

Democracy's Past, Present and Future: Identifying the Historical Antecedents of Socialist Participatory Democracy

Author: Dr Brian S. Roper

Department of Politics, University of Otago, Dunedin, 9054, New Zealand
Te Tari Matauranga Torangapu, Te Whare Wananga o Otago, Otepoti, Aotearoa.
Ph: (64-3) 479-8667 (wk); (64-3) 472-7473 (hm); (64) 21-1917-275 (iPhone);
Email: brian.roper@otago.ac.nz Web: www.briansroper.blogspot.co.nz

About the Author:

Brian Roper co-edited *State and Economy in New Zealand* (Oxford, 1993) and *The Political Economy of New Zealand* (Oxford, 1997). His most recent book – *Prosperity for All? Economic, Social and Political Change in New Zealand since 1935* – was published by Thomson in 2005. *The History of Democracy* was published by Pluto in 2013. In addition to being an academic, he has been a political activist for the past 30 years in Christchurch, Brisbane and Dunedin.

Contents:

Introduction

- 1) The Collapse of Stalinism and the Turn Towards Liberalism in Contemporary Left Political Theory
- 2) The Social Dimension and Central Institutional Features of Athenian Democracy
- 3) Liberal Representative Democracy: Democratic Principles and Civil Liberties
- 4) The Historical Mission of Capitalism and Representative Democracy
- 5) Socialist Participatory Democracy: Building on the Achievements of the Past to Make the Future

Conclusion

Democracy's Past, Present and Future: Identifying the Historical Antecedents of Socialist Participatory Democracy

Abstract

The present crisis of global capitalism and liberal representative democracy underlines the importance and necessity of investigating democracy's past as part of the struggle for a more democratic future. Yet most contemporary liberal political theorists proceed on the assumption that the only viable model of democracy to have emerged thus far in history is liberal representative democracy. Indeed, the term 'democracy' is generally used as if it applies exclusively to liberal representative democracy since no other previous or possible form of government can be legitimately described as democratic. In my book - *The History of Democracy* - I demonstrate at length that this assumption is highly disputable on historical grounds and that the history of democracy is more complex, varied and inspiring than liberal depictions of democracy suggest, with Athenian, liberal and socialist forms of democracy being worthy of recognition and consideration. Specifically, in this paper I focus on the historical antecedents of socialist participatory democracy arguing that these antecedents can be identified in Athenian democracy, liberal representative democracy, and the tragically curtailed revolutionary experiments with socialist participatory democracy. The central argument is that socialist democracy, if it is built in the future through a process of collective societal transformation, will be built on the historical foundations of what has come before. This is the one limited line of defence of the feasibility of socialist participatory democracy that will be explored in this paper. There are many potential objections and counter-arguments ranging from the standard Austrian school critique of central planning to the critical rejection of the classical Marxist

conception of a radically democratic workers' state by deliberative democrats and Autonomist Marxists that in order to keep the discussion within manageable limits cannot be considered here.

Introduction

Early in the 21st century there are sound reasons to consider democracy's past as part of the struggle for a more democratic future. The global financial crisis and ensuing prolonged recession - universally recognised as constituting the most severe crisis of the world capitalist economy since the Great Depression - has been managed by governments around the world initially with the injection of fiscal stimulus and huge bailouts of failing financial institutions and, secondly, the subsequent imposition of neoliberal fiscal austerity to reduce the resulting greatly increased levels of government debt. Neoliberal fiscal austerity has provoked resistance throughout the world including the wave of revolutions in the Middle East, the Occupy movement, mass resistance to neoliberal austerity in Greece and other countries in Europe. In all of the advanced capitalist countries, but perhaps most markedly in the US, business is able to exert a disproportionate influence over government policymaking. For example, according to the Centre for Responsive Politics (2011), for the 2007-2008 election cycle in the United States business contributed \$1,999.8 million compared to \$74.9 million from labour, with the corresponding figures for 2009-10 being \$1,367 compared to \$96.6 million. Little surprise then that in the current historical conjuncture people are questioning the extent to which the majority of citizens are able to exercise effective influence over government in liberal representative democracies.

The implementation of neoliberalism on a global scale has also had a devastating impact on the environment, accelerating capitalist depletion of non-renewable resources, deforestation, the accumulation of green house gases in the upper atmosphere and global

warming, pollution of waterways with effluents, soil with pesticides, and oceans with outfalls, shipping and oil spills. As the twenty-first century marches on and is increasingly punctuated by environmental disasters such as the 2010 Deep Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and the 2011 Japanese nuclear disaster at the Fukushima power plant, as the effects of global warming become increasingly evident, and as the responses of the world's most powerful states appear patently inadequate, more people are being prompted to question whether capitalist civilisation can survive the environmental devastation it is causing.

The mounting problems of capitalism on a global scale and the obvious limitations of liberal representative democracy underline the importance of considering the democratic socialist alternative to capitalism and representative democracy. Yet most contemporary political theorists proceed on the assumption that the only viable model of democracy to have emerged thus far in history is liberal representative democracy. Indeed, the term 'democracy' is generally used as if it applies exclusively to liberal representative democracy since no other previous or possible form of government can be legitimately described as democratic.

In *The History of Democracy* I demonstrate at length that this assumption is highly disputable on historical grounds and that the history of democracy is more complex, varied and inspiring than liberal depictions of democracy suggest, with Athenian, liberal and socialist forms of democracy being worthy of recognition and consideration. Specifically, in this presentation I briefly discuss the political and intellectual context in which I embarked on this book project and highlight the importance of the contribution that it makes by reference to contemporary liberal democratic theory. I will then focus on

the historical antecedents of socialist participatory democracy arguing that these antecedents can be identified in Athenian democracy, liberal representative democracy, and the tragically curtailed revolutionary experiments with socialist participatory democracy. The central argument is that socialist democracy, if it is built in the future through a process of collective societal transformation, will be built on the historical foundations of what has come before. This is the one limited line of defence of the feasibility of socialist participatory democracy that will be explored in this paper. There are many potential objections and counter-arguments ranging from the standard Austrian school critique of central planning to the critical rejection of the classical Marxist conception of a radically democratic workers' state by deliberative democrats and autonomist Marxists. The need to keep the discussion within manageable limits means that these objections and counter arguments cannot be considered in this paper. I will, however, be addressing this wider debate in my next book - *The Future Socialist Society*.

1) The Collapse of Stalinism and the Turn Towards Liberalism in Contemporary Left Political Theory

I first started thinking about writing a book on the history of democracy in the years following the collapse of Stalinism in Eastern Europe from 1989 to 1991. It was widely interpreted in a manner that simultaneously rejected socialist participatory democracy as a viable alternative to representative democracy and denied that Marxism has anything of intellectual value to offer contemporary thinking about democracy's past, present and future. In my view, this intellectual manoeuvre, involving a widespread turn to liberalism was highly problematic and dramatically narrowed the terms of debate between defenders and critics of representative democracy. In view of the fact that this response

and outlook has continued to be highly influential within the Western academy, it is worth recalling the tenor of the arguments that the collapse of East European Stalinism generated.

It was not in the least surprising that a chorus of conservative and neoliberal opinion interpreted the collapse of the Stalinist dictatorships as providing conclusive evidence of the definitive victory of capitalism, liberalism and representative democracy over 'really existing socialism', Marxism and the totalitarian 'communist' state. Fukuyama (1992: 211, xi-xxiii) proclaimed 'the end of history': advanced capitalist liberal democracies constitute the high point of human progress beyond which, in terms of qualitative societal transformation, it is neither feasible nor desirable to go. 'At the end of history, there are no serious ideological competitors left to liberal democracy' (Fukuyama 1992: xi-xxiii). Brzezinski (1989: 1) claimed in *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the 20th Century*, that 'communism's irreversible historical decline [has] made its practice and its dogma largely irrelevant to the human condition'. Further, 'humanity's catastrophic encounter with communism during the twentieth century' has conclusively demonstrated 'utopian social engineering is fundamentally in conflict with the complexity of the human condition' and that 'democracy - and not communism - will dominate the twenty-first century' (1989: 258).

Huntington (1996: 21, 306) develops a more sophisticated interpretation of the post-cold war world, but it is an interpretation that rests firmly on the assumption that communism and Marxism are dead: 'In the late 1980s the communist world collapsed, and the Cold War international system became history. In the post-Cold War world, the most important distinctions among peoples are not ideological, political, or economic. They are

cultural'. All of these thinkers, whom Anderson (2000: 19) claims have 'provided one fluent vision of where the world is going, or has stopped, after another', clearly would enthusiastically endorse Yergin and Gustafson's (1995: 300) assertion that the historical failure of communism has resulted in 'the virtual disappearance of Marxism as an intellectual force, both in Russia and the rest of the world, and the dominance of the ideas of the market and private enterprise'.

It is surprising that instead of providing systematic rebuttal, many intellectuals on the left embraced ideas that led to essentially similar conclusions. The central themes of these left intellectual responses to the collapse of Stalinism include: 1) the idea that the collapse of East European Stalinism has decisively and definitively discredited the classical Marxist vision of socialism; 2) that a consistent and intellectually convincing commitment to democracy is effectively absent from classical Marxism; and that, therefore, 3) it is necessary to acknowledge that the only healthy way forward is to turn towards liberalism in order to develop the theoretical basis of political struggles for a radical and pluralist democracy. These themes are clearly evident in the work of Paul Hirst, Chantal Mouffe and Norberto Bobbio.

Hirst (1990: 1-2) in *Representative Democracy and its Limits* confidently proclaims that 'representative democracy has become unchallengeable and unsurpassable', 'now secure in a way it has never been for the better part of [the twentieth] century'. This means that the intellectual left has 'to face the fact of the exhaustion of the radical critiques of representative democracy, like Marxism' (1990: 2). Because the Marxist tradition only has a weak commitment to democracy and 'offers no viable political theory', it is necessary for the left 'to raid the storehouse of Western liberalism and democratic theory' (1990: 2). The

tone of the argument barely rises above the vulgar anti-Marxism of the neo-conservatives cited above. For example, he proclaims that 'The turning from Marxism [to liberalism] is no mere "revisionist" fashion, as the surviving fundamentalist Marxists seem to think, rather it is a precondition of relevant and politically credible argument in a representative-democratic polity' (1990: 3). Having rehearsed the standard (Austrian school) neoliberal critique of any conceivable system of centralized economic planning, he draws upon corporatism, American and English pluralism, and Carl Schmitt to advocate a form of associative democracy in which 'self-governing associations ... undertake a greater part of the tasks of social life' (1990: 99; see also, 8). The project to establish and generalise such associations 'requires neither a revolution nor the building of a new society, merely the extensive but gradual reform of the old at a pace directed by the realities of politics and the choices of citizens' (1994: 13). The institutions of representative democracy are to be 'supplemented, not supplanted' so that their defects can be meliorated (Hirst 1990: 6; 1994: 12).

In a similar vein, Mouffe (1993: 57) argues 'socialist goals can only be achieved acceptably within the liberal democratic framework'. Hence 'the crucial issue' for radical political practice 'should be how to radicalize and further democratize our present political institutions' (1993: 57). Further 'the aim is not to create a completely different kind of society, but to use the symbolic resources of the liberal democratic tradition to struggle against relations of subordination' (1993: 58). Because a strong commitment to democracy is missing from classical Marxism it is necessary to draw extensively from liberalism in order to pursue a radical pluralist democratic project (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 149-193; Mouffe, 1995: 35; 2000). It also involves 'abandoning the reductionism and

essentialism dominant in the traditional interpretations of socialism and acknowledging ... the contingency and ambiguity of every essence' (1993: 58). Here we have the well-documented manoeuvre of using post-structuralist theory to justify the turn away from Marxism, towards liberalism (see Callinicos, 1989; Geras, 1990: 61-168).

The line of argument articulated by Hirst and Mouffe was developed earlier by one of the more sophisticated and intellectually honest critics of socialist participatory democracy - Norberto Bobbio. Although Bobbio (1987a: 39-40) does recognise that Marx in *The Civil War in France* and Lenin in *State and Revolution* envisaged socialism as a form of participatory democracy, he nonetheless concludes that such a model of democracy has been proven to be neither desirable nor feasible by the historical experience of Stalinism. Because Marxism only has a weak theory of democracy, which was one of the contributing factors to the rise of Stalin, socialists who are committed to the struggle for a more democratic society must borrow extensively from liberal political theory (Bobbio 1987b: 2-15). Further, since there are no realistic and desirable alternatives to representative democracy, the most that can be achieved is an extension of the principles, rules and procedures of this form of democracy to the social and economic spheres: 'Political emancipation necessitates the development, extension and strengthening of all the institutions that gave birth to modern democracy and can derive no benefit whatsoever if they are suspended, even for a moment' (1987a: 84).

Subsequently during the 2000s, so-called democratic theory, really liberal democratic theory, became largely focused on the debate between those defending 'liberal minimalist democracy' and 'deliberative democracy' (Dryzek, 2004: 149; Held, 2006: 231-255)). The idea that there might be a third form of democracy, socialist participatory democracy,

worthy of serious consideration was firmly rejected. According to the liberal political scientist and advocate of deliberative democracy, John S. Dryzek, 'Democratic socialism' is 'a dead duck' (2004: 144). By democratic socialism he means, not the social democratic reformist politics of parties like the Australian, British or NZ Labour parties, but the idea that democratic socialism might ever constitute a feasible and desirable alternative to advanced capitalism and liberal representative democracy.

Most liberal political theorists share Dryzek's view because they assume that representative democracy is the only genuine form of democracy, often in conjunction with the equally disputable assumption that there are no important intellectual and political differences between classical Marxism and Stalinism. In contrast, a much healthier starting point for considering the past, present and future of democracy is recognising that liberal representative democracy is not the only form of democracy to have been created in the past and that may be created in the future. Where liberal political theorists are, however, prepared to acknowledge the existence of a wide variety of different conceptions of democracy, they do so in a purely theoretical manner. So, for example, Dryzek in a chapter entitled 'Democratic Political Theory', starts off by using 54 adjectives to identify a wide range of different conceptions of democracy, such as adversarial, aggregative, Christian, classical, communicative, difference, discursive, liberal, participatory, and so forth (2004: 143). Not surprisingly 'socialist' is missing from this long list, and this underlines the importance of one of the key things that *The History of Democracy* does - it establishes that socialist participatory is the most important form of working class and anti-capitalist democracy to have emerged thus far in history. In contrast, when liberal democratic theorists are prepared to acknowledge the existence of a

variety of different conceptions of democracy, they do so in a manner that diminishes the historical and intellectual significance of socialist participatory democracy by identifying a plethora of democratic conceptions, most of which are utterly insignificant in the actual history of democracy.

Against this backdrop, in sections 2-5 of the paper I argue, more positively, that socialist participatory democracy has historical antecedents stretching back to Athenian democracy, that capitalism is creating social and economic conditions conducive to the emergence of socialist democracy, and that socialist democracy is likely to transcend liberal representative democracy while retaining some of its most important historical advances, such as the constitutional codification of civil liberties and protection of the rights of minorities.

2) The Social Dimension and Central Institutional Features of Athenian Democracy

Athenian democracy (508 to 322 BC) is by far the most important form of democracy to have emerged in classical antiquity and it has been subject to a range of interpretations by those within the Marxist tradition. There is little agreement as to whether or not the social dimension and central features of Athenian democracy are relevant for those committed to developing and advocating socialist democracy as a feasible and desirable alternative to capitalism and representative democracy in the 21st century. Wood's (1988, 1995: 181-237) interpretation is the most positive in this regard, arguing 'the ancient concept of democracy grew out of an historical experience which had conferred a unique civic status on subordinate classes, creating in particular that unprecedented formation, the peasant

citizen' (1995: 204). Her work commendably highlights positive features of Athenian democracy frequently overlooked by both Marxists and non-Marxists. In contrast, Callinicos (1988) and Harman (1999: 67-68) view Athenian democracy more negatively, contending that it is of little relevance to socialist democracy in the 21st century. De Ste Croix in his great work, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*, steers a middle course, arguing 'the Greeks habitually expected an oligarchy to rule in the interests of the propertied class, a democracy mainly in the interests of the poorer citizens. Control of the state, therefore, was one of the prizes, indeed the greatest prize, of class struggle on the political plane' (1981: 286). This conception of class struggle on the political plane highlights why it is that central aspects of Athenian democracy remain relevant to the struggle for working class self-emancipation and socialist democracy in the 21st century.

First, Athenian democracy was a form of democracy that emerged out of a revolutionary upheaval. The increasingly unpopular tyrant - Hippias - continued to rule Athens in 510 BC. Cleisthenes, a member of the aristocratic Alkmeonid family that had been sent into exile by Peisistratos, gained support from one of the Spartan kings (Cleomenes) to help him overthrow Hippias. This was achieved with relative ease but Cleisthenes immediately encountered opposition from the other prominent aristocratic families. Isagoras who was staunchly committed to the continuation of the political rule of Attica by an aristocratic elite led this opposition. He managed to get himself appointed as an archon in 508 and then enlisted the support of the Spartans in order to overturn the constitution established by Solon's reforms and establish the rule of an aristocratic oligarchy. As Thorley (1996: 21) observes, with Spartan support 'Isagoras now exiled the Alkmeonids [including Cleisthenes] ... together with many other families, and tried to

dismantle the constitution and set up a council of his own supporters. This [provoked] a riot in Athens, and Isagoras and his Spartan supporters found themselves besieged on the Acropolis by the angry populace, who saw all that had been gained by Solon's reforms fast disappearing.' Cleisthenes was reinstalled in power by this popular movement. He then proceeded to introduce to Athens 'the most radical democracy in the ancient world' (1996: 21). Essentially, democracy arose in Athens out of a revolutionary uprising by peasants, artisans and free labourers.

In an interesting account of these events, Ober (2007) convincingly argues that we should reject a 'great man' interpretation in which Cleisthenes is portrayed as cunningly manipulating the ignorant masses from above. Around 594BC, Solon responded to widespread peasant unrest by introducing reforms that empowered the bulk of the peasantry by enabling citizens from all property classes to participate in the law courts. These reforms 'and the civic festivals sponsored by the tyrants had undercut traditional lines of authority and encouraged Athenian political self-consciousness. By 508 B.C.E. the ordinary Athenian male was no longer a politically passive client of a great house. He had begun to view himself as a citizen rather than as a subject' (2007: 86-87). This account can be strengthened by taking into account the continuing tension and conflict between the landowning aristocracy and the peasantry that had been contained but not extinguished by Solon's reforms, and that persisted throughout the sixth century BC. The attempt by the aristocratic faction led by Isagoras to overturn Solon's reforms was thus likely to have been accurately perceived by the peasant citizenry as being motivated by a desire to increase the burdens that the landowning aristocracy could impose on the peasantry (for example, by increasing rents and re-establishing debt bondage) and thereby to secure by

political means a greater proportion of their productive output. Consequently, it is likely that 'Cleisthenes' leadership and the successful implementation of the reforms associated with his name are responses to the revolutionary situation, and so it is not Cleisthenes but the Athenian demos (qua citizen body) that is the protagonist. ... The events of the year 508-7 constitute a genuine rupture in Athenian political history, because they mark the moment at which the demos stepped onto the historical stage as a collective agent, a historical actor in its own right and under its own name' (2007: 86).

As this suggests, there was an extremely important social dimension to Athenian democracy. Aristotle in *The Politics* wrote, 'a democracy is a state where the freemen and the poor, being in the majority, are invested with the power of the state' and that 'in democracies the poor have more sovereign power than the rich; for they are more numerous, and the decisions of the majority are sovereign' (Aristotle, 1962: 155). In a similar vein, according to Plato in *The Republic*, 'democracy comes into being after the poor have conquered their opponents, slaughtering some and banishing some, while to the remainder they give an equal share of freedom and power' (Plato, 1977: 605). The key point, as Wood (1995: 181) observes, is that 'the peasant citizen was a free labourer enjoying the status of citizenship in a stratified society with the juridical and political freedom that this implies.' These peasant citizens faced no insurmountable obstacles to involvement in public affairs based on social position or wealth.

Thirdly, the reforms of Solon and Cleisthenes democratised the legal system by establishing large popular law courts with juries ranging in size from 201 to 1501, dicasts (acting simultaneously as judges and jurors) being selected by lot from each of the 10 Athenian tribes. Ephialtes' reforms in 462BC greatly enlarged the powers of the courts,

introduced pay for *dicasts*, and reduced the powers of the aristocratic council of ex-archons, the Areopagos, which had previously continued to play an important role in the legal system.¹ The fact that *dicasts* were paid (from 462 to 322) ensured that the law courts were composed of large numbers of citizens drawn from all classes, as opposed to the aristocratic archons who had held a monopoly on judicial power prior to Solon's reforms in 594. This is highly significant because it ensured that the courts provided protection for the labouring citizens against oppressive and exploitative domination by the wealthy.

Furthermore, the Athenian democracy created institutional mechanisms that facilitated a highly level of citizen participation in governance, created an effective system of checks and balances on the exercise of political and military power, and promoted a particular conception of civic virtue. It is conceivable that workers, peasants and their allies may revive some of these in the process of creating socialist democracy. This might include the rotation of posts, short time limits on holding positions, selection by lot, and so forth. In a speech attributed to the great Athenian general and political leader, Pericles, he observes that 'we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics minds his own business; we say he has no business here at all' (cited in Held, 2006: 14). In other words, it was generally accepted that all citizens would be directly involved in the political governance of Athenian society. Of course the conception of civic virtue in a socialist democracy will differ fundamentally from that which prevailed in Athens from 508 to 322BC, but it is likely to have a similar emphasis on the responsibility of all citizens to actively participate in the governance of society.

¹ 'The archaic Areopagos had had oversight of the laws, the magistrates, the politically active

Finally, it is important to be clear that Athenian democracy also had major weaknesses, not least of which was the exclusion of women, slaves and immigrants from citizenship and political influence. It is important, therefore, not to exaggerate the extent to which it can serve, even in part, as a model for the future.

3) Liberal Representative Democracy: Democratic Principles and Civil Liberties

Representative democracy, like Athenian democracy before it, did not emerge historically through a prolonged process of peaceful reform but rather by a series of revolutionary upheavals, economic and political crises, wars and civil wars from the first Dutch Revolt in 1565 to the end of the American Civil War in 1865. These revolutions transformed previously existing states and established the intellectual, constitutional and institutional foundations of representative democracy.ⁱ Although Bismarck's 'revolution from above' in Germany and the Meiji Restoration in Japan are also of great historical significance (Mooers, 1991: 103-153; Akamatsu, 2010; Anderson, 1974b: 435-461; Jansen, 1995), three revolutions – the English (1640-1689), American (1776-1790), and French (1789-1795) – played world-historic roles in reviving democratic forms of governance from the seventeenth century onwards and have been the most influential intellectually and politically. This is not to deny that representative democracy was subsequently developed, modified and extended to a considerable extent by a succession of incremental reforms from 1865 to the present. But in general these major reforms followed, and built on the foundations created by, the bourgeois revolutions (for an interesting recent discussion of

citizens, and the general conduct of all Athenians, and it could pronounce judgement, [including] the death sentence, in political trials' (Hansen, 1991: 37).

this, see Davidson, 2012).

For Marx the demise of the feudalism and the absolutist state and the emergence of representative democracy was historically progressive. He celebrated the historical achievements of both capitalism and representative democracy. Nonetheless, Marx argued that representative democracy was a specifically *bourgeois* form of democracy that was extremely limited, with respect to its social and economic foundations in capitalism, and with regard to its specific institutional mechanisms. It is limited for precisely the reason that makes it contrast so dramatically with Athenian democracy: the labouring citizens are systematically excluded from participating in the governance of society. In this respect, Rosa Luxemburg conveys very clearly the central heuristic thrust of the Marxist critique of representative democracy:

We [revolutionary socialists] have always distinguished the social kernel from the political form of *bourgeois* democracy; we have always revealed the hard kernel of social inequality and lack of freedom hidden under the sweet shell of formal equality and freedom – not in order to reject the latter but to spur the working class into not being satisfied with the shell, but rather, by conquering political power, to create a socialist democracy to replace bourgeois democracy – not to eliminate democracy altogether (1970: 393).

This raises the question: to what extent would a revolutionary working class movement in the process of collectively creating socialist participatory democracy retain the elements that constitute the 'sweet shell' of liberal representative democracy?

American liberal political scientist Robert Dahl (1989: 221-2) identifies what he considers to be the central features of liberal representative democracy: elected officials, free and fair elections, inclusive suffrage, the right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative information, and associational autonomy. As is widely recognised, this form of

democracy, formally at least, operationalizes the principle of majority rule while protecting minority and individual rights. The latter most commonly involves the constitutional codification and formal guarantee of civil liberties such as freedom of speech and association. In this respect, the liberal tradition has focused a lot of attention on the need to limit state power to preserve individual liberty, albeit by simultaneously separating the economic and political spheres in a manner that ensures that authoritarianism prevails within the economic sphere and that democracy is confined to the narrowly defined political sphere. But I don't want to focus any more attention on the many problems with liberal representative democracy, since I am sure that you are familiar with them. Rather, in the remainder of this paper I will highlight the extent to which socialist participatory democracy builds on the positive achievements of Athenian and liberal representative democracy.

4) The Historical Mission of Capitalism and Representative Democracy

Marx and the other classical Marxists consider that it is capitalism's historical mission to create the social and economic preconditions for socialism, centrally, but by no means exclusively, through the development of the forces of production (scientific knowledge, technology, labour productivity). Thus Marx argues in *Capital* (vol.3), that it is the 'historical mission of the capitalist system of production to raise these material foundations of the new mode of production to a certain degree of perfection' (*Capital*, vol.3, p.441) and 'it is one of the civilizing aspects of capital that it enforces this surplus-labour in a manner ... more advantageous for the development of the productive forces [and] social relations ... for a new and higher form' (*Capital*, vol.3, 1967: 819). In a similar vein, Lenin argues in the *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, that 'the progressive historical role of capitalism may be summed up in two brief propositions: increase in the productive forces of social labour, and the socialisation of that labour'. Capitalist development of the forces of production thus ensures that there will be sufficient social surplus product to sustain an advanced self-governing civilisation, and also that the general level of scientific and educational advancement in society will ensure that the general populace will be intellectually capable of governing their own affairs.

The technological advancement facilitated by capitalism's unceasing drive to boost labour productivity is a necessary, but by no means sufficient, condition for the establishment of socialist democracy. The revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialist democracy require a collective agent with the socio-economic

interests, social structural capacity, and revolutionary potential to both eliminate capitalism and build socialism.

The working class is revolutionary, Marxists have maintained, because of its historically constituted nature as the exploited collective producer within the capitalist mode of production. As the *exploited* class, it is caught in a systematic clash with capital, which cannot generally and permanently satisfy its needs. As the main *producing* class, it has the power to halt – and within limits redirect – the economic apparatus of capitalism, in pursuit of its goals. And as the *collective* producer it has the objective capacity to found a new, non-exploitative mode of production. This combination of interest, power and creative capacity distinguishes the working class from every other social or political force in capitalist society, and qualifies it as the indispensable agency of socialism (Mulhern quoted by Wood, 1986: 91).

Of course, this echoes Marx and Engels' observation in the *Communist Manifesto* that 'not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians' (1998: 42). The working class is the central and leading collective agent of the revolutionary transformation of capitalism and the creation of socialism.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider this in any depth, but it is worth noting that, as Draper accurately observes, 'The conditions of existence of the working class provide the connection between the economic position of the class and its political tendencies; 'the proletariat is revolutionary in accordance with its whole [social] position'' (1978: 41). In other words, the exploitation of the working class by the capitalist class, however much it may be ideologically veiled by commodity fetishism, the wage form, and the ensemble of more overtly ideological institutions in capitalist society (media, education system, bourgeois political parties, and so forth), eventually pushes workers to

act collectively to resist their exploitation. This happens because capitalism consistently fails to satisfy the needs of workers and their dependents. The capitalist wants to maximize profits through increasing productivity while at the same time cutting the costs of hiring labour. Hence workers are confronted by the concerted effort of employers to hold wages down, prolong the working day, increase the intensity of work, hire and fire at will, avoid costly measures to protect the health and safety of workers, and maintain tight control over labour within the workplace. Outside of the workplace place workers struggle to afford adequate housing, maintain a healthy diet, educate themselves and their children, obtain health care, and survive should they become unemployed.

For this reason workers' organised struggles clash with some of the basic imperatives of capitalism. This arises because of the basic contradiction between social production and private appropriation. 'The operative contradiction is between the rights of private property, capitalism's juridical idol, and the organized proletariat's inevitable insistence on *social responsibility* for all vital aspects of life, including the economic' (Draper, 1978: 42-3). As workers struggle collectively in order to ensure that their basic needs are met by their employers and the state, they press demands, such as trade union organising rights, better conditions and higher wages, public provision of health, housing, education and welfare, which are viewed by capitalists as potentially threatening, if not directly undermining, profitable capital accumulation. This fundamental clash with capitalist imperatives is specific to the working class; the interests of other classes, such as the petty bourgeoisie, or peasantry, can be much more easily accommodated within capitalism.

Capitalism itself organises the working class. It does so in a number of ways. In the earliest phase of capitalist development, as we have seen with respect to the emergence of

capitalist agriculture in England during the seventeenth century, the emergence of capitalism creates an increasing number of wage labourers. In this respect the growth of the working class not only directly corresponds to, but also is in fact integral to, the growth of capitalism itself. 'In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed - a class of labourer, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital' (Marx and Engels, 1998: 42). Proletarianisation becomes an enduring tendency of capitalist development, that is, as capitalism grows and develops an increasing proportion of the total population become dependant on the sale of their capacity to work for a wage or salary.

But more than this, capitalist development involves a process of mass urbanisation, a process that has continued to the present day (Marx and Engels, 1998: 40). And within the rapidly growing towns and cities, workers become increasingly concentrated in large worksites - factories, docks, railway yards, warehouses, shops, mines, and offices. As Draper puts it, 'Capitalism has no choice about teaching its workers the wonders of organization and labour solidarity, because without these the system cannot operate.' Capital 'assembles the bourgeois and the proletarians in large cities, in which industry can be carried on most profitably, and by this herding together of great masses in *one* spot makes the proletarians conscious of their power'' (Draper, 1978: 41-2).

It is the working class which is the main producing class in capitalist societies - the significance of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie declines historically in this regard, and capitalists are a class of non-productive surplus appropriators. It is the working class, and only the working class amongst all the classes of capitalist society, that is located at the

absolute core of the system of capitalist production. For this reason the working class is, in terms of social and economic power, potentially the most powerful class in capitalist society.

Most important of all, Marx and Engels not only consider that the working class is the only collective agency capable of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and establishment of socialism; they also consider that 'the emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves' (Marx, 1974: 82). Only the working class itself, through its own efforts, can build socialism and eventually create a class-less and state-less self-governing communist society.

By the early 21st century, the positive historical achievements of capitalism and representative democracy have become very clear: tremendous development of the forces of production, the extension of citizenship rights and civil liberties to a substantial majority of the adult population, establishing the principle of electing representatives, and so forth. But these achievements have always been recognised and encapsulated in the classical Marxist conception of the *transcendence* of representative democracy. The concept of transcendence implies, not simple abandonment, but the incorporation of the best elements of the lower form of democracy in a higher more developed form – in this case, socialist participatory democracy. This is clear, not just in the writings of Marx, Luxemburg, and Trotsky, but also Lenin. For example, in *State and Revolution* he argues that socialism involves 'an immense expansion of democracy, which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the money-bags' (Lenin, 1968: 324).

5) Socialist Participatory Democracy: Building on the Achievements of the Past to Make the Future

This section focuses on the classical Marxist depiction of how socialist participatory democracy (SPD) is likely to come about, and specifically, why it is going to take a revolution, outline some of its central features, and finally underline the point that this will involve the extension, rather than restriction, of democracy as it currently exists in liberal representative democracy (LRD).

It is part of the ABC of classical Marxism that socialist democracy can only be established through a revolution. Let us be clear as to why. First, there is the matter of historical precedent. Both Athenian democracy and LRD were established in a revolutionary manner because creating a more democratic form of government necessarily involves the overthrow of the undemocratic (or less democratic) state that prevails prior to the revolution. Much the same can be said for SPD. Second, classical Marxism developed the principle of socialism from below, according to which socialist democracy can not be introduced from above by a small elite, whether composed of enlightened reformist politicians in parliament or a small section of the armed forces staging a coup. For socialism to be democratic it must be introduced and established by 'a self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, [acting] in the interest of the majority' (Marx and Engels, 1998: 49). That is, it centrally and necessarily involves the self-emancipation of the working class. Third, revolution is required to overthrow capitalism and this is necessary to establish socio-economic conditions conducive to the collective creation of a more democratic society. More specifically, capitalism must be overthrown to end capitalist exploitation and eliminate the huge inequalities this exploitation generates, to overcome alienation in which people feel that they have no real control over their own

lives, to eliminate recurrent economic crises, mass unemployment and widespread poverty through democratically centralised production and distribution, to end competition, imperialism and war, to enable the introduction of the measures required to effectively halt global warming, and to create a freely accessible media. Last but not least, capitalism has to be overthrown because it is an inherently and inescapably undemocratic form of economic organisation.

For the classical Marxists revolutionary insurrection is necessary to overthrow the capitalist state (whether liberal democratic or authoritarian) and enable the building of a democratic workers' state. More specifically, revolution is necessary because the basic institutional infrastructure of a radically democratic workers state emerges during the course of the revolution. At its core, this kind of democratic state is composed of a centralised network of workers' councils.

Revolution is also considered necessary because in the process of changing society, workers and their allies (students, members of the middle classes, peasant farmers) are changed through their involvement in the revolutionary movement. In other words, there is a vitally important pedagogical dimension to revolutionary upheavals- they generate an immense educative and developmental impetus within the broad mass of people. Thus societal transformation and personal transformation become inextricably interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

The classical Marxists were clear about the revolutionary process likely to facilitate the emergence of socialist democracy. But in the wake of the tragically brief experiments with this form of democracy, it is important to clarify the central features of SPD as envisaged

by the key figures in this tradition. These include a distinctive and defining social dimension: the working class and its allies, being in the majority, rule. The majority become directly involved in self-governance of society. Hence like Athenian democracy, it is a direct and participatory form of democracy. At its core the 'associated producers' democratically control production and distribution through a centralized network of councils and assemblies. Constitutional principles and institutional mechanisms that are designed to facilitate popular participation, prevent the degeneration of the revolution into some kind of authoritarianism, and ensure democratic accountability include: the right of recall of delegates by the constituencies that elect them, elections being held more frequently than in LRD, regular mass assemblies, constitutional protection and substantive expansion of civil liberties, such as, freedom of speech, intellectual freedom, religious freedom, freedom of assembly, popular control of, and access to, the media and other major forms of communication, and the democratization of the judiciary. As Luxemburg (1970: 389) argued in her critical assessment of the Bolshevik leadership of the Russian Revolution, 'Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party – however numerous they may be – is no freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently.'

Establishing SPD requires a fundamental transformation of the political economy of time. The elimination of mass unemployment and large areas of unproductive employment makes it possible to reduce the average hours each person needs to spend performing productive labour. In conjunction with this, socialism greatly expands public provision of childcare, while simultaneously actively promoting equal responsibility for the care of children by men and women. By creating more free time socialism ensures, not

only that participatory democracy can work, but also that individual liberty, diversity and self-development is maximised. In conjunction with an egalitarian distribution of material resources, reducing the temporal realm of necessity is a central part of ensuring that 'free development of each is the condition for the free development of all' (Marx and Engels, 1998: 62).

If it is to succeed, the revolutionary creation of SPD must take place on a global scale, both because it is not possible to build socialism in one country and also to reconfigure the relationship between humankind and the biosphere in order to address the environmental crisis generated by capitalism, most notably climate change. In short, socialism is necessary to create a society that is libertarian, egalitarian, and environmentally sustainable.

Recall that Dahl identified elected officials, free and fair elections, inclusive suffrage, the right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative information, and associational autonomy as definitively characteristic of representative democracy (or polyarchy as he referred to it). At the risk of glossing over the sometimes heated debates about this within Marxism, and between Marxists and liberal socialists such as Bobbio and Held, it can be reasonably argued that all of these 'institutions of polyarchy' will be retained and further developed in socialist democracy.

Conclusion

This kind of socialist democracy has been subject to wide ranging criticism by those of a liberal and/or social democratic intellectual and political orientation. The most important of these is still the Austrian school and there are others, such as the liberal socialists Norberto Bobbio and David Held, who raise some interesting and important issues that defenders of socialist participatory democracy need to address. The Austrian school critique has been addressed directly by Callinicos, Devine, Mandel and McNally in their convincing defences of the economic feasibility of democratically centralised economic planning. They also show that many of the most common criticisms of socialist participatory democracy, such of those that appeal to transhistorical conceptions of human nature, rest on false assumptions and/or weak arguments that can be rebutted.

Nonetheless, an intellectually honest response to the critics of socialist participatory must acknowledge that it is still very much a collective work in progress. For example, liberal socialists (Bobbio and Held) highlight the possibility that socialist participatory democracy, with its multiple layers of council democracy, may actually be less rather than more direct than liberal representative democracy. If, for example, workers elect delegates from their workplace to a regional assembly of workers' delegates (or soviet to use the Russian term), and this regional assembly, in conjunction with all of the other regional assemblies, elects delegates to a national workers' assembly, then there is no direct election of delegates by citizens to the national government. Although the right of recall and frequent elections provide important checks on the indirectness of this system of voting, it may be that some form of direct election of delegates to something like an annual national mass congress of workers' delegates, with supreme power over the constitutional

arrangements of the workers' state and the broad outline of the economic plan, is necessary to provide an additional channel for the expression of popular sovereignty. Perhaps I've got this wrong and I'm missing something here, but it seems clear that there is more intellectual work to do in thinking this through.

Held also argues that the Marxist tradition has been weak in its analysis of the importance of establishing limits on state power to, among other things, preserve individual liberty. This criticism is less troubling because there are those, such as Mandel, who have rightly emphasised the importance of entrenching individual and minority rights in the constitutional arrangements of a radically democratic workers' state.

Continuing to explore and debate these issues is vitally important precisely because advanced capitalist civilisation in its current form is unsustainable. About this we can be reasonably certain. Indeed, for Marxists, neo-Weberian historical sociologists, and even cosmopolitan social democrats like David Held, the mere continuation of the fundamental social, economic and political arrangements of advanced capitalist civilisation is highly unlikely. Capitalism's brief historical existence has been characterised by extraordinarily rapid economic, scientific and technological development, recurrent crises, revolutionary upheavals in both advanced and less developed capitalist societies, endemic military conflict between nation-states including two world wars, and non-renewable resource depletion, deforestation, pollution, and climate change. Consequently, there are very strong reasons to doubt that capitalist civilisation will persist longer than earlier civilizations that were characterised by a considerably greater degree of internal stability and, indeed, the weight of evidence suggests that its historical life will be considerably shorter. It is sobering to recall that humankind has yet to create a civilisation that has

avoided collapse in the historical long-term.

Yet, despite this, a large majority of the world's people, and the world's intellectuals, currently subscribe to the view that what is will always be. They operate on the basis of the assumption the future will most likely involve a continuation of the prevailing social, economic and political arrangements of advanced capitalism. This is understandable in view of the fact that for any society to be maintained and reproduced over time, it must be sustained by one of the most elemental forms of ideological legitimation, the common sense everyday acceptance of the impossibility of societal transformation. Being understandable, however, does not make it justifiable.

Marx wrote in 1872 that 'There is no royal road to science, and only those who do not dread the fatiguing climb of its steep paths have a chance of gaining its luminous summits' (Marx, 1967: 21). But what did Marx see from the vantage point of those luminous summits? There is no simple answer because what is so spectacular about the view from the top of a mountain is precisely the breadth of vision – not only can one see for a considerably greater distance than at sea level, but one can also see for a greater distance in every direction. Nonetheless it is clear that Marx had a uniquely broad historical vision in one crucially important respect: *Marx could see beyond capitalism*. In a famous comment on his relation to Hegel's dialectical method, Marx wrote that this method was a 'scandal and abomination to bourgeoisdom and its doctrinaire professors ... because it regards every historically developed social form as in fluid movement and therefore takes into account its transient nature not less than its momentary existence' (1967: 20). If one views the broad sweep of history, and one must gain altitude in the

sense alluded to here in order to establish this field of vision, then the historical terrain occupied by capitalism is no longer all that one can see.

In this respect, Marx, Engels and the major figures in classical Marxism made what remains a profoundly original contribution to Western political thought: a systematic defence not only of the basic principles of direct participatory democracy with a lineage that can be traced back to Athenian democracy, but of the desirability, feasibility and necessity of self-governance by the associated producers in order to transcend all major forms of exploitation, oppression and alienation. They thought that this was more than a purely utopian vision because the internal contradictions of capitalism undermine it from within - not only driving the capitalist system into crisis but simultaneously creating a collective agency (the working class and its allies) that has the social structural capacity to transform it.

Huntington (1996: 321) in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* observes that 'on a worldwide basis Civilization seems in many respects to be yielding to barbarism, generating the image of an unprecedented phenomenon, a global Dark Ages, possibly descending on humanity.' We may agree on this, if on little else. We have then, a closing image of the sun setting, of our luminous summits glowing pink against the backdrop of a blue sky turning black. We see the mountains casting lengthening shadows as the sun goes down. The shadows of the past thus come to point in the direction of an uncertain future. But this much is certain - there is no way that we can hope collectively to build a qualitatively superior civilization in the absence of a clear vision of a society that is more democratic, egalitarian and environmentally sustainable than the one we inhabit at present.

References

- Anderson, P. 2000. Renewals. *New Left Review*, no. 1 (January-February): 5-24.
- Aristotle, 1962. *The Politics*. Hamondsworth: Penguin.
- Benjamin, W. 1992. *Illuminations*. London: Fontana Press.
- Bhaskar, R. 1989. *Reclaiming reality: A critical introduction to contemporary philosophy*. New York and London: Verso.
- Blackburn, R. 1991. Fin de siecle: Socialism after the crash. In *After the fall: The failure of Communism and the future of socialism*, ed. R. Blackburn, 173-249. London: Verso.
- Bobbio, N. 1987a. *Which socialism?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. 1987b. *The future of democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- _____. 1991. The upturned utopia. In *After the fall: The failure of Communism and the future of socialism*, ed. R. Blackburn, 3-5. London: Verso.
- Brzensinski, Z. 1989. *The grand failure: The birth and death of Communism in the twentieth century*. London: Macdonald.
- Callinicos, A. 1989. *Against postmodernism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- _____. 1991. *The revenge of history: Marxism and the East European revolutions*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- _____. 1995. *Theories and Narratives: Reflections on the philosophy of history*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Dahl, R. 1989. *Democracy and its critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1998. *On democracy*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

- Davidson, N. 2012. *How revolutionary were the bourgeois revolutions?* Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Devine, P. 1988. *Democracy and economic planning: The political economy of a self-governing society.* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Draper, H. 1977. *Karl Marx's theory of revolution.* Vol. 1: *State and bureaucracy.* New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Dryzek, J. 2004. 'Democratic Political Theory', in G. Gaus and C. Kukathas (eds), *Handbook of Political Theory*, Sage, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi, 143-154.
- Eagleton, T. 1999. Utopia and its opposites. In *Socialist register 2000: Necessary and unnecessary utopias*, eds. L. Panitch and C. Leys, 31-40. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Fukuyama, F. 1989. The end of history? *The National Interest*. Summer: 3-18.
- _____. 1992. *The end of history and the last man.* New York: Free Press.
- Geras, N. 1986. *Literature of revolution.* London: Verso.
- _____. 1990. *Discourses of extremity: Radical ethics and post-Marxist extravagances.* London: Verso.
- _____. 1994. Democracy and the ends of Marxism. *New Left Review*, no. 203 (January-February): 92-106.
- Halliday, F. 1991. The ends of the cold war. In *After the fall: The failure of Communism and the future of socialism*, ed. R. Blackburn, 78-99. London: Verso.
- Harman, C. 1989. The myth of market socialism. *International Socialism*, 2d ser., no. 42: 3-63.

- Haynes, M. 2002. *Russia: Class and Power, 1917-2000*. London & Sydney: Bookmarks
- Held, D. 1995. *Democracy and the global order: From the modern state to cosmopolitan governance*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- _____. 1996. *Models of democracy*. 2d ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hennessey, R. 2000. *Profit and pleasure: Sexual identities in late capitalism*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hirst, P. 1990. *Representative democracy and its limits*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- _____. 1994. *Associative democracy*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Hobsbawm, E. 1991. Goodbye to all that. In *After the fall: The failure of Communism and the future of socialism*, ed. R. Blackburn, 115-25. London: Verso.
- _____. 2000. *The new century*. London: Little, Brown and Company.
- Huntington, S. 1996. *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Korsch, K. 1971. *Three essays on Marxism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe 1985. *Hegemony and socialist strategy*. London: Verso.
- Lenin, V. [1917] 1968. The state and revolution. In *Selected works*, V. Lenin, 263-359. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Lukacs, G. 1971. *History and class consciousness: Studies in Marxist dialectics*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.
- Luxemburg, R. [1918]. 1970. The Russian revolution. In *Rosa Luxemburg speaks*, ed. M. Waters, 365-95. New York: Pathfinder.

- Mandel, E. 1986. In defence of socialist planning *New Left Review*, no. 159 (September-October): 5-38.
- Marx, K. [1867] 1967a. *Capital*. Vol. I. New York: International Publishers.
- _____. [1894] 1967b. *Capital*. Vol. III. New York: International Publishers.
- _____. [1871] 1968. *The civil war in France*. In *Selected works in one volume*, K. Marx and F. Engels, 271-309. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- _____. [1859] 1970. *A contribution to the critique of political economy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers
- _____. [1863] 1971. *Theories of surplus-value*. Part III. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- _____. [1858] 1973 *Grundrisse*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- _____. [1875] 1974. *The critique of the Gotha programme*. In *The First International and after – Political writings*, K. Marx. Vol. 3. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- _____. [1880] 1975a. Marginal notes on A. Wagner. In *Texts on method of Karl Marx*, trans. and ed. T. Carver, 179-219. Oxford: Blackwell.
- _____. [1847] 1975b. *The poverty of philosophy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- _____. [1850] 1978. *The class struggles in France*. In *Collected works*, K. Marx and F. Engels, Vol. 10: 45-145. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Marx, K. and F. Engels. 1975. *Selected correspondence*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- _____. [1846] 1976. *The German ideology*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- _____. [1848] 1998. *The Communist manifesto*. London: Verso.

- Miliband, R. 1985. The new revisionism in Britain. *New Left Review*, no. 150 (March-April): 5-26.
- _____. 1991. Reflections on the crisis of Communist regimes. In *After the fall: The failure of Communism and the future of socialism*, ed. R. Blackburn, 6-17. London: Verso.
- Mouffe, C. 1993. *The return of the political*. London: Verso.
- _____. 1995. Democratic politics and the question of identity. In *The identity in question*, ed. J. Rajchman, 33-46. London and New York: Routledge.
- _____. 2000. *The democratic paradox*. London: Verso.
- McNally, D. 1993. *Against the market*. London: Verso.
- Nimtz, A. 2000. *Marx and Engels: Their contribution to the democratic breakthrough*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Novack, G. 1971. *Democracy & revolution: from Ancient Greece to modern capitalism*. New York: Pathfinder Press.
- Plato, 1977. *The Republic*. VIII. In *The Portable Plato*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Potter, D., D. Goldblatt, M. Kiloh and P. Lewis, eds. 1997. *Democratization*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Present author (2013) *The history of democracy: A Marxist interpretation*. London: Pluto Press.
- Ollman, B. 1990. Putting dialectics to work: The process of abstraction in Marx's method. *Rethinking Marxism* 3 (1): 26-74.
- Rawls, J. 1993. *Political liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Rees, J. 1998. *The algebra of revolution: The dialectic and the classical Marxist tradition*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Resnick, S. and R. Wolff. 2002. *Class theory and history: Capitalism and Communism in the U.S.S.R.* New York and London: Routledge.
- Rueschemeyer, D., E. Stephens and J. Stephens. 1992. *Capitalist development and democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sayer, D. 1987. *The violence of abstraction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ste Croix, G. 1983. *The class struggle in the Ancient Greek world*. London: Duckworth.
- Trotsky, L. [1937] 1972. *The revolution betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and where is it going?* New York: Pathfinder Press.
- Wolff, R. 2000. Marxism and democracy. *Rethinking Marxism* 12 (1): 112-122.
- Wood, E. 1986. *The retreat from class*. London: Verso.
- _____. 1988. *Peasant-citizen and slave: The foundations of Athenian democracy*. London: Verso.
- _____. 1991. *The pristine culture of capitalism: a historical essay on old regimes and modern states*. London: Verso.
- _____. 1995. *Democracy against capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 2002. *The origin of capitalism: A longer view*. 2d ed. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Yergin, D, and T. Gustafson 1995. *Russia 2010 and what it means for the world*. New York: Vintage Books.

-
- ⁱ There is no space to consider the Dutch Revolt against foreign rule by the Spanish Habsburgs in this book. For useful accounts of varying length see: Brandon (2007); Harman (1999: 194-202); Parker (1979); Van der Linden (1997).