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# Beyond Scientism and Irrationalism

## TAKIS FOTOPOULOS

Thanassis Kalomalos' (T.K.) critique raises, either explicitly or implicitly, a number of important issues that I will try to discuss briefly here. The issues raised explicitly are, first, the feasibility and desirability of a "scientific" liberatory project and, second, the causes of the crisis of left politics. The implicit issue is whether discarding marxist scientism implies a retreat to general relativism and post-modern conformism or, alternatively, whether it leads to some kind of irrationalism and spiritualism of the type that is frequently adopted widely both in the North (revival of the old religions, adoption of some spiritualist "fruits" from the East, e.g., Taoism, etc.) and in the South (Muslim fundamentalism).

### The "Scientific" Character of the Liberatory Project

As I tried to show in my article[1], the marxist attempt to ground the socialist project on "scientific" or "objective" foundations was both untenable and, as History has proven, undesirable as well, because of its negative social implications. As regards, first, the possibility of a scientific interpretation of social change (on which Marx attempted to base the inevitability of a socialist society), I tried to show that such an interpretation was non-feasible. This non-feasibility arises not only within the positivist framework of what objectivity and science are about (the point of view that T.K. wrongly attributes to my analysis) but also within the framework of the various approaches used to describe marxist methodology.

Thus, as far as positivist methodology is concerned, the very aim of the first part of my article was to show the positivists' inability to establish objective truths, in any way we define objectivity, that is, either as tradition-independent truths (the material notion of objectivity) or as tradition-independent *ways of finding* truths (the formal notion of objectivity)[2]. The implication of this inability to establish "objective truths" is that what

counts as “scientific” today is in fact, as I pointed out, Aa function of the degree of *intersubjectivity*, that is, of the degree of consensus achieved among the theorists in a particular discipline[3]. This fact could easily explain why natural sciences are characterised as more mature than social sciences, given the higher degree of intersubjectivity among its practitioners (that could *actually* be achieved at a given time and place) compared to the relatively lower lower degree of intersubjectivity (that could *possibly* be achieved —for the reasons explained in the article) among social scientists.

As far as marxist methodology is concerned, T.K., missing completely the point of the critiques put forward by C. Castoriadis, M. Bookchin and myself, resorts to some kind of eclecticism in order to keep “dialectical historical materialism” as the “correct approach” to interpret social evolution. Thus, taking for granted what is disputed (i.e., how do we know that the marxist conception of history and society is the “correct one”), he proceeds to an eclecticism that will not hesitate to discard fundamental tenets of marxism (like the labour theory of value) in the hope that this will leave untouched the overall marxist conception.

Thus, T.K., bypassing all the modern marxist debate on methodology that I described in my article (structuralist marxism, realist marxism, etc.), comes back to the original marxist conception of objectivity and dialectics in order to criticise my approach for committing the “error” of using the concepts of “science” and “objectivity” as synonymous. However, the fact that the marxist conceptions of objectivity and science are different from the positivist ones was not of course unknown to this author of the article under critique, and that is why I went through all the major schools of the philosophy of science, both “orthodox” and marxist, exactly in order to stress these differences. Still, this fact is blatantly ignored by the critic who just proceeded to put forward his own view of marxist methodology, irrespective of my criticisms of it.

As regards, first, objectivity, it is well known that the marxist conception of it is qualified, by a “social” element —that concepts and theories are conditioned by social (class) interests (which T.K. does mention)— and a “historical” element —that concepts and theories are, also, conditioned by time (which he does not mention). Still, these qualifications do not aim to deny the supposed “objective” and “scientific” character of historical and dialectical materialism. Thus, Marx, on the basis of changes in the “economic sphere” (i.e., the sphere that was mainly responsible for the transformation of society at a specific place and time —Europe in the transition to capitalism), attempted to provide a universal interpretation of all human history and render the socialist transformation of society historically necessary. He himself had no doubts either about the “objective” character of his conception, which he paralleled to a natural history

process[4], or about the "scientific" character of his economic laws which he viewed as "iron" laws yielding inevitable results[5]. Lenin was even more explicit when he declared that Amaterialism provided an *absolutely objective criterion* [my emphasis] by singling out the "relations of production" as the structure of society ... creating the possibility of a strictly scientific approach to historical and social problems[6].

As regards, second, marxist dialectics, T.K. ignores the fact, put forward in my article, that it presupposes a certain kind of reality, which is also dialectical in form and evolution. In other words, as Castoriadis puts it, Athe marxist philosophy of history is above all an objectivist rationalism ... past history is rational ... future history is rational ... the connection between the past and the present is rational[7], and, in effect, Amarxism does not transcend the philosophy of history, it is just another philosophy of history; the rationality which marxism supposedly induces from the facts is, in fact, imposed on them[8] so that, in the end, Amarxism is not anymore, in its essence, but a scientific objectivism, supplemented by a rationalist philosophy[9].

But then, as the same author has effectively shown, the creative and imaginary element in history plays a very limited role[10], namely one that is consistent with the Althusserian view, according to which the true subjects and real protagonists of history are not biological men but the relations of production. Men, in this context (which nobody that wishes to call himself a believer in marxist dialectical and historical materialism can discard), are only the "supports" (Trager) or bearers of the functions assigned to them by production relations[11].

Finally, T.K. conveniently ignores the critique by Hindess and Hirst[12], also mentioned in my article, that the marxist dialectical approach suffers from what they call the "epistemological fallacy", that is, the construction of an *a priori* core of concepts, *assuming* their own conditions of validity[13].

If, however, the "scientification" of the socialist project attempted by Marx was not feasible, then the same applies today, and for exactly the same reasons, as regards the possibility of scientifying the liberatory project. Still, this does not mean that a liberatory project, which is not scientific, is just a utopia —as T.K. believes. A liberatory project is not a utopia if it is based on today's reality. And today's reality is summed up by an unprecedented crisis of the "growth economy", which constitutes the *raison d'être* of the capitalist society: a crisis, not in the marxist sense of the capitalist relations of production hindering the further development of forces of production, but in the sense, first, of an eco-catastrophic development which is concentrated in a small part of the planet, despite (or because of) the present internationalisation of the capitalist economy and, second, in

the sense of a huge and growing concentration of power (political, economic, etc.) in the hands of elites.

Furthermore, a liberatory project is not a utopia if it expresses the discontent of significant social sectors and their, explicit or implicit, contesting of the existing society. And today the main political and economic institutions on which the present concentration of power is founded are increasingly contested. Thus, traditional politics are contested in various ways that will be examined below. Also, the explosion of crime against property could be viewed not just as a cultural or temporary phenomenon, but, mainly, as a long-term trend expressing discontent with the increasing inequality in the distribution of income and wealth —an inequality, which, within the context of the present consumer society, becomes unbearable.

But, what about the desirability of a scientific project? T.K has no doubts about it (as he puts it, the liberatory project "falls back to wishful thinking.... [and] [T]he generalities and vagueness presented by the neo-utopian Left as a liberatory project constitutes no project at all but a dream of escape from the surrounding unpleasant reality" (pp. 174, 176, in this issue). Here, one cannot but wonder at the easiness with which T.K. avoids considering the historical implications of the scientification of the socialist project. Still, it is a well known historical fact that power within the pre-revolutionary marxist movements, as well as in the post-revolutionary governments, was concentrated in the hands of the guardians of the scientific orthodoxy, who "knew" how to interpret history and take appropriate action in order to accelerate the historical process towards socialism. As Marcuse has pointed out, long ago, Aa straight road seems to lead from Lenin's "consciousness from without" and his notion of the centralised authoritarian party to Stalinism[14]. This is so, not only because, as Lenin puts it, workers are not able, on their own, to develop a scientific theory of socialism, a task which historically has been left to the intellectuals[15] but also because the custodians of the scientific orthodoxy, Athe party, or rather the party leadership, appears as the historical repository of the "true" interests of the proletariat and above the proletariat[16].

However, quite apart from the fact that the scientification of the liberatory project inevitably leads to new hierarchical structures ("those who know", and therefore have an automatic right to lead, and those who do not), T.K.'s critique obviously blurs some other important concepts. Thus, first, he does not differentiate between a scientific *project* and a *program* and, second, between *politics* and *technique*. Still, although we do need a program, in the sense of a "provisional and fragmentary concretisation of the projects' goals"[17], we definitely do not need, for the reasons stated above, a "scientific" project. Furthermore, social ecology does offer a concrete program in the form of *Confederal*

*Municipalism*[18]. This program not only does not consist of "generalities", but it is also politically realistic. The collapse of statism itself, both in the East and in the West, and the neoliberal success in diverting the anti-statist sentiments (which emerged in May 1968), towards market capitalism, is just a clear indication that confederal municipalism expresses latent tendencies in favour of non-authoritarian forms of social organisation, rather than just "wishful thinking".

Even more significant is T.K.'s inability to draw a clear distinction between politics and technique. This inability, in fact, constitutes a common characteristic of any hierarchical conception of politics, like the marxist one. The fact that T.K. sees politics as a kind of engineering is obvious from the following statement: "...if for more complex items like aircrafts, bridges and the like we need one or more sciences, then to produce a new society, different from the one we suffer, we need the most elaborate and advanced science of all..." (p. 175, in this issue). The implicit assumption is that as engineering, making use of the scientific laws of physics or chemistry, etcetera, produces today's marvels of technology, so in exactly the same way could we use the "scientific" laws of marxism to produce another society! Apart, therefore, from the very disputable fact we already considered about the feasibility of developing such a science of social change, marxist or otherwise, it is obvious that the above view implies a conception of politics which is utterly incompatible with individual or social autonomy.

In this context, Castoriadis[19] has introduced a very useful distinction between *politics as a technique* and *politics as praxis*. A technique is a "purely rational" activity which relies on exhaustive (or practically exhaustive) knowledge of its domain. As, therefore, Castoriadis puts it, "to demand that the revolutionary project is founded on a complete theory is in fact to equate politics with a technique." But, politics, in the word's original Greek[20] meaning, belongs to a different domain, the domain of praxis "which sees the development of autonomy as an end and uses autonomy as a means to this end ... where the others are seen as autonomous beings and as the essential factors for the development of their own autonomy"[21]. So, although praxis is a conscious activity, it can only rely on a *fractional* knowledge (because there can never be an exhaustive knowledge of man and his history) and a *provisional* knowledge (because the praxis itself leads to the continuous emergence of new knowledge).

If, therefore, the aim of politics is not, as at present, the manipulation of the electorate and "statecraft" but instead is the autonomous activity of autonomous individuals in managing their own affairs, then what we need is a program, like the one suggested by Confederal Municipalism, and not a marxist or any other "science" with its "iron" laws and the implied "engineering-view" of politics.

**The Causes of the Crisis of Left Politics**

T.K. identifies the causes of today's crisis of politics with, on the one hand, "...the inability of any left political movement to propose any concrete political programme...." and, on the other, "...the withdrawal of the left from the scientific project of Karl Marx..." (p. 164, in this issue). As regards the former cause, I suppose the fact that the critic does not even mention the concrete political program proposed by Confederal Municipalism is due to his obvious ignorance of it; one could only hope, therefore, that the detailed exposition of this program in *Society and Nature*, Vol. 1, No. 3, will help him to rethink his views on the matter. However, as regards the latter cause, I think that to attribute the present multidimensional crisis of politics in general and of left politics in particular to the withdrawal of the left from the marxist "scientific" project does betray a lack of analysis of the present situation.

The growing crisis of traditional politics is expressed today by several symptoms which, frequently, take the form of an implicit or explicit contesting of fundamental political institutions of representative democracy (parties, electoral contests, etc.). Such symptoms are the significant and rising abstention rates in electoral contests, the frequent explosion of discontent in the form of uncontrolled riots, the diminishing numbers of party members, the fact that the respect for professional politicians has never been at such a low level (the very frequent financial scandals of late have simply consolidated the belief that politics, for the vast majority of the politicians-liberals and social democrats alike —is just another job, i.e., a way to make money), etcetera. The crisis, therefore, of left politics should be seen within the context of a general crisis of traditional politics, where it seems that left politics suffers particularly badly, for reasons I will attempt to examine below.

As regards the general crisis of traditional politics, a historical cause of the present mass apathy is the fact that Athe last two centuries have proved the fundamental incompatibility of both liberal democracy and of marxist-leninist "socialism" with the project of autonomy[22]. However, the question is why this crisis has become particularly acute in the last decade or so. To my mind, the answer has to be found in the cumulative effect of the structural changes which have affected the capitalist system since about the mid-seventies. I will mention here the following important changes:

- the growing internationalisation of the capitalist economy which has undermined effectively the state's power to control economic events and, by implication, the belief in the efficacy of traditional politics;

- as a result of (a), the acute intensification of the struggle for competitiveness among the main capitalist blocks (EC, USA, Japan) which, in turn, has resulted in the establishment of the "neoliberal consensus" and the effective collapse of social democracy; and
- the technological changes which have led to the present post-industrial society and the decline of the power of the working class.

Today's electoral contests are in effect decided by the middle strata (a significant part of skilled workers and workers in high-income groups classify themselves in these strata), whereas the "underclass", which was created by neoliberalism and automation, mostly does not take part in such contests. My point, therefore, is that the growing apathy towards politics does not mainly reflect a general indifference regarding social issues, as a result of consumerism, but a growing lack of confidence, especially of weaker social groups, in traditional political parties and their ability to solve social problems. Another part of the growing indifference with traditional politics, especially among young people, is due to the growing disillusionment with socialism, which has led to the myth of "the end of ideologies" and further enhanced the spreading of the culture of individualism that was promoted by neoliberalism.

However, if the deterioration of the crisis of politics may be attributed to the above factors, the crisis itself is chronic and embraces all citizens (apart from a very small minority) who feel alienated from a process which in reality they do not control. This, in turn, puts into question representative democracy, a system that allows a social minority (professional politicians) to determine the quality of life (sometimes the fate itself) of each citizen.

The next question is why left politics has been particularly affected by the general crisis of traditional politics. I think that to interpret this phenomenon we have to go back to the challenge to the system posed by the rise of the left in the late sixties and early seventies. As this challenge swiftly petered out, it was followed by the ruling elite's backlash which led to a general shift to the right in the West, both at the political and the theoretical level.

At the political level, the collapse of social democracy was not only the inevitable outcome of the drastic reduction of state's economic power and in particular of its power to secure high levels of employment. In fact, the commitment to full employment policies was abandoned not only because Keynesian policies at the national level were incompatible with the internationalisation of the capitalist economy, but also because such policies undermined the profits and competitiveness of capital, as they pushed real wages to rise faster than productivity. But the abandonment of this commitment,

combined with the need to dismantle the welfare state (in order to create better conditions of competitiveness, through the drastic reduction of the "social wage" which was putting a significant burden on the private cost of production), fatally undermined the political appeal of social democracy and led to the present crisis of social democratic politics. It is not, of course, accidental that the higher abstention rates in electoral contests usually occur among the lower income groups, which fail to see anymore any significant difference between liberal and social democratic parties.

Still, social democrats pretend that there is no "neoliberal consensus" and that it is just enough for them to take power so that neoliberalism may be eliminated. All this, despite the fact that the fundamental neoliberal principle, that is, the maximisation of the role of the market in the economy and society, has already been enshrined in their own governmental or political programs. However, the neoliberal consensus, which in Europe has already been institutionalised through the Maastricht treaty, is not merely a temporary phenomenon but represents the political consequence of structural changes in the capitalist system[23] that lead to the completion of the market (a historical process that was interrupted by the socialist state interventionism of our century).

The solution to the so-called problem of "democracy-deficit", which is proposed today by social democrats and their fellow travellers in the Green movement, consists in the strengthening of citizens' participation in the political process, through the enhancement of the *civil society*. However, this "solution" presupposes the reproduction of the present institutional framework that has been rightly called *liberal oligarchy*. The proposed process simply aims at the creation of certain social checks on the power of the elite, without in any way challenging the framework itself, which legitimises the elite's existence and its right to govern. Furthermore, the proposed enhancement of the civil society is utterly utopian, especially today, because, in effect, it is in tension with both the state and the internationalised market.

As regards the tension with the state, Thatcherism has shown how easy it is for the state to undermine effectively the institutions of the civil society. Also, as regards the tension with the internationalised market, it is well known that there is an inverse relationship between the degree of competitiveness and the level of development of the civil society's institutions: the more developed these institutions are (e.g., trade unions) the lower the degree of competitiveness, as the Swedish case has shown. So, given that neither social democrats nor their fellow travellers in the Green movement see the outcome of the inevitable tension between the civil society, on the one hand, and the state and the market, on the other, in terms of the replacement of the latter by the former, it is not difficult to predict that any enhancement of the civil society will have to be compatible

with the process of further internationalisation of the market and the implied role of the state.

At the theoretical level, the collapse of socialism and the rise of neoliberalism had the effect that the New Left's radical critique of "scientific" socialism, statism and authoritarian politics did not function as a catalyst for further development of the non-authoritarian left thinking. Instead, the critique of scientism by the New Left was taken over by post-modernist theoreticians and was further developed into a general relativism, which inevitably led to the abandonment of any effective critique of the status quo and to the theorisation of conformism.

At the same time, in the East, the economic failure of "actually existing socialism" and the consequent collapse of the system had a mixed effect on left politics. The negative effect was that it contributed significantly to a further disillusionment with the socialist project and provided the moral cover, for those that needed it, for individualistic values. The massive shift of many ex-socialist intellectuals towards liberalism is a clear indication of this[24]. The positive effect was that the collapse of state socialism functioned for many in the Left as a catalyst to rethink the building materials of the liberatory project itself$not only in the sense of abandoning any idea of founding it on a "science" of social change (very few in the left still believed in this idea anyway, even before the collapse of the society which claimed to be based on it) but also in the sense of developing a new non-authoritarian conception of politics. The collapse, therefore, of "scientific" socialism, far from hindering the development of a new liberatory project, as T.K. assumes, constitutes, in fact, an important step in the liberation of thought —a necessary precondition for the individual and social liberation itself!

**Beyond Irrationalism**

However, discarding marxist scientism should not push us to the alternative trap of general relativism and irrationalism. As regards relativism, first, as I tried to show in my article under critique, we should make an important distinction between *political relativism* (all traditions, theories, ideas, etc., have equal rights) and *democratic relativism* (all traditions are debated and decided upon by all citizens) on the one hand, and, on the other, *philosophical relativism* (all traditions have equal truth value). Thus, while we should adopt political and democratic relativism, philosophical relativism should not be unquestionably accepted, especially when it contradicts democratic relativism. One cannot assign, for example, equal value to the autonomy and the heteronomy traditions, as the adoption of the latter precludes democratic relativism itself. In other words, a conscious choice has to be made between these two traditions and the implied

conceptions of politics. Without therefore falling into the post-modernist trap of a general relativism that will assign equal value to all traditions[25], we can still avoid the pitfalls of scientism and objectivism.

Furthermore, the above stand on philosophical relativism, combined with the choice of the autonomy tradition which is implied by democratic relativism, will lead us to exclude all forms of irrationalism (religious, mystical beliefs, etc.) that currently abound in the green movement (e.g., deep ecology), the feminist movement (some versions of ecofeminism) and so on. This is so because the common characteristic that the various forms of irrationalism share is that they all lie outside the field of *logon didonai*, of rendering account and reason, which, as Castoriadis puts it[26], "in itself entails the recognition of the value of autonomy in the sphere of thinking," a fact which implies that "it is a tautology that autonomy in the sphere of thinking is synonymous with reason itself".

Also, as autonomy is not an "individual" affair and it is "decisively conditioned by the institution of society"[27], the project of autonomy can only be realised through the autonomous activity of the people, within a process of creating social institutions that make autonomous thinking possible, and not through some kind of spiritual process of "self-realisation", as deep ecologists[28], for instance, suggest. In fact, such a process of self-realization could only enhance privacy and the withdrawal from the social process that institutes society. A hierarchical society based on the domination of human over human could perfectly survive the self-transformation (usually of its middle classes) in the form of Mahayana Buddhism's enlightenment, or reborn Christianism. It is not accidental that self-transformation of millions of Americans and West Europeans along these lines, in the past decade, was fully compatible with one of the most vicious attacks of the ruling elites that took the form of neoliberal policies (Reaganomics, Thatcherism, etc.).

If, however, self-realization simply enhances the trend (which is also fervently promoted by the status quo) to privatize problems that by their nature are social, it should not be thought that the "convergence", suggested by some "eco-libertarians"[29], between rational and irrational ways of thinking, for example, between social and deep ecology, is theoretically or politically possible. Thus, at the theoretical level, the convergence between deep and social ecology is not feasible because of the incommensurability between the worldviews and methodologies involved (a subject that I cannot expand further here). Also, at the political level, such a convergence is impossible because the type of activity suggested by the supporters of it presupposes some form of a contradictory combination of self-realisation through a spiritual process (a process that

by definition is incompatible with autonomous thinking) and raising of consciousness through autonomous activity within a radical social movement.

Consistent with this conception, supporters of this type of convergence suggest ways of action that "start from the individual" and involve "local campaigns, building self-managed farms and workshops, creating alternative communities, etcetera"[30]. However, this type of action is at best utopian, as regards its chances for radical social transformation, and at worst irrelevant, since in effect these types of action could easily be assimilated by the status quo. The attempts to create "islands of resistance" within the system and to "persuade by example" have, anyway, been tried in the past and failed miserably, exactly because it is too easy for the capitalist system to marginalize them.

In contrast, Confederal Municipalism suggests a way of action which is perfectly compatible with the project of autonomy and which involves direct interference at the local political level. Such interference could lead to the creation of a confederation of municipalities that will be in a position to challenge state power and transform society along direct-democracy lines. In this sense, Confederal Municipalism offers a concrete political program, with its own view of an alternative society, and the strategy to move towards it. Scientism, therefore, as well as irrationalism, do not have any role to play in the process that will move us towards an autonomous ecological society.

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[1] T. Fotopoulos, "The «Objectivity» of the Liberatory Project," *Society and Nature*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1992), pp. 1-31.
[2] T. Fotopoulos, "The «Objectivity» of the Liberatory Project," pp. 9-11.
[3] T. Fotopoulos, "The «Objectivity» of the Liberatory Project," p. 9.
[4] "The evolution of the economic formation of society can be viewed as a process of natural history." K. Marx, Preface to the first German edition of *Das Capital* (Moscow: Progress Publishers/Lawrence & Wishart, 1965), p. 10.
[5] "The natural laws of capitalist production work with iron necessity towards inevitable results." K. Marx, Preface to the first German edition of *Das Capital*, p. 8.
[6] V. Lenin, "What the Friends of the People Are," in *Reader in Marxist Philosophy*, H. Selsam and H. Martel, eds. (NY: International Publishers, 1963), pp. 196-97.
[7] C. Castoriadis, *L' Institution Imaginaire de la Societé* (Paris: Seuil, 1975), pp. 57-58.
[8] C. Castoriadis, *L' Institution Imaginaire*, pp. 72-73.
[9] C. Castoriadis, *L' Institution Imaginaire,* p. 90.
[10] C. Castoriadis, *L' Institution Imaginaire,* pp. 184-90.
[11] L. Althusser & E. Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London: NLB, 1970), p. 180.

[12] *See* B. Hindess & P. Hirst, *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (London: Routledge, 1975), pp. 313-23; and A. Cutler, B. Hindess et al., *Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today* (London: Routledge, 1977), Ch. 4.
[13] "Lenin was, as usual, explicit in asserting that Athe materialist conception of history is no longer a hypothesis but a scientifically demonstrated proposition." V. Lenin, "What the Friends of the People Are," p. 198.
[14] H. Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism* (London: Routledge, 1958), p. 145.
[15] V. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967).
[16] H. Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism*, p. 147.
[17] C. Castoriadis, *L' Institution Imaginaire*, p. 106.
[18] *See* the articles by Murray Bookchin, Howard Hawkins and Takis Fotopoulos in *Society and Nature*, Vol. 1, No. 3, for a very concrete definition of such a program.
[19] C. Castoriadis, *L'Institution Imaginaire*, pp. 97-109.
[20] In fact, it was the ancient Greeks who introduced the idea that Aon political affairs there is no science, in other words a systematic knowledge based on evidence, specialised training, etc., but *δόξα*, i.e., the opinion of men, which should of course be trained as well, and which improves by experience, but which is not science. C. Castoriadis, *The Lectures in Greece* (Athens: Upsilon, 1990), p. 126.
[21] C. Castoriadis, *L'Institution Imaginaire*, p. 103.
[22] C. Castoriadis, «The Era of Generalised Conformism,» in *The Broken World* (Athens: Upsilon, 1992), p. 25.
[23] *See* T. Fotopoulos, *The Neoliberal Consensus and the Crisis of the Growth Economy* (Athens: Gordios, 1993).
[24] I do not, of course, refer here to those that, unscrupulously, did shift to liberalism (or to the liberal-social democratic version of it, within the context of the present "neoliberal consensus"), nor to those in the small minority, of which T.K. obviously is a member, who, honestly, remain faithful to the old "truths".
[25] Even if we accept the post-modernist view that history cannot be seen as a linear (Kant et al.) or dialectical (Hegel, Marx) process of Progress that embodies reason (a view that I would accept as far as the forms of social organisation are concerned), this does not imply that we could assign equal value to all historical forms of social organisation (as the post-modernist assignment of equal value to all traditions implies), from classical Athens and the sections of the Paris commune, to the present "democratic" regimes.
[26] C. Castoriadis, "The Crisis of Marxism and the Crisis of Politics", *Society and Nature*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1992), p. 209.
[27] C. Castoriadis, "The Crisis of Marxism and the Crisis of Politics," p. 209.
[28] According to A. Naess, the father of deep ecology, Athe higher the Self-realization attained by anyone the broader and deeper the identification with others. A. Naess,

*Ecology, Community and Lifestyle* (MA: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 196.
[29] *See,* e.g., Peter Marshall, *Nature's Web* (England: Simon & Schuster, 1992).
[30] Peter Marshall, *Nature's Web*, pp. 461-62.