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Competition, Conscious Collective Cooperation and Capabilities: The Political Economy of Socialism and the Transition

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Since socialism as a logically consistent system will both produce and require human beings with different consciousness, behavior and capabilities than those produced and required by capitalism, one has a chicken-and-egg dilemma for a transition to socialism. Particularly important is the obfuscation of the social cooperative nature of human production (and hence existence) behind both the ideology and reality of competition and markets. This article considers a transition to socialism from this perspective. Sections II and III consider the end points of a transition, capitalism and socialism, in regards to these issues of markets, competition, consciousness, cooperation and abilities. Section IV discusses the central issue in a transition. Section V poses the conundrum presented in the opening of this abstract. Finally, sections VI and VII present two examples from today's world that are argued to offer processes of resolution to the dilemma, one from industry and one from civil society.

Keywords: Developing Capabilities; Marxism; Socialism

Introduction

The subject of this article is the political economy of the transition to socialism. A large part of the frame for considering the transition will be determined by two logical considerations. First, the nature of the transition must in part be determined by the two end points: the political economy of capitalism and the political economy of socialism. As an aside, it must be stressed that while at a high enough level of abstraction there is just one capitalism—a system whose goal is the pursuit of profits and the accumulation of capital—which it accomplishes centrally through the exploitation of labor in a market organized system of production and distribution, concretely there are many different capitalisms. Swedish, German, French, US,

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Japanese and Chinese capitalisms all differ greatly in their specific forms. Similarly, while there will be defining characteristics of the political economy of socialism, it too will vary in its possible and actual specific forms. Hence while this article will remain at a level of abstraction concerning the transition at which these concrete differences do not enter, it must be understood that what is discussed here is intended only as a frame, not as a cookbook. The people engaged in effecting the transformation in a given country will need to fully take into account both the specifics of the concrete capitalism they are superseding, and the specifics of the concrete socialism that they have collectively decide they will build, to determine the nature and timing of the specific policies appropriate for their process.

The second logical consideration concerns the nature of the political economy of socialism. Unlike the capitalist starting point, this does not currently exist and therefore needs to be specified. It turns out that while there is far from complete agreement on the characteristics of the political economy of socialism, particularly as one moves to more and more concrete levels, there is a high degree of agreement about the most centrally important abstract characteristics of the political economy of socialism (which, again, is all that will be needed for this article).[1]

The article will proceed as follows. In section II I will discuss the political economy of capitalism to establish one end point of the transition, and in particular to establish what needs to be transcended. It will be assumed that most readers of this article are familiar with the general concepts of the political economy of capitalism, and so I will spend only one paragraph on its general nature. What I will present at some length, is an introduction to a discussion of the effects of capitalism's central institution, markets, on their participants. While advocates of a transition to socialism are reasonably in agreement on the effects of markets in capitalism, there is a major divide among proponents of socialism on the issue of the desirability and even the possibility of 'market socialism'. I will present this discussion of markets in capitalism because I will subsequently argue that it is the behavior engendered in participants by markets and competition that today is key to inhibiting the initiation of a transition to socialism. In section III I will discus the other end point of the transition, the political economy of socialism, in particular contrasting it to the political economy of capitalism. With those two end points established, I will be able to give an overview of the political economy of the transition to socialism in section IV. In section V I will briefly highlight the

[1] Although many might find this agreement surprising, it is actually to be expected. For those who hold the materialist approach to the transition, the characteristics of socialism will be created by people in struggle against the limitations on their human development, and hence the similarity of the central aspects will be determined by the similarity of the restrictions of concrete capitalisms. For those that take a moral/ethical/religious approach to the desired nature of socialism, the obvious and widely agreed upon (among critics) harmful effects of existing capitalisms on humans will again give rise to their central concerns being similar. For a recent brief discussion of these two approaches to considering the transition to socialism written by an advocate of the materialist approach, see Bertell Ollman,'The Utopian Vision of the Future (Then and Now)', *Monthly Review*, 57:3, July–August 2005, 78–102.

conundrum for the transition to socialism that emerges from the considerations of the previous sections, which I believe is the central difficulty in initiating the transition today. Finally in sections VI and VII I will very briefly refer to two case studies of processes, one in the work place and one in 'civil society', that I believe are the type of human activity that will begin to break through the barrier presented by the conundrum.

The Political Economy of Capitalism

The procedures that form the political economy of capitalism, or any other economic/political/social system, are rooted in and flow from its central goal. For capitalism, that is the pursuit of profits or the accumulation of capital. The source of these profits or accumulated capital is the exploitation of labor, which is primarily carried out through the market system.

In line with the concern of this paper with the transition to socialism, I will here enter into an extended discussion of the effects of markets on people engaged in them. Below I will argue that is central to the issue of a transition actually occurring.

In a short article, Bowles makes the following basic observation about how markets shape their participants.

> First, markets are cultural institutions. As anthropologists have long stressed, how we regulate our exchanges and coordinate our disparate economic activities influences what kind of people we become... Markets may be considered to be social settings that foster specific types of personal development and penalize others.
>
> By economizing on valuable traits—feelings of solidarity with others, the ability to empathize, the capacity for complex communication and collective decision making, for example—markets are said to cope with the scarcity of these worthy traits. But in the long run markers contribute to their erosion and even disappearance. What looks like a hardheaded adaptation to the infirmity of human nature may in fact be part of the problem.[2]

In a particularly colorful phrase, Stephan J. Gould, who spent his life arguing against the concept that human behavior is hard-wired into us, determined prior to our cultural socialization (along with many other conservative myths supposedly rooted in human biology), wrote:

> Our genetic makeup permits a wide range of behaviors—from Ebenezer Scrooge before to Ebenezer Scrooge after. . . . Upbringing, culture, class, status, and all the

[2] Samuel Bowles, 'What Markets Can and Cannot Do', *Challenge*, July–August, 1991, 11–16. The classic book-length work to present and develop this thesis is Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944]). In *The Market Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Robert Lane describes a large number of experimental results that will be of interest to anyone concerned with the effects of markets on their participants, notwithstanding that in this author's view Lane's overall frame suffers from very often not asking or addressing the pertinent questions.

> intangibles we call 'free will,' determine how we restrict our behaviors from the wide spectrum—from extreme altruism to extreme selfishness—that our genes permit.[3]

A particular aspect of markets that will be important to this paper is their competition. In the 1970s and 1980s as market fundamentalism stormed mainstream capitalist economic theory, it spilled over into socialist theory by bringing the idea of 'market socialism' from its marginal status as a topic of discussion largely among Soviet and East Block economists, to the status of a central topic of debate among socialists throughout the world. Stated simply, competition and markets were posed as an antidote to central planning, which had been declared unavoidably bureaucratic and incapable of being efficient. We will discuss this further below. But leaving aside here the point that there is no conclusive evidence that competition necessarily increases efficiency, our concern, in regards to the issue of the transition to socialism, is with other effects that competition is generally accepted to generate. In the fist place, it engenders a feeling of animosity between competitors that prevents the development of solidarity. Robert Owen, recalling his childhood, wrote:

> I have often reflected on how unjust such proceedings {competitive contests to determine who was best at something, in this case between children—A.C.} are in principal, and how injurious in practice. One instance of this made a deep impression on my mind. Some party bet that I could write better than my next eldest brother, John, who was two years older; and upon a formal trial, at which judges were appointed, it was decided that my writing was better, although so far as I could then form an opinion I thought my brother's was as good as my own. From that day I don't think my brother had as strong an affection for me as he had before this unwise competition.[4]

Second, advocates always praise what competition does for the winner, how it both drives her to new heights and simultaneously gives her an improved sense of self-worth and of her ability to affect the world. They never consider, however, what it does to the losers, which by their own logic should do exactly the opposite—and in a competition there will generally be many more losers than winners. B.F. Skinner discussed this issue several times in his vision of a good society, *Walden II*.

> We carefully avoid any joy in a personal triumph which means a personal failure of somebody else. . . . We don't use the motive of domination, because we are always thinking of the whole group. We could motivate a few geniuses that way . . . but we'd sacrifice some of the happiness of everyone else. Triumph over nature and over oneself, yes. But over others, never.

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[3] Stephan J. Gould, *Ever Since Darwin* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1977), p. 266.
[4] A.L. Morton, *The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen* (New York: International Publishers, 1962), p. 87.

> When one man gets a place in the sun, others are put in a darker shade. . . . We are opposed to personal competition. . . . We never mark any member for special approbation. There must be some other source of satisfaction in one's work or play, or we regard an achievement as quite trivial. A triumph over another man is never a laudable act. Our decision to eliminate personal aggrandizement arose quite naturally from the fact that we were thinking about the whole group. We could not see how the group could gain from individual glory.[5]

An excellent book-length study by Kohn on competition develops the above points in much greater depth. First, he debunks the positive myths about competition: its inevitability from human nature, its productivity, its essential contribution to the enjoyment of play. Second and more important to our concern, he expands upon competition's anti-cooperative and anti-solidarity effects and indicates the essential benefits of rejecting it. Finally, he considers the crucial change in how we approach the world that will be necessary to reject competition, which will be discussed further below.

> But the alternative is also the very reason for objecting to competition in the first place. It is because we value human relationships, among other things, that we find competing to be problematic. The motive for opposing competition and the arrangement to replace it are one and the same: cooperation.
>
> To take this perspective is to move beyond our customary individualistic frame of reference. Even if it seems appropriate for me to compete—overlooking for the moment the price I pay for doing so—I need ask whether it is in our collective interest to keep competing. . . . If it is not, then we need not only to think but to act as a group. Replacing structural competition with cooperation requires collective action, and collective action requires education and organization. . . . An individual may in some respects lose out by refusing to take part in a mutually destructive struggle, but a group of people . . . can join forces. By helping others to see the terrible consequences of a system that predicates one person's success on another's failure, we can act together to change the system.[6]

I will argue below that (collective) self-determination, the ability, in the well known phrase, to be and see oneself as the subject of history and not the object, is both one of the necessary components of socialism, and its absence in the majority of contemporary humanity is also the key impediment today for a transition to socialism. Conservatives argue that people who are pre-determined to be followers can never be competent leaders, and hence the vision of a society that is self-governing and egalitarian, not only in material goods but in power, is a chimera. Two works in particular from the 'envisioning socialism' literature address this issue in the frame of traits that markets and capitalism develop, one compactly and the other at greater length.

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[5] B.F. Skinner, *Walden II* (New York: Macmillan, 1976 [1948]), pp. 103, 156.

[6] Alfie Kohn, *No Contest. The Case Against Competition* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1992 [1986]), pp. 194, 195.

Albert and Hahnel write:

> 1. Work produces human qualities. . . . If work is rote, frustrating and mind-numbing, it dampens skills and self-esteem. If work is complex and challenging, in enhances skills and self-esteem. . . .
> 2. The human qualities work produces in turn affect what responsibilities we can hold and what level of participation in decision making we can sustain. . . . If some of us do one kind of work (systems engineer) and others do another (receptionist), and if the two produce markedly different knowledge, skill and/or dispositions, people doing the different jobs will have different likelihood of advancing up workplace job hierarchies. Indeed, when workers do not get their different abilities and inclinations from schooling or socialization, the only option left is that they get them from 'on the job acculturation'.
> 3. Any economy that *produces class divisions* must differentiate among new workers building confidence and skill in some and generating apathy in others. In contrast, any economy that aspires to classlessness must welcome new workers into balanced jobs that develop confidence and skills in *all*.
>
> Suppose a capable young workforce enters industry only to exert little influence over boring work. Regardless of their initial abilities, suppose only a small percent win promotions offering more knowledge, freer workdays, and greater time for study. We can confidently predict that each time these few climb the promotion ladder, their chances of falling back will decrease. Each step up will increase their skills and confidence. In contrast, workers left below will continue to follow orders and many of their potentials will atrophy for lack of 'exercise.'[7]

Before passing on to the other more in-depth investigation of this issue, it is worth noting briefly that the darling of the conservatives, Adam Smith,[8] was very clear on this issue as well.

> The difference of natural talents in different men is, in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius that appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause, as the effect of the division of labor. The difference between the most dissimilar characters, between a philosopher and a common street porter, for example, seem to arise not so much from nature, as from habit, custom, and education. When they came into the world, and for the first six or eight years of their existence, they were, perhaps, very much alike, and neither their parents nor playfellows could perceive any remarkable difference. About that age, or soon after, they came to be employed in very different occupations. The difference of talents

[7] Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel, *Looking Forward. Participatory Economics for the Twenty First Century* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1991), p. 16.

[8] As an interesting aside, while Adam Smith was indeed a champion of markets, he was much more progressive than his modern disciples. Beside the point noted in the text that he found the claim to wealth very often largely an accident of birth, he was both for government intervention whenever markets did not work well (e.g. his example of firewalls), and he held specifically that workers deserved a greater share of socially created wealth than they received.

> comes then to be taken notice of, and widens by degrees, till at last the vanity of the philosopher is willing to acknowledge scarce any resemblance.[9]

Devine devoted chapter 7, 'The Abolition of the Social Division of Labor,' to this issue of how capitalist work inhibits workers' fuller human development. He indicates that he largely follows the work of Bahro in this chapter, but I will try wherever possible to avoid the particular jargon Bahro developed to present his arguments.[10]

First, the division of labor is certainly a universal aspect of modern economic life. Since well before Adam Smith's well known example of the pin factory, the division of labor has been understood to be central to elevated levels of labor productivity. No modern socialist theory advocates eliminating it. Like Albert and Hahnel discussed above, Devine is rather concerned with radically altering it. He addresses the issue in a different and more developed frame than that used by Albert and Hahnel, but we will see that many of his conclusions are alike or similar.

Second, Devine argues that there are two distinct aspects to what we think of as the division of labor, which under capitalism are thoroughly fused. On the one hand there is the *functional division of labor*. As the name implies, this refers to the obvious fact that in modern production many different functional tasks must be performed to produce an output, many different specific jobs and particular detailed tasks. No one person could perform them all, certainly not at once, but given the skills that need to be learned, no one person could perform them all even at different times (as in Adam Smith's pin production before moving to the efficient structure). Hence a functional division of labor is necessary because of the nature of modern production (but not necessarily the one that actually exists). On the other hand, there is the *social division of labor.* Basically this consists of people having different amounts of social power based on their particular role in the overall process of social production. I will return to describe this further after discussing another concept in Devine's frame.

A third aspect of Devine's frame is that humans need devote some part of their social consciousness to 'producing the basic requirements of human existence. This covers routine production and reproduction, and also the hierarchy of knowledge associated with it.'[11] The remaining social consciousness can be used in two different ways. Quoting Bahro, Devine indicates these as:

> *compensatory* interests, first of all, are the unavoidable reaction to the way that society restricts and stunts the growth, development, and confirmation of innumerable people at an early age. The corresponding needs are met with substitute satisfactions. People have to be indemnified, by possession and consumption of as many things and services as possible . . . for the fact that they

[9] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (New York: The Modern Library, 1985 [1776]), p. 17.

[10] Pat Devine, *Democracy and Economic Planning: The Political Economy of a Self-governing Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988); Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (No city given: NLB, 1978 [1977]).

[11] Devine, op. cit., p. 164.

> have an inadequate share in the proper human needs . . . *emancipatory* interests, on the other hand are oriented to the growth, differentiation and self-realization of the personality in all dimensions of human activity.[12]

The fourth aspect of Devine's frame very much echoes the briefer frame of Albert and Hahnel above. The various technical tasks performed in a modern economy involve a division of the people into either 'those who perform functions and exercise of social power at the level of systems and sub-systems as a whole' or people who 'perform partial functions and are the objects of the exercise of social power by others'.[13] Hence he argues that 'the crucial inequality in modern society is in the distribution not of output [although he of course considers that to be important for a desirable society] but of access to emancipatory activities, activities that contribute to personal growth and development'.[14]

Devine then puts forward as a fifth aspect of his frame a tentative division of tasks into five categories (while stressing that certainly other divisions are possible for considering the same point): planning and running; creative; nurturing; skilled; and unskilled and repetitive. In existing societies, tasks in the last category are certainly 'subaltern and give rise to alienation, instrumentalism and apathy'.[15] But even tasks in the very first category, planning and running, are generally (except at the highest levels) subaltern in that one has a position in a hierarchy, and one therefore gets to plan and direct only what is assigned to one: hence one is dealing with partial tasks and not operating on the level of a complete system or sub-system. Capitalism tends to confine people to a given job for their lifetime, or at best allows them (and generally forces them when fired from a given job) to move from one job to another job in the same category, thus generating the restricted and stunted human development that Marx was centrally concerned with.

The sixth aspect takes off from the traditional Marxist position that the forces of production (and hence labor productivity) on average continue to develop over time. This means that less and less social consciousness is needed for the necessary tasks of production and reproduction, and more social consciousness is left over, to be used either in compensatory or emancipatory ways.

The seventh aspect of his frame is that people that spend all or the very large majority of their social consciousness involved in subaltern tasks, be they the ones necessary for production[16] and reproduction or others from 'higher categories whose

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[12] Ibid., quoting Bahro, op. cit., p. 272.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p. 167. This result is somewhat modified by his eighth aspect discussed below, where people are conditioned by the system to not desire emancipatory activity even when it is available.

[15] Ibid., p. 166.

[16] Some people in capitalist societies manage to find work that supports their production and reproduction that is not subaltern, but those people of course are considered very lucky. They are sometimes said to have a 'vocation' as opposed to a 'job'. In current societies the vast bulk of activities involved with immediate production and reproduction are subaltern. Ibid.

subalternity comes from this society's hierarchical social organization, will develop a 'subaltern consciousness'.[17]

The eighth and final aspect of Devine's frame is that people with a subaltern consciousness (the large majority of humanity) will not choose emancipatory activities with their growing extra social consciousness, as that would require autonomy and self-activization which has been suppressed by their subaltern consciousness. Instead, they will seek compensatory activities. Above all in capitalist society that means the privatized consumption of goods and services, as opposed to, and as compensation for not, pursuing human growth and actualization of (more of) their human potential.

One important observation about the frame of Devine should be stressed. Albert and Hahnel nicely and briefly indicate how the capitalist work environment shapes human development, the development of capabilities. Devine's frame not only does that, but includes an important extra step—it discusses how the capitalist work environment causes people to not seek human development even when the possibilities for it exist. This will be an important consideration in the discussion of the transition to socialism below.

The Political Economy of Socialism

Again, the procedures that form the political economy of socialism are rooted in and flow from its central goal. For socialism, the central goal is nearly universally accepted to be 'human development', or some equivalent expression of that same goal such as 'the development of one's human potential', or 'the opportunity to develop potential abilities', etc. Freire uses the longer but slightly more suggestive expression 'man's ontological and historical vocation to become more fully human'.[18] While still fairly abstract, a set of more concrete and operative sub-goals, which one very often sees put forward as the goals of socialism, actually receive their justification from their support for socialism's central goal just listed. The most commonly cited of these are self-determination (or 'self-governance' or simply 'democracy'), equality and solidarity.[19] Recently the protection of the natural environment has been included as a goal in almost all discussions of socialism. In the discussion in the next section I will also address one less often posited goal of socialism, 'individuality',[20] as it often introduces confusion to a central subject of this article, competition versus cooperation.

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1992 [1970]), p. 40.

[19] A somewhat longer expression that is slightly more suggestive of these sub-goals is 'self-determination by self-activating subjects in a self-governing society'. Devine, op. cit., p. 189. McNally, stressing how this goal differed from the condition of workers under capitalism, refers to it as 'self-emancipation'. David McNally, *Against the Market. Political Economy, Market Socialism and the Marxist Critique* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 3.

[20] Tom Weisskopf, 'Toward a Socialism for the Future, in the Wake of the Demise of the Socialism of the Past', *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 24:3&4 (1992), 1–28.

As mentioned above, there is a major debate among socialists concerning the possibility of the use markets in socialism.[21] A very popular argument for markets in socialism is that they are needed for efficiency. In its more radical form, the von Mises—Hayek efficiency critique was intended to deny the possibility of socialism.

> . . . rational economic decision-making is impossible without private ownership of the means of production and the establishment of monetary prices for commodities in fully competitive markets. Socialism thus represents for them a system of economic chaos; in such a society 'it would be impossible to speak of rational production any more'.[22]

However, in a less radical form adopted by market socialists, markets simply add efficiency. In Schweickart's most left-wing of all modern market socialist proposals (because the state, not a market, decides on all new investment), he argued for the second of the three pillars of his model, markets (in consumer goods and existing capital goods), as follows: 'The alternative to market allocation is central planning, and central planning (as theory predicts and the historical record confirms) is . . . inefficient'.[23]

Perhaps the single book that argues at the greatest length and depth the incompatibility of markets with socialism[24] from Marx's perspective is by David McNally. He argued,

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[21] While this debate basically involves two very different views of socialism, there is a semantic aspect to the discussion that frequently confuses it and obscures the deeper issues: what is a market? All socialists agree that a division of labor will continue to exist. Not everyone will self-produce everything they consume—that would be incompatible with both the socialist vision of high labor productivity and with the vision of humans as socially connected beings by their nature. Hence some sort of exchange process will have to continue to exist. Devine tries to capture the ending of markets and the continuation of such exchange by distinguishing between 'market forces' and 'market relations'. Polanyi talked about the difference between markets, which could have all sorts of characteristics depending on what society they were embedded in, and self-regulating markets. To achieve socialism it was necessary to end self-regulating markets as dominant in society (including especially attempts to make self-regulating markets out of the 'fictitious commodities' of labor, land and money, that in fact could never be successfully made into self-regulating markets). The point I want to stress here is that advocates of non-market socialism are not advocating an end to all specialization of labor, and hence all forms of exchange-mechanisms, but rather they advocate that all such exchange-mechanisms be consciously socially controlled and not operate according to their own laws and dynamics, which is what they mean be the term 'markets'.

[22] McNally, op. cit. 1993, p. 1.

[23] David Schweickart, *Against Capitalism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), p.69. The argument is sometimes refined to be that markets are particularly needed for efficiency for complex economies. 'The Soviet economy and those economies modeled on Soviet economy always suffered from efficiency problems, and these became steadily worse as the economies developed'. David Schweickart, 'Market Socialism: A Defense,' in Bertell Ollman (ed.) *Market Socialism. The Debate Among Socialists* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 12.

[24] The issue here is the role of markets in socialism. Most advocates of non-market socialism accept that in the transition to socialism, markets will indeed exist coming out of capitalism. The goal will be for them to 'wither away', in step with the development by people of the capabilities to replace what markets do with conscious social control. Our concern in this paper will not be the withering away itself, but rather the changes in human capabilities, and in particular how to effect them, that will be necessary for such a withering away to occur.

> I endeavor to show that Marx systematically engaged with, and rejected, the idea that the market could serve as a central mechanism of socialist economy, and that this rejection was underpinned by a serious and profound argument about the nature of commodities, money and the market . . .his powerful critique of those socialist theorists who hoped to construct a socialism via the market, who sought to eliminate exploitation while retaining commodities, prices and money.[25]

Beyond arguing that markets are incompatible with the goals of socialism, advocates of non-market socialism must argue that it is theoretically viable. Book length expositions in English include those by Devine, Albert and Hahnel, and Cockshott and Cottrell. Shorter article length presentations include those by Campbell and by Laibman.[26] It should be noted that the models differ significantly. This is in line with the comment in the introduction that there will likely be many different concrete manifestations of socialism.

The concern of this article, however, is not the market or non-market aspect of socialism per se. Rather, the concern is the transition to socialism, and the argument of this article is that it is the effects of markets discussed in the last section on people living under capitalism that inhibits this transition.

Overview of the Transition to Socialism

In the well known Marxist approach to the transition from one form of economic/political/social organization to another, the driving force for a transformation is a contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production. A mode of production runs relatively smoothly (notwithstanding that class struggle never ceases) when the forces of production and the relations of production, the latter being above all the human relations established by the property relations, are coherent. When coherent, the relations of production serve the further development of the forces of production, a necessary (especially at low levels of human productivity that require nearly all one's time be used in providing the material means of survival) but not sufficient condition for further human development. But the forces of production are continually evolving. Hence at some point they will become incoherent with the existing relations of production. At this point, a radical restructuring of the relations of production will occur that will bring them in line with the new level of the forces of production, and a new mode of production will be born.

One question has long been thrown at this theory as a challenge to its very validity. Marx certainly thought that in his lifetime the forces of production had developed to

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[25] McNally, op. cit., pp. 3–4.

[26] Devine, op. cit.; Albert and Hahnel, op. cit.; W. Paul Cockshott and Allin Cottrell, *Towards a New Socialism* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1993); Al Campbell, 'Feasible Economic Procedures', *Science & Society,* 66:1, Spring 2002, pp. 29–42; and David Laibman, 'The Future Within the Present; Seven Theses for a Robust 21st-century Socialism', *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 38:3 (2006, forthcoming).

where the existing capitalist relations of production had ceased to further the development of the forces of production as they had earlier in the history of capitalism, and had become a brake on their further development, at least relatively compared to what would be effected by socialist relations of production. At the same time the limits imposed on human development by those capitalist relations of production, which he wrote about at length, were no longer historically necessary or justified to develop the forces of production to the level necessary to support a more humane economic/political/social system.[27] So he expected that there would be a radical restructuring of the relations of production, and capitalism would start (again—it is a process) to be replaced by socialism in a not too long period of time. The question then is: why 150 years later is capitalism still the dominant world system? Or to ask the same question in another way—why has the working class, the agent for the change in Marx's scenario because it more than anyone else is having the development of its humanity inhibited, not rebelled, not overthrown the system, but to the contrary continues to accept it, notwithstanding its continual dissatisfaction with its share of social production?

There have been two reasons put forward by advocates of a socialist transformation in response to this question. The first is that while Marx was correct in his general description of the nature of and causes of the transformation from capitalism, his evaluation of the potential improvement in the forces of production under capitalism was wrong, and from that his time scale for the transformation was wrong. In fact the last 150 years have seen great improvements in the forces of production, measured by the criterion of importance to human development, labor productivity. This however does not really answer Marx's assertion, since he did not argue that there would be an absolute halt to the development of the forces of production, but rather that the relations of production would retard their development relative to what socialist relations of production could now achieve. It is easy to argue that without the competition between capitals (leading to tremendous redundancy of research, and barriers to the spread of new technology once developed, not to mention tremendous socially wasted resources invested in advertising, marketing, and legal battles), and without the competition between labor and capital, the forces of production could develop much more rapidly than they do now.

The other response is much more complex, forms the central concern and discussion of this article, and presents the political economy of socialism from an

[27] Devine makes this general argument more concrete, within the frame he developed that was discussed above. The forces of production now have achieved high enough labor productivity to provide for human production and reproduction and still have many resources left over. These resources can today be devoted directly to designing and executing work in such a way that its central goal becomes creating emancipatory work, possibly even at the cost of some efficiency, as opposed to the earlier historically necessary goal of improving the forces of production and hence labor productivity.

importantly different angle. Fundamentally, the other response directs more attention directly to the role of people, both in its definition of socialism and its consideration of the transition to socialism. Note that it does not assert that the above description in terms of the forces of production and relations of production is wrong. To the contrary, it accepts that description, more or less as a shorthand way of describing a complex process, but at the same time it goes on to present a much richer and more complete description of that process as well, again, both in its description of socialism and its consideration of the transition to socialism.

First, the political economy of socialism is not just about constituting a set of relations of production compatible with the now more advanced, and more socially integrated, means of production (though that is necessary). Although his recent though now well known book *Beyond Capital* is focused on the related but different issue of 'the missing half of Marx's *Capital*', Lebowitz does take up a number of the questions of interest to this paper at various places in that work.

> Although the worker is not *Capital's* subject, this idea of the worker as outcome of his own labour enters Marx's discussion of the labour process; there Marx notes, the worker 'acts upon external nature and changes it, and in this way he simultaneously changes his own nature' (Marx, 1977: 283). Similarly in the *Grundrisse,* this concept of joint products (the changing of circumstances and self-change) is also clear in the process of production, where 'the producers change, too, in that they bring out new qualities in themselves, develop themselves in production, transform themselves, develop new powers and ideas, new modes of intercourse, new needs and new language' (Marx, 1973: 494). In all this, there remains a clear conception of growth and self-development . . . [28]

We see here the same idea indicated above by Devine, and Albert and Hahnel, there in its negative form under capitalism: people produce themselves by their work, and restricted, narrow and subaltern work, which is typical for most workers under capitalism will produce corresponding human beings. Albert and Hahnel call for building 'balanced job complexes' that mix tasks of different levels on the rote/creative scale into all jobs, while Devine calls for holding at least one job from each of his categories over one's work-life to foster the central goal of socialism, multi-directional multi-faceted—that is, authentic, in line with the human potential—human development.

Lebowitz expands on his ideas on human development (and hence the goal of socialism) in his article 'The Rich Human Being: Marx and the Concept of Real Human Development'. This concept of creating a rich human being is just another

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[28] Michael Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital*, second edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2003), p. 181, quoting Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1 (New York: Vintage Books, 1977 [1867]), and Karl Marx, *Grundrisse* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

way of presenting the same goal of a socialist society,[29] that of human development, though it adds the concept of the people themselves as the driving force for the human development; '[A] rich human being [is a human] whose 'own realization exists as an inner necessity, as a *need*'. As with Devine and Albert and Hahnel, variety of activities is key to a greater development of our human potential.

> At the core of all this is the importance of *variety*, variety of activity—people develop their capabilities only through their own activity. Through new acts which allow for the growth of their specific capacities, . . . When they are denied the opportunity to exercise these potentialities, however, they do not develop—which is precisely what Marx recognized was inherent in a society in which human beings exist as a means for the expansion of capital.[30]

The second issue concerns the transformation to socialism. To achieve such a social transformation, people motivated to do so must carry it out. To be so motivated, they must come to see the key to improving their lives as collectively achieving a society based on self-determination, equality and solidarity. Their daily life experience, however, conditions them instead to always think inside a box composed of the rules of capitalism when they think about how best to survive, possibly improve their material situation, and for a few, even possibly further their individual human development (though, as has been argued, their ideas on how to do this latter if they

[29] A somewhat lengthy word of caution is needed here to avoid confusion. Marx used the terms socialism and communism essentially interchangeably, using the one or the other more often at different periods in his life. He thought of the development of this new mode of production very much as a process of transformation and referred to a 'lower stage' and 'higher stage' to discuss certain features that this process of transformation might assume at different points in the process. After his death, Marxists largely came to use the term 'socialism' for the lower stage of communism and 'communism' for the higher stage. In and of itself such a change in names of course cannot be problematic, but there very often came to be associated with the two new names a concept of two formations, as opposed to two phases in a process of transformation. Lebowitz in general goes back to Marx's usage, focusing on the transformation as a process (though others if directly asked of course would not deny it was a process), and using the terms socialism and communism quite interchangeably. Hence when he refers to 'socialism', he often is referring to its higher stage, which he often refers to as a situation where it has become an 'organic mode of production', that is, it produces its own premises. The lower stage or stages he sometimes refers to, in line with his emphasis on process, as 'the becoming of communism'. He argues in several places—for example, 'The Rich Human Being: Marx and the Concept of Real Hyman Development', Federico Caffè Centre Research Report n.3/2004. Roskilde University, Denmark: Federico Caffè Centre, 2004, p. 8—that one of the most resistant aspects to change to an organic communist mode of production is 'overcoming the private ownership of labor-power', '[t]he claim of the associated producers upon society's output in accordance with 'the supply of labor' rather than by their membership in society . . .'. The models of Devine, Albert and Hahnel, Cockshott and Cottrell, and Campbell all are models of socialism, with this sort of labor relation. Further, this article is about a transition to that lower stage, hence a transition to a transitional stage. This author agrees with a number of people—such as Sam Gindin, 'Socialism "With Sober Senses": Developing Workers' Capacities', *The Socialist Register* (1998), p. 87—who argue that, while continuing to understand socialism as part of a process (and in particular not a coherent mode of production in the sense of Lebowitz), we need to develop much more fully our understanding of the dynamics of 'the transition to socialism' and not simply assume we somehow jump to socialism, or even focus all our attention on the dynamics of socialism as a transition to communism. Put simply, the process of getting to socialism has been historically shown to be much more complicated, both theoretically and practically, than Marx envisioned. This whole collection of articles, of course, is intended exactly as a contribution to that task.

[30] Lebowitz, 'The Rich Human Being', op. cit., pp. 9, 7.

do think of it are generally misdirected by capitalism). The vision of them improving their human condition and development collectively requires thinking outside the box of capitalist rules, and that is something that will have to come from outside their daily experience which is lived inside that box.

Along with a handful of other people concerned with effecting this system and personal change, Paulo Freire stressed this essential problem that is at the heart of the argument of this article:

> But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors or 'sub-oppressors.' The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to become men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain point in their existential experience, adopt an attitude of 'adhesion' to the oppressor. Under these circumstances they cannot 'consider' him sufficiently clearly to objectify him—to discover him 'outside' themselves. This does not necessarily mean that the oppressed are unaware that they are downtrodden. But their perception of themselves is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression. At this level their perception of themselves as opposites of the oppressor does not yet signify engagement in a struggle to overcome the contradiction; the one pole aspires not to liberation, but to identification with its opposite pole.
>
> In this situation the oppressed do not see the 'new man' as the man to be born from the resolution of this contradiction, as oppression gives way to liberation. For them, the new man is themselves become oppressors. Their vision of the new man is individualistic; because of their identification with the oppressor, they have no consciousness of themselves as persons or as members of an oppressed class. It is not to become free men that they want agrarian reform, but in order to acquire land and thus become landowners—or, more precisely, bosses over other workers. It is a rare peasant who, once 'promoted' to overseer, does not become more tyrannical towards his former comrades than the owner himself. This is because the context of the peasant's situation, that is, oppression, remains unchanged. In this example, the overseer, in order to make sure of his job, has to be as tough as the owner—and more so. Thus is illustrated our previous assertion that during the initial stage of their struggle the oppressed find in the oppressor their model of 'manhood'.[31]

This article then puts forward the following as the key to overcoming the central impediment of the last 150 years to embarking on a transition to socialism. People must, through both education and collective experiences, *both* come to see conscious collective cooperative self-determination as both desirable and possible, *and* they must (as a process) develop enough capabilities to begin to exercise it. That then immediately poses the following question.

[31] Freire, op. cit., p. 30.

> How are these capacities produced? For Marx, it was from the process of cooperation itself. As he indicated, 'when the worker cooperates in a planned way with others, he strips off the fetters of his individuality, and develops the capabilities of the species'.[32]

Once the process of transition by working people has begun, each exercise of such capabilities will lead to the expansion of their capabilities, which will lead to their exercising more and more conscious collective self-determination in more and more spheres of their lives, which will in turn again lead to the further expansion of their capabilities, and so on: a positive feed-back loop will continually expand their human development.

I will next turn to pose the fundamental conundrum posited by all the above for the transition to socialism, but first I want to address a common misconception involved with the issue of cooperation, and suggested by the last quote from Marx. Many people, especially but not exclusively defenders of capitalism, pose 'individualism' as the opposite of 'cooperation'. In fact, as we have seen, Marx was centrally concerned with the economic/political/social system allowing the fullest possible (at a given historical moment) development of each individual human's potential. And that is individualism, but an authentic individualism, not a false 'Robinson Crusoe' or 'in-isolation' individualism. That is, humans are in their very essence social beings. It should be clear that a footballer that refused to cooperate with his teammates could not maximally develop his own individual football abilities, and a physicist that refused to read the current research of other physicists could not maximally develop his own individual abilities in physics. And of course our individuality is strongly shaped not only by individuals we have interacted with throughout our lives, but also by the culture we have inherited from past humanity. Competition, not individualism, is the opposite of cooperation, and competition both undermines the possibility of cooperation and fosters illusions of 'me-against-the-world' or 'Robinson Crusoe' individualism. Individualism exists, and properly understood it is not the opposite of cooperation, but rather another way to express the central goal of socialism: the authentic development of every individual is simply another way of referring to the development of our human potential. But that individualism must be understood as a social individualism, that is, the individualism of a being whose essential nature is social, and hence an individualism that rests on cooperation.

The Conundrum

In the frame of the above, the fundamental conundrum for initiating a transformation to socialism can be stated quite simply, notwithstanding it can be stated a number of different ways. Workers have been conditioned to be subaltern. Even if they do think of developing their humanity, and most of them simply think of improving their material condition as opposed to developing their humanity, they

[32] Lebowitz, 'The Rich Human Being', op. cit., p. 9, quoting Marx, op. cit., p. 447.

tend to think of it as occurring by consuming more goods, as they see done by people on top of the current social order, people who certainly appear to have more freedom for human development than they do. Their constant competition and conflict with capital sometimes makes clear to some of them their need to fight capital for a bigger share of wealth produced (though to others it suggests allying with the capital that employs them against other capitals and workers), but it does not suggests to them the need to fight to replace the system of capitalism. Their struggle for survival and maybe for improvement in their daily lives takes place within the frame of capitalism, and while the nature of capitalism means such struggles will never cease, there is nothing in their daily lives to introduce the idea of going beyond capitalism. And this general tendency to think within the box of capitalist rules that they live in is reinforced by observing what happens to those few who do advocate breaking out of the box. Depending on the country they are in and the stage of the struggle at the given moment, these people lose their jobs, the key to survival for workers in the capitalist frame, or they lose their lives.

Stating the same thing more abstractly: capitalism has warped and stunted the human development of workers, creating narrow and subaltern humans who tend to have no vision of a more humane future, and often have been so debased that they will not even recognize it as the path to human development that is an essential element of the human species (or perhaps will recognize it but not believe it could possibly be realized), even when it is presented to them. Yet Marxist and many other radical theories have assigned the central role (or in some cases one of the central roles) as the agents of that transformation to these workers. It seems they would have to be the people they would become under socialism to understand the benefits, necessity and possibility of a transition to socialism. Therefore the agents who could and would initiate the transformation to socialism will never arise, and hence the unexpected stability of capitalism even as it has become historically an anachronism.

As stressed by both Freire and Lebowitz, a key initial site of development of such cooperative action, before they have enough control over their workplaces or their communities to exercise any significant amount of power cooperatively there, will be in the struggle exactly for such space in both sites for cooperative self-governing activity. The final two sections of this article will be 'case studies', very brief descriptions of the type of cooperative self-governing structures that could be, and in fact are, being struggled for, as the type of structures that would generate the development of the human capabilities that would make possible workers governing a socialist society. The struggles themselves for these structures, even before the structures exist as sites for the development of human capabilities, then constitute first steps in developing such necessary capabilities.

Building Agents of Change at Work—Some Considerations from the Canadian Auto Workers

Gindin begins his review of some experiments being tried in the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) union to create agents interested in a socialist transformation with two points that their concrete work must recognize as the reality that they are starting from. The first is the conundrum just discussed. In general, the exchange of a wage for labor power is unequal not just for the usually cited reason that workers retain only a part of what they produce, but because of the deeper reason that it represents a difference between '*access to consumption* and *control over doing*'. Expanding on this, again we arrive at the conundrum: '*What workers give up in selling their labor are precisely the kind of capacities and potentials which are absolutely fundamental to one day building a different kind of society: the capacity for doing, creating, planning and executing.*'[33] The second point is that 'Today, there is a spectre haunting socialists, the spectre of marginalization . . . at a moment when the socialist idea should be more relevant than at any time since the Great Depression, it seems that for all practical purposes socialism simply doesn't *matter*.' And 'our immediate goal is the "less ambitious" one of just getting the *idea* of socialism seriously on the agenda again . . . '.[34]

Gindin argues that winning workers and unions over to a socialist perspective remains as always essential for both the socialist movement and the union movement (despite the fact that many of the Marxists and the unionists that had held that perspective earlier abandoned it in the 1980s and 1990s). The broad strategy remains the same as before. Socialists must participate in the ongoing struggles that unions are engaged in today trying to defend themselves from the continually escalating attacks of capital on labor. Further, they must do so in such a way that they manifest two things simultaneously; they must make clear to the workers that they really are involved in the struggle to protect their well being and are not just using it as an excuse to propagate socialist propaganda, and they must try to draw lessons out of the struggles, be they victorious or defeated, that cause the workers involved to look beyond the rules of capitalism for their defense and hopefully future improvement. This latter goal is being made somewhat easier in that capital has increasingly ruled out state intervention on behalf of workers within the framework of capitalism, and that removes a major source of obfuscation of the intrinsic anti-human development nature of capitalism, leaving only the choices of naked determination of worker welfare by the market or breaking with the logic of capitalism.

At the heart of the project is the need to try to instill in the workers a way of looking at the world, and work in particular, contrary to the capitalist world view. At the heart of the capitalist world view is

[33] Gindin, op. cit., pp. 77, 79; italics in the original in both quotations.
[34] Ibid., pp. 75, 87.

> the straight-jacket of 'competitiveness'. Competitiveness presents itself as not only the best, but the *only* model of development. As such it obscures class relations, structures economic debate and acts as the ultimate ideology of the status quo. Since competitiveness is, however, not just an idea but a reflection of structures already in place, competitiveness represents a constraint we have to deal with. The trick is to prevent that *constraint* from slowly insinuating itself into our *goals.*[35]

In line with the discussion above, one immediately understands the reason for the heart of the counter view projected.

> This entry point—the 'democratic development of capacities'—is primarily an ideological counter-weight but it also affects how we approach a number of inter-related issues, particularly the relevant unit of production, the appropriate unit to address needs, the centrality of protecting spaces for experimentation, the relationship between the economic and the political, the tactical and strategic urgency of taking on financial capital.[36]

> Here is an example of the type of different result these two world-views can yield.

> For example, the logic of competitiveness incorporates the need for significant unemployment to discipline workers and boost corporate performance. The democratic development of capacities asserts that the underutilization of human potentials contradicts development; if economic structures do not make full employment a priority, it is those structures rather than workers that must be 'adjusted'.[37]

It is not the purpose of this section to describe the way the CAW went about trying to convey this central point on competitiveness and other related messages in a pedagogically appropriate way, or the results of these experiments. Gindin's article, and a more recent and more concrete pamphlet intended to present the current issues under discussion in this experiment,[38] present both of these thoroughly.

The point of this section is, however, is to illustrate with a concrete example that there are ways to get workers at their worksites to *begin* to think outside of the rules and frame of capitalism. As has been argued, that is the only way to resolve the conundrum discussed above that has inhibited the initiation of the process of a transition to socialism to this day, particularly in First World but also in many Third World countries.

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[35] Ibid., p. 90.
[36] Ibid., p. 91.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Sam Gindin, 'The Auto Industry. Concretizing Working Class Solidarity: Internationalism beyond Slogans', Socialist Intervention Pamphlet Series, 2004 <http://www.socialistproject.ca/documents>, accessed 26 May 2006.

Building Agents of Change Outside of Work—Some Considerations from Porto Alegre

The large majority of the political and social decisions that determine a society of course occur outside the workplace. Even for economic issues narrowly defined, the myriad decisions that create the frame that the workplaces operate in are established at supra-workplace levels. It follows that, as is reflected in all the non-market socialism models referred to above, directing the socialist political economy by 'self-activating subjects in a self-governing society' will require conscious collective economic, political and social decisions at supra-workplace levels in addition to the workplace decisions just considered. Everything said about the need to not only throw off all subaltern consciousness, but also to develop the capabilities to exercise this self-determination, clearly apply to these supra-workplace decisions just as it does to work place decisions. The Participatory Budgeting (hereafter PB) experiment began in Porto Alegre and then spread to numerous other cities in southern Brazil and a few other parts Latin America and the world.[39] This section will be a very brief comment on this experiment from the point of view of building the necessary economic/political/social human capabilities at the supra-workplace level.

While our concern is the transformatory effects of the procedure on its participants, a very brief description of the mechanics is necessary for that purpose. Since the mechanics of PB are not broadly socially known, almost every work on PB includes at least a short section on the procedures.[40] A cautionary note is that, as one would expect, the mechanics vary somewhat from one application to another, and even in a given application they vary over time.

Our presentation here will be a greatly abbreviated form of Marquetti.[41] The traditional budget process in Brazil consists of four phases, with the following responsible authorities: preparation (executive), adoption (legislative), execution (executive) and auditing (executive and legislative). Formally the structure and timing of the budget cycle changed very little with the insertion of PB into the process, but its actual content changed radically.

Public participation in the PB process involves both direct and indirect democracy, the latter occurring through the election of members of the PB council.

The first phase, preparation, has three sub-phases: establishing the overall revenue balance, definition of priorities, and then actual budgeting. The first sub-phase is largely determined by the executive, though already the PB councilors can modify it.

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[39] Adalmir Marquetti, 'The Characteristics of the Brazilian Cities with Participatory Budgeting', Mimeo: Pontificia Universidade Católica Rio Grande do Sul, 2004; Giovanni Allegretti and Carsten Herzberg, 'Participatory Budgets in Europe. Between Efficiency and Growing Local Democracy', TNI Briefing Series No 2004/5. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute and the Centre for Democratic Policy Making, 2004.

[40] See, for example, Marquetti, op. cit.; Adalmir Marquetti, 'Particpatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre as a Redistributive Policy', Proceedings of the Marx International Congress III, Nanterre, 2001 <http://www.ganges.pro.br/aam/download/participatory_budegting_redistributive_policy.pdf> (with the misspelling of budgeting as indicated), accessed 26 May 2006; Allegretti and Herzberg, op. cit.; Rebecca Abers, *Inventing Local Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000).

[41] Marquetti, 'The Characteristics of the Brazilian Cities with Participatory Budgeting', op. cit., § 2.

The executive presents projected total revenues and total expenses. The PB councilors can debate the figures, and they can even propose new taxes, though to actualize them would require a vote by the city council. But already we see an important degree of public accountability. The second sub-phase is where the greatest direct public participation enters. Preferences are defined by direct democracy in a series of public assemblies,[42] both by regions for local issues and by themes for city-wide issues, where all participants have the rights to speak and vote. In the third sub-phase the PB council works out the actual budget and the plan of investment services. In this it is assisted by the executive, and it does so in accord with a set of agreed upon rules concerning the distribution between 16 regions in the city, and the various priorities established by the population in the previous sub-phase (including built in priorities for the poorer regions and the regions with the least developed infrastructure). In the subsequent three phases of the budgeting process, adoption, execution and auditing, the PB plays primarily an important oversight (and hence also legitimization) role.

Abers, in a section titled 'Participation, Self-Development, and Distributional Justice', directly discuss two types of transformatory effects that various writers on such participatory processes have focused on. While one is less obvious and immediate than the other, both of them are exactly the issues we have discussed above as necessary for initiating a transition to socialism.

> Two general types of arguments are made. Some, such as Pateman, focus on the knowledge and skills that participation 'teaches.' People gain experience in negotiating with others, coming to decisions, and leaning about the political issues that they must decide. An important result is an increased sense of 'political efficacy': as people learn that participation can effectively play a role in collective decisions, they are more likely to continue participating, learning even more about the process . . . .
>
> Other scholars give more emphasis to the role participation can play in promoting an awareness of common interests and a sense of commonality . . .[43]

Abers then continued in relation to the second point that such a development of a 'group identity' has shown, both in empirical game-playing experiments and in qualitative studies on social movements and conditions more similar to Porto Alegre, that '[t]his identity promoted cooperative behavior'.[44] This then takes us back to the idea proposed by Marx at the end of section IV: the key to building the capacities necessary to embark on and engage in a transition to socialism will emerge 'from the process of cooperation itself.'

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[42] The first of these assemblies is actually an accountability session, where the municipality presents what it actually accomplished from what it was mandate do the previous year, and explains why it was not able accomplish certain of its charges.

[43] Abers, op. cit., p. 178.

[44] Ibid.

Conclusion

The key to the transition to socialism is not some structure in itself that one might put in place, and particularly not some given structure that accepts that people are inalterably selfish and tries to harness that to build socialism, as in market socialism. The key to building socialism is transforming people, and specifically, developing their capabilities so they can become cooperative 'self-activating people exercising self-governance and more broadly self-determination'. The conundrum for initiating this process is that working people have had their human capabilities so warped and underdeveloped, that they, in accord with their daily reality under capitalism, see neither the human necessity nor even the desirability of initiating a socialist transformation of society to achieve fuller human development. They do, however, find their role in the existing order unsatisfactory. From that struggles will continually arise, not on the basis of the characteristics of humans in a socialist society that they do not have, but on the basis of their dissatisfaction with their condition at present under capitalism. What is necessary, however, is that the nature of the participation in struggle, and the education that comes from both the struggle and the consideration of the goals to be struggled for,[45] must be such that they lead the participants to look at the world and themselves differently. In particular, cooperative action in struggle and consideration of the role of cooperation in a humane society to be struggled for, and the linked task of debunking the ideology of competition, will be key to their coming to recognize their true collectivist species character. This in turn will be key to their developing self-determination, solidarity and equality, the concrete manifestations of the next step needed today by humanity in its 'vocation for fuller human development'.

[45] In this article I have considered changes at both one's worksite and one's community ('civil society'). A large part of life is spent in a third institution, the family (including families of one), and huge changes will occur in family life and structure as well, as part of building human capacities. While I have not entered into this complicated issue largely for reasons of space, it is also true that many changes in family structure and from that human behavior will come from changes at the worksite and in the community. Some likely examples that we see precursors of already (in trying to mitigate the human limiting effects of capitalism) include increased education and job opportunities (including political leadership) for women, increased social childcare facilities, cooperative eating and housing arrangements (transforming these activities from family activities to community activities), and so on.