reject the base-superstructure model, by emphasising the creative character of workers' struggles. Against Structuralism, which was supposed to be able to explain the whole, but failed to locate the subjects of class struggle in its analysis, those intellectuals criticised capitalist fetishism "from the standpoint of the experience of those who live within those social relations" as "the collective experience of oppression in all its forms" (Clarke 1979:144; see also Callinicos, 1989). However, Socialist Humanism's weakness

did not lie in its "culturalism" or "subjectivism", but in its rejection of any holistic interpretation of struggles, and above all in its lack of any teleology which prevented it from understanding the unity of the fragmented struggles (Clarke, 1979).

As for Autonomism and the Theory of Class Composition, they have both been concerned with the diversity of autonomous movements within the working class (see Cleaver, 1979, 1993; Holloway, 1995). The approaches stressed the notion of labour's self activity – founded on the *inversion* of the class perspective as advocated by Tronti (see Bonefeld, 1994), and centred their analysis on class struggle rather than focusing on capitalist development. To Cleaver, Autonomist development was "both theoretical and political enrichment of Marxist theory" because "the concept of political recomposition theoretically articulates the central role of working class struggle at the heart of technological change" (Cleaver in Bonefeld *et al* 1992:114). In the light of Italian Autonomism, Negri offered the term "working class self-valorisation" to theorise such a development of working class autonomy. Based on difference and plurality (Ryan, 1982), self-valorisation "designates the positive moments of working class autonomy" – where the negative moments are made up of workers" resistance to capital domination. Alongside the power of refusal or the power to destroy capital determination, we find in the midst of working-class recomposition the power of creative affirmation, the power to constitute new practices (Cleaver in Bonefeld *et al,* 1992: 129).

Undoubtedly, as Holloway asserts, "Autonomist theory has been crucial in reasserting the nature of struggle". However, "...the real force of Marx's theory of struggle lies not in the reversal of the polarity between capital and labour, but in its dissolution" (Holloway in Bonefeld *et al,* 1995: 164). In this way, the critique of Autonomism puts forward the criticism that, in order to stress the liberation (self-valorisation) of the working class, it maintained the separation between capital and labour. Thus, to Bonefeld, the approach "destroys the insight that labour is a constitutive power...capital is conceived as a subject in its own right...the inversion of the class perspective is dependent upon two 'subjects'" (Bonefeld, 1994: 44). Holloway and Bonefeld argue that both structuralist and autonomist approaches share a very similar problem – the externality imposed on labour and capital as two "independent subjects" – so that the inner connection between capital and labour must be re-established basically because, as Holloway explains, people are the sole creators: "it is labour alone which constitutes social reality. There is no external force, our own power is confronted by nothing but our own power, albeit in alienated form" (Holloway, 1993:19). Labour exists in and against capital for capital is labour existing "in a mode of being denied" (Bonefeld, 1994: 51). The terms integration and transcendence offered by Bonefeld (1994) aim to conceive this contradictory mode of existence of labour.

Having said that, a question remains: how do subjects as

concrete persons experience that contradictory mode of being? For although it is true that within Structuralism "the condemned human being is, in fact, a "nobody" " (Bonefeld in Bonefeld *et al*, 1995:186), who is it when references are made to labour being "in" and "against" capital?[6] On the one hand, in his critique of Autonomism, Bonefeld argues that "Autonomist approaches need [thus] to be deepened *into a critique of the social existence* of labour as a power which constitutes, suffuses and contradicts perverted forms" (Bonefeld 1994:51). On the other hand, while Negri posed the question of "how can we verify the real possibility of a constitutive praxis" (Negri, 1991a:183), Cleaver is concerned with the specific expression of self-valorising activities. As he puts it, "the struggle against all forms of domination requires the refusal of [such] theoretical imperialism and much more open, imaginative attempts to understand alternative ways of being in their own terms" (Cleaver in Bonefeld 1992:134).

It is in the light of these ideas that this paper aims to re-locate the subject within the process of *in* and *against*, in order to explore transgressive action. Therefore, what I have to offer here are some tentative suggestions as to how a Marxist notion of action might be developed. To look at both creative action when it develops "in and against", and "in and against" giving birth to creative action, requires an in-depth investigation into particularity. To that purpose, class struggle has to be conceived mainly as a struggle to constitute "subjectivity", that is, as the contradictory movement of acceptance and negation of capitalist relationships from the subjects, for, as Holloway highlights, "if society is nothing but subjectivity and its objectivation, it follows that subjectivity (practice) is the only possible starting point for the comprehension of society...the world can only be understood subjectively, critically, negatively, from below" (Holloway in Bonefeld *et al* 1995:172).

Therefore, in what follows I will explore action. In a nutshell, my argument is that in order for action of a transgresive nature to take place, at least the Cartesian premises of the distinction between mind and body, as well as the notion of instrumental action, must be overcome in praxis, and that the means whereby the overcoming must be achieved is unavoidably contradictory. Thereby, after understanding the process of valorisation of capital as the same process as that of alienation, I will critically address these two Cartesian premises: the first, by revisiting Spinoza's notion of action as the unity between mind and body; and the second by presenting an example of the constitution of characters' subjectivity in drama. Eventually, I will suggest that a prerequisite to a Marxist explanation of the whole and the particular at the same time is the comprehension of action as de-alienation, wherein subjects, as concrete persons, become again the core of the analysis of capital.

Marx, Spinoza and Stanislavsky: against Descartes

1. (De)valorisation of capital as a process of (de)alienation

In *Capital* and *Grundrisse* Marx completed his critique of capitalist society and his notion of alienation in a more sophisticated way than in the *1844 Manuscripts*; that is, he went further in explaining the process of valorisation of capital as involving the whole reproduction of society. Indeed, Marx never abandoned the notion of alienation in his "mature" works, but rather he improved it, for the metamorphosis of capital was to him the metamorphosis of people as people, their relationship with and against others and their creativity transformed into things and forms.[7] Certainly, insofar as "class struggle ...is no less central for the Marx of *Capital* than it was for the Marx who had written the *Communist Manifesto* nearly twenty years earlier" (Holloway in Bonefeld et al 1992: 150), it must be de-codified in such a way that the subject appears again as the core of that struggle.

Simultaneously to the valorisation of capital, an endless process of alienation takes place. Thus, "the theory of valorisation is the theory of the way in which capital subordinates, transforms and utilises human productive activities for its own purpose: endless command over society" (Cleaver in Bonefeld 1992:116). Albeit seemingly as an everyday life routine, the metamorphoses of capital – that is money transformed into commodities, money transformed into productive capital and commodities becoming commodity capital – is the same process of self-estrangement, the estrangement of man from man, and the creation of a world view, wherein social relations are fetishised under the form of "things". Now, if the process of valorisation of capital is, at the same time, an endless process of alienation, the process of "liberation" is also an endless process of de-alienation. However, in so far as there is no such thing as autonomy of labour, both alienation and de-alienation are contradictory and complex processes which are expressed within the subject.

2. Unity as necessity

In a recent book, Joas (1996) has called into question the principles on which the sociological theory of action is based, since the idea of creativity occupied a marginal position. By this criterion, three tacit assumptions that the theory of action based on rational action entails have to be rejected: that "the actor is capable of purposive action" , that "he has control over his own body" and that "he is autonomous vis-à-vis his fellow human beings and environment" (*ibid.*:147).[8] This rejection requires, as Joas explains, an analysis of a non-teleological interpretation of the intentionality of action, the constitution of the body schema and primary sociality respectively (ibid.). Thus, he proposes "the alternative to a teleological interpretation of action, with its inherited dependence on Cartesian dualisms" in conceiving "of perception and cognition not as preceding

action but rather as a phase of action" (*ibid*:158). This alternative is entirely Spinozian.

According to Descartes, firstly "man consists of two radically different substances" (mind and body), which are united into one individual; and secondly reason has "the unlimited capacity to control and direct passion" (Feldman in Spinoza 1992: 13). So, when Descartes asks in the second of his *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641) "what then am I?" he answers: "A thing that thinks. What is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions" (Descartes quoted by Bakhurst and Sypnowich, 1995: 2). Then, "the Cartesian self is, in its very nature, disembodied" and it is "a profoundly asocial phenomenon" (*ibid.*: 3, emphasis added).[9] "Bodies are not properly speaking known by the senses or by the faculty of the imagination, but by the understanding only, and...they are not known from the fact that they are seen or touched, but only because they are understood" (Descartes: *Mediations* quoted by Taylor, 1994:145). This hegemony of reason expresses "what it naturally tends to mean to us today, that reason controls, in the sense that it instrumentalizes the desires" (Taylor 1994:147, emphasis added).

Contrary to this, Spinoza"s notion of the human mode – against Greek, Medieval or Cartesian philosophy"s moralistic condemnation of human emotion – is one of unity (Feldman in Spinoza, 1992:15, intro.).[10] Spinoza considers a human being "as a mode of extension, a body, or as a mode of thought, a mind" (ibid.: 14). As Morris puts it, "there seems to be neither dualism (as with Descartes) nor the reduction of thought to material bodies (as with Hobbes). If there is only one order of nature, it seems inadmissible to speak of the body and mind as two different orders" (Morris, 1991:24). The relationship between mind and body in Spinoza"s account "is not one of causal interaction but one of identity" (Rosenthal, 1971:7) which has interesting implications for his notion of action.

When does an emotion (affect) become action for Spinoza? When we have an "adequate idea" of it. If an affect is understood clearly and distinctly then it becomes action (we are the cause of it).[11] An emotion adequately understood makes a person an agent of self-knowledge; "lacking such knowledge an individual is merely a passive recipient of internal and external stimuli" (Feldman in Spinoza, 1992:15). Knowledge is important because "...to be free is ...to cause things to happen according to our understanding of the way things are and ought to be" (*ibid.*: 16). Freedom is a form of self-determinism and virtue is power as the capacity to act. It is freedom not as free choice but as necessity wherein action and its conceptualisation run together. Thus, in the Spinozian resolution of the paradoxical relation between mind and body, passion, if well canalised, is "good", because it is related to the possibility of creation and activity, self-determination and knowledge. Like Marx, Spinoza conceived human beings as social. Spinoza's notion of "Potencia" represents the singularity within the whole. As Negri highlights,

"free necessity is...the foundation of Spinozian politics" (Negri 1991a:190), where power is against Power. Thus, Potentia is the dynamic and constitutive inherence of the single in the multiplicity, of mind and body...", that is, "power against Power - where potestas is presented as the subordination of the multiplicity...and of potencia"(*ibid.*:191-2).

3. Action: Threefold contradiction towards the unity

Once it is accepted, as a requirement to understand human action and its creativity, that both the recognition of corporeality and the unity between body and reason are different "extensions" of the same "essence", then the question follows: is there any possibility to understand how that unity is achieved in and against as a practical overcoming of the Cartesian splits? As stated before, the theoretical rejection of the three components of instrumental notions of human action has to be overcome in praxis.

I intend to put in and against in motion "dramatically"; theatre is not epic but dramatic: a play "consists of a series of states of consciousness, or situations which become intensified, grow more and more dense, then get entangled, either to be disentangled again or to end in unbearable inextricability" (Ionesco in Esslin, 1991 :190).[12] Therefore, an example of how actors constitute their subjectivity with a materialistic and dialectic method of performing on the stage will help us to see the inner connection in motion, namely, the achievement of the unity through contradiction. It is to Stanislavsky that I now turn.

The Russian director Stanislavsky developed two methods of actoral technique: introspection and physical actions. By using the first method, actors are asked to recreate the characters' subjectivity – "objectively" determined either by the author or by the director – by evoking their own feelings. When the actors reproduce the director's instructions of a predetermined plan, contradictions are rarely achieved on the stage for the actors have to undertake two apparently separated tasks. The first task is done through introspection or evocation. The actors have to feel first like murderers, which is accomplished through their inner search for hatred. Once they arrive at the "feeling", the second task is for the actor to establish contact with the partner. The connection is difficult to achieve and the result, in general, is an imitation of a similar situation in real life. This obliges the actors to uncover feelings that they may not have felt before, feelings which are very far from their own lives and experiences. The conflict is hidden. The "small truth" is not achieved. As Serrano puts it, the scene is almost always one where "human interrelation appears as the result of two introspecting and parallel monologues" (Serrano, 1981:54, emphasis added).

Conversely, the method of physical actions – which improved and eventually replaced the first one – not only entails actors'

feelings, but also allows for the creation of an organic relationship on the stage. This process is referred to as the here and now on the stage which consists of three types of conflict: conflicts within themselves, conflicts with the partner and conflicts with the environment. The written play becomes the scenario whereby the conflict develops, rather than the means of expressing internal emotions. (Serrano, 1981). Stanislavsky explained it to his students in this way: "Let us suppose you have a knife in your hand with which...you have to kill your rival. Your thought, divided between the weapon (knife) and the action (murder) will not permit you to forge that unity of action out of your body and energy which should have for the audience the stamp of truth"... thus ..."when you have gathered all the power of your thought on the knife, you can begin to widen the circle of your concentrated thought. Do not attempt to change anything in your state of mind, but transfer your thought from the knife to its object ... your rival" (Stanislavsky in Magarshack, 1973:145). As we see, the instructions are first to concentrate on the physical action, namely, examine the knife. The connection between your thought and your hand will be done by the impulse: trust because you are a unity! The second step involves facing the victim, facing his/her reactions. The third step incorporates the act of killing but in interaction with the victim and the environment (what to do with the blood, the police, the neighbours, and so on).

Three points deserve to be emphasised here: first, that Stanislavsky and his followers thought that "an actor feels his thoughts physically, and can hardly restrain his inner calls to action" (*ibid.*:51, emphasis added). Secondly, he believed that not all activity was a physical action. Whilst the former is banal and uninteresting, the latter implies a meaning for the actor (he examines the knife – activity – "to give himself time to see, judge, make a precise strategy, and then he begins his attack" – physical action – Richards, 1995:31). Thirdly, it was necessary to start inside the actor: "if you were going to be guided only by pointed instructions you would be carrying out the objective I gave you, because you would be doing blindly what the author says, you would parrot his lines" (Torstov in Stanislavsky, 1963:218, emphasis added).

Therefore, facing the task of killing someone, the actors, as units, live the three types of conflicts that I described above. These conflicts are (within) the relationship. While the actor examines the knife, he/she has a conscious conflict with him/herself: the dilemmas are to kill or not to kill, how, and when. The conflict with the partner arises in the opposition of interests. It is obvious that the partner, at least at first glance, (if not sleeping) is supposed to react. However, he/she has also his/her own contradictions (maybe the killer is a brother, or they are in love, or simply, he wanted to die!). The third type of conflict is related to situations that the actors cannot manage even when they understand them, which depends on the general development of conflicts within the dramatic structure

(we do not know the role of this murder within the global contradiction of the play).

One of the marvellous consequences of the physical actions" method is that the chain of actions and inter-actions that appear on the stage cannot be prevented.[13] In general, actors are not murderers. Neither have they ever felt the necessity to kill anyone. On stage, they did not need to "feel" like murderers before killing the partner. They, as creative actors, constituted the personality of a murderer here and now by going through the conflicts I described, by expressing the physical actions required to achieve their objective. It is through action that they are able to unify mind and body, and that unification fosters a sort of potentially transgressive action.

Creative action as de-alienation: towards the unity.

In the past, to follow a plan was misleading. How could we "think" of a better world from this world? On the one hand, if we do this "theoretically", we will again be not only detached from praxis but also against it. Let us say that the failure of the Soviet - type regimes was also the impossibility of the *recovery*[14] of unity. Theory was imposed like a screenplay in a sort of Stanislavskian (and Stalinist) first method: workers were to play a revolutionary role. Communist theory was to give rationality to the spontaneity of the masses. With such a theory, there was neither a personal starting point, nor was the experience that led to a new way of being taken into account. The Cartesian split which indicates that mind, i.e. theory, governs the body, i.e. anger, love, desire, impulse, struggle, revolts, was definitely maintained. The screenplay was repeated and reproduced by actors, regardless of "real" life feelings and desires, which were taking place elsewhere. It is important to remember that any theoretical elaboration is also "in and against".[14] On the other hand, if we act spontaneously, and deny theorising, such action would be devoid of the possibility of capitalising on experience. Theory and practice should definitely run together.

Within some specific situations, social subjects transgress the established order through collective action, call into question the splits that govern their lives. In these positive moments, here and now they unify themselves because political action becomes freedom as necessity. And very often "theory" – unable to explain these new constitutions of subjects and struggles – simply deny them by avoiding their incorporation into the "revolutionary agenda". The recovering of the constitutive power is expressed not as a whole, but as specific "moments of creative subjectivity" in a particular time and space.[16]

It seems to be quite clear that the challenge for actors is creatively to go through those conflicts and build the character"s subjectivity through action. Social subjects do also creatively go through social contradiction, but the challenge is to recover the

power of creativity. It seems that in both cases the achievement of unity and conflictive action are unavoidable.

What the exercise shows is first that, at least in the example, those three theoretical presuppositions that the rational action schema entails (Joas 1996) were overcome in praxis. That is, the example is indeed an example of "creative action", for the actor was neither autonomous vis-à-vis his partner, nor did she have complete control of her own body, nor did her intention have a teleological connotation. Conversely, what we see is that the primary intention of killing could have been modified by internal contradictions, by the relationship with the partner – who is not just a target for action but "the other". Secondly, and most important for Marxism, as far as "actors feel thoughts physically", the identity of the character was not an alien identity given by the screenplay but one which had a subjective meaning for the actor-character. And it is exactly this subjective meaning which allows her to also be "the other", "with the other", "against" the other and "beyond" the other. That is, the constitution of subjectivity is realised by going through three conflicts (within oneself, with the other and with the whole/social).

I have shown then that action in theatre consists of at least three types of conflicts that actors are obliged to go through with the Stanislavskian method of physical actions. It is possible to state that social action also consists of these kind of conflicts, or better, that the process of "in and against" – which is the same process of (de)valorisation of capital and (de)alienation – entails these kind of conflicts. The decision to take part in a collective action depends on three aspects: on one's own questions and answers, doubts and belief (socially created, but individually assumed); on the interaction with others, which includes agreement, confrontation, organisations; and on the global "political" situation.[17] The process of de-alienation (or de-valorisation of capital) could be understood as a process within which the subject struggles to constitute its unity in contradiction by going through those conflicts described above, which are in no way "conflicts of interest" but the expression of class struggle within the subject. This is the inner connection in motion. However, it is only *ex-post facto* that we can think that a collective action has been a creative action.

Eventually, I think that Marxism must incorporate in its agenda the analysis of action in terms of unity against the empty concept of "interest" that capitalism brings. In other words, in order to come back to the scream,[18] Marxism would need to further develop a notion of subjectivity in action, in terms of a materialist critique of the theory of action.[19] Although human action is inherently creative it is also necessary to de-construct the forms through which that creativity expresses itself. Moreover, in general the theory of action takes for granted some premises which are the result of social relations. If there is a need to understand action, it might be an exploration of *political* action, *namely, action as de-alienation.* Basically, transgression can be seen as the constant struggle *in* and

against capitalistic (de)-codification which separates desire from action,[20] a process of discovering of ourselves. The process of *de-alienation* is then the movement of de-construction of the circuit of capital reproduction *from and within the subject*. The subversiveness of social action lies in that it entails the search for the recovery of the *particularity* within the whole.

Notes

1. The first version of this article was the paper "Marxism and subjectivity, under the direction of Stanislavsky" presented at the 26th CSE Conference "Restructuring the left" at Newcastle, University of Northumbria, 12-14 July 1996. I would like to thank to Werner Bonefeld, Simon Clarke, Charla Huck, Jane Garrett and Mike Neary for their support and criticism. I am also grateful to the editorial board of *Common Sense* for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper. Further comments and critiques are welcome (E_Mail address: syrdp@ice.csv.warwick.ac.uk).
2. Zukav, G 1979 *The dancing Wu Li Masters. An overview of the new Physics*, Rider/Hutchinson: London: 95.
3. On this, see Mulhall S and Swift A 1995, and Coole, 1995. For a Marxist approach to the issue of subjects and structures see Callinicos, 1989.
4. For instance, see Backhaus, 1992 for a critical appraisal of subject-object relation in Marxist critical theory.
5. Cleaver's question refers to the collective particularity, i.e how to explain the diversity and multiplicity of collective self-activity. Nevertheless, he asserts that although Negri's work "has tended to use the term self- valorisation in discussing the macro class subject [but] the concept however, can also be useful in thinking about the dynamics of individual autonomy" (Cleaver in Bonefeld et al, 1992:142 – footnote 52).
6. Alienation is not perceived directly by people. Even when we are aware of fetishism, the concrete forms in which the illusion develops contrast with the theoretical elimination of the separation between capital and labour. In his "early" works Marx stressed that there were two "constituents' ("two" parts in opposition related in a special form), which have to pass from the "unmediated or mediated unity of the two" to the second stage of opposition, "the two in opposition, mutually excluding each other" (*Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*: 126). Alienation exists not only in labour as labour but also in labour as capital: the split of both presupposes the existence of two subjectivities confronted within class struggle. In Negri"s words "the circulation of capital intervenes...to allow the dualism of the concept to explode and to take the form of a duality of subjects. But always on the same basis, that of a continuous process that never stops" (Negri, 1991b:131).
7. The notion prevails that there are two 'Marx:es' the philosopher and the economist. But this notion ignores the unity of Marx's thought. As Bernstein says, "it is ironic that so many Marxist scholars have failed to appreciate the dialectical character of Marx"s own development" (Bernstein, 1971:56). See also Clarke, 1991. For an opinion to the contrary see Joas, 1996:98-99.
8. In his book he explores these three tacit assumptions as "the intentional character of human action, the specific corporeality and the primary sociality of all human capacity for action" (p.148).
9. Descartes' claim that "while one can doubt the existence of any material object, including one's own body, one cannot doubt the existence of one's own soul"

(Rosenthal, 1971: 6) confirms the separation between soul and body he holds.
10. According to Spinoza, this does not imply that passion should not be controlled. As Feldman points out, emotion had to be understood and effectively controlled (ibid. 17), *not* because of a moral need but because if we do not control passion, we suffer.
11. Descartes did not want to get rid of passions but rationally control them (Taylor 1994:150-51) and for Spinoza action is passion with an adequate idea of it. The main difference in this regard between these intellectuals is that whilst for Spinoza, body and mind are equivalent, for Descartes reason remains in control.
12. Furthermore, for Kariel (1978: 91)"the politics of liberalism brings out some of man's least attractive traits first by splitting the individual from society, private life from public life, and the means to achieve ends from the ends themselves, and then by keeping the separated entities in a frozen state... discussing works of art because [they] can serve as models to loosen up the frozen polarities of liberalism".
13. An example can illustrate this: in the movie *The Cement Garden*, directed by Birkin, the mother dies. Her four children find her lying in bed. They try to cover the mother's body with a blanket. However, the blanket is too short. One of them covers her face, but by doing this, the mother's feet appear. The brother pulls the blanket again to cover the feet, and then the face appears. They began to play a game and start laughing! It would have been almost impossible to plan an action like that, because common sense indicates that, when the mother dies, children cry. However, the scene was absolutely truthful: this is the method of physical actions.
14. On "the Soviet self" see Mikhailov 1995.
15. This statement entails self-criticism, for any rational cognitive activity is incomplete if it is separated from emotional commitment (this is not a moral or ethical need but a political one).
16. In Negri's words "we must insist on the fact that no teleology is given for this development. Every result is appreciable only a posteriori" (Negri in Bonefeld et al 1992:80).
17. Class struggle is frequently located at a second aspect, i.e. the conflict with the partner through capital and labour opposition. But that focus obliges us to look at capital and labour as separated and autonomous objects of class struggle.
18. As Holloway expressed it :"In the beginning was the scream. A scream of anger, a scream of horror" (Holloway 1995:155).
19. See a critical appraisal on Marxist theory of action in Callinicos 1993.
20. Deleuze and Guattari's *Body without Organs*, which repulses desiring machines is, as they explain, a fantastic mirror of the social absorbing and codifying desires (Deleuze & Guattari, 1990).

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impoverished the rural poor and made them wage-dependent. David Richardson and E. W. Evans discuss the importance of the profits from Britain's imperial trade, including that in slaves, in creating the conditions for industrial primacy.

Theodore Koditschek, in an impressively documented and fluently written study, surveys the rise of a distinctively Marxist British social history, whose outstanding work he takes to be E. P. Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class*. He then considers the current crisis of confidence among Marxists provoked, among other things, by the 'post-structuralist' challenge. He argues that 'a serious examination of the historical dynamics of gender and nationality in the development of modern capitalism is not only compatible with historical materialism....the best and most insightful work on these topics has been conducted in a systemic and materialist, rather than a narrowly culturalist or post-structuralist, frame.'

Richard Farnetti argues that Japanese investment in Britain has not increased employment. In the course of his paper he makes a very important point, namely, that the success of the Japanese 'model' exemplified by Toyota, utilising such apparently neutral technical devices as 'just-in-time' sourcing, had a hidden premise - the destruction of the Japanese Trade Union movement. Once this is understood the way is open to admit a paradoxical thesis - that Henry Ford is the true progenitor of Toyotism! (Farnetti draws here on a French paper by Robert Boyer.) The argument is that Ford's vision was never realised in the USA because the motor giants got bogged down in a series of major labour struggles and were unsuccessful in disciplining the American working-class sufficiently to force it to accept full-scale flexibility. Only in Japan was this vision achieved. (This should give pause to those categorising Japanese industry as 'post-Fordist'.) As Farnetti points out, the Japanese have been careful to chose sites in Britain where they anticipate the work-force will be sufficiently docile to accept their methods.

The next chapter, by Stuart Coupe, is an empirically-based study of South African industry under apartheid. Then come Leonard Gomes on French financial policy between the wars, and Keith Gibbard on the failings of the French 'Regulation School'. István Mészáros deals with the way History has been conceptualised, from the time of the Greeks to the present. He argues that only Marxism provides a genuine historical consciouness, and that bourgeois consciousness in one way or another suppresses questions of historical temporality for ideological reasons. He pays particular attention to Vico, Hegel, and Hannah Arendt.

I come last to Cyril Smith's challenging paper 'Hegel, Economics and Marx's Capital'. Smith correctly argues that Marx was not an 'economist' devoted to 'explaining capitalism' better, but wanted to expose and oppose the inhuman power of capital. In passing he remarks that the so-called 'three sources' (German philosophy,

British political economy, and French socialism) were in fact targets of Marx's criticism. (This is true: Marxism is not their sum total; it is the outcome of making each negate the others; Marx's synthesis was truly original in superseding all its sources in locating their failings in their social and historical limits.)

Smith's paper turns on questions of method and, in particular, he scrutinises the claim that Marx simply 'applied' Hegel's dialectic. Lenin thought this; but Smith's main source is recent work in this vein by Tony Smith (e.g. his *The Logic of Marx's Capital*, 1990). (I am going to resolve the problem of the coincidence of Smiths by henceforward taking the liberty of using the first names.)

The crucial problem with such a claim is that according to Hegel's own account his logical categories were not empty forms but inseparably connected with their content. Cyril asks pertinently 'But in that case how could Marx have "applied" Hegel's method to his own very different content?' (I have made this point myself; and I have my own answer to it which Cyril neglects to notice.) According to Tony Hegel did not apply his own method correctly, but Cyril thinks something deeper is involved. He charges Tony with misunderstanding the work of both thinkers in presenting Marx's *Capital* as 'a systematic theory of economic categories ordered according to a dialectical logic taken over from Hegel'. Cyril believes Tony thereby reduces the whole thing to yet another interpretation of the world. More subtly, Cyril argues that such a split between a logic and its application means that logic cannot investigate itself and that Hegel in both his logic and his phenomenology tried to make thought thus self-reflexive.

Turning now to Cyril's own reading of *Capital*, he argues that the critique of political economy consists at bottom in showing how it naturalises forms which are essentially crazy. However, Cyril runs into trouble because, with Marx, he has to acknowledge these forms have 'objective validity' in our epoch. As such their necessity must be explained; so after all Marx 'does seem to follow what Tony Smith calls "the systematic ordering" of the categories of political economy, for he developed his critique of them in the order in which these are given in bourgeois society'. So 'explanation' comes back in.

Cyril is not able to articulate coherently the explanatory and critical moments of Marx's enterprise. Not that this is easy. Marx wrote in a letter to Lassalle that his presentation of the system was at the same time a critique of it. Elsewhere I have tried to show how this could be so. (In citing my work on p.243 Cyril gives entirely the wrong reference: correct is 'Hegel's Logic and Marx's Capital' in *Marx's Method in Capital* edited by Fred Moseley, Humanities Press 1993.) But Cyril claims my reading is based on a mistranslation. In truth it is not; rather, we disagree about what Marx means by 'the system of bourgeois economy'. I take it to refer to the 'objectively valid' lunacies that Marx intended to trace and criticise; but Cyril thinks it means the body of work called 'political economy' - this is supposed to be the target of Marx's critique; Cyril says that Marx

was not 'criticising' the capitalist system but intent on overthrowing it (p.244). This makes no sense to me: in passing Marx makes critical remarks about political economy as a body of theory but his main target was capital itself; in describing it as exploitative and the value-form underpinning it as 'crazy', what else was Marx doing but criticising it?

In conclusion, Porcupine Press are to be congratulated on publishing a volume of such high scholarly standard; it is to be hoped that it will be acquired by all Libraries.

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