

Half-Baked¹

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Starting with the much-repeated but rarely taken seriously aphorism “it is easier to imagine the end of the world, than to imagine the end of capitalism”. I argue that the only way to avoid the destructive consequences of class polarisation and its inherent ecological unsustainability, is to create non-capitalist communities of producer-consumer cooperatives outside the orbit of the hierarchic state.

Key words: Anarching – Degrowth – Anthropocene – Producer-consumer cooperatives

Identifying the Problem

First, let me explain why I use the term “half-baked” in my title. This is not undue modesty on my part, it is an affirmation of the virtues of the half-baked. Half-baked allows us to take advantage of a partially prepared product and to finish the job to the tastes of the individual or group. In one sense, it is a modified version of open source ecology (about which more later), providing a starter pack and inviting us to creatively go forward. So, this paper is an invitation to others to continue the process suggested by what is to follow, to start a conversation.

The present dire state of civilization at the global level has been debated ad nauseum. Explanations abound – going all the way from flaws in so-called human nature, to misinterpretations of the revealed word of “God”. What we might call

¹ This is not intended to be an article for a scholarly journal, I hope eventually to publish it as a political pamphlet (around 30 pages). Any helpful comments you have will be much appreciated and acknowledged in the final version.

After a lifetime of carefully citing my sources and filling my publications with footnotes, I have come to the conclusion that most people are perfectly capable of using internet search engines or even libraries to follow up ideas and factual claims for themselves.

political-economy solutions to these problems are all variations on four main themes. First, capitalist ideologues argue that only free markets and more prosperity will eventually ensure peace and happiness for those who are prepared to work hard; second, caring capitalists and social democrats argue that capitalism can be reformed through welfare states to provide equality of opportunity, again for those who are prepared to work hard; third, progressive anti-capitalists (what we used to call communists or socialists) argue that the capitalist state must be replaced by a workers' state, again to provide equality of opportunity for those who are prepared to work hard; and fourth, small groups of people argue that it is precisely capitalism (especially in its globalizing forms) and the hierarchical state apparatuses it creates that are at the root of the problem, and that we have to start thinking about what comes after capitalism and the state-form of societies if we are to save the planet, eliminate poverty, and find happiness.

My argument is that the first three types of political-economy solutions fail to deal with two fatal flaws of capitalism. The crisis of class polarization is the first fatal flaw (the rich get richer, the poor are always with us, those in the middle are increasingly insecure). The migrant "crisis" in Europe is a vivid reminder that the poor cannot necessarily be relied upon to put up with their misery passively forever in the places where they happen to be born. The second fatal crisis is ecological unsustainability, now powerfully expressed in terms of the Anthropocene stage of the planet and its fossil fuel driven growth economy. This is starkly exposed by Ian Angus in his book *Facing the Anthropocene* which connects the ecocidal impetus of capitalist globalization with the very survival of the planet. In my view this is driven by the culture-ideology of consumerism. So, we must start to think about what comes after capitalist globalization.

What is to be Done?

Marx and then Lenin's answer to these questions resulted in some defining moments of the 20th century. But there was always something perverse about the Marxist critique of state power as the executive committee of the capitalist class, and the eagerness with which so-called Communist revolutionaries seized and used state power. In the Soviet Union it led to unmitigated disasters for many, formidable contributions to the military defeat of the Nazis, better conditions of daily life for some, the Cold War and several proxy wars, its consequences still grinding on. What it definitely did not lead to was the capture of power by the working class – strongly suggesting that the dictatorship of the proletariat (however defined) cannot produce the withering away of the state. What it definitely did lead to was the "new class" of state bureaucrats and Soviet totalitarianism and then, eventually, by default, the capture of power on a global

scale by what I and others have conceptualized as the transnational capitalist class whose corporate, political, technical, and consumerist fractions drive capitalist globalization. The state is part of the problem, not the solution.

Alternatives to Capitalist Globalization

Is there a non-capitalist alternative to capitalist globalization? Yes there is, and a good place to start is by repeating the aphorism: “It is easier to imagine the end of the world, than to imagine the end of capitalism“. Whoever actually said this first, it expresses a profound truth about the era of capitalist globalization. Those with the slightest appreciation of the nature of capitalist hegemony, from its origins in Marx, through Gramsci, Althusser (repressive/ideological state apparatuses), Marcuse and the culture industries thesis of the Frankfurt School, will, of course, immediately understand why it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism. So, we have to begin again to think through what we once conceptualized as democratic socialism might look like in the 21st century. At the risk of sounding ridiculous, let me employ a dialectical argument. The power of capitalist hegemony today is so overwhelming (as is the military and police power of states) that the only viable strategy for change is by a process of negating, avoiding, and eventually consigning capitalism and the state to the dustbin of history. The digital revolution provides simultaneously the most powerful tool of capitalist exploitation and of the means of changing the system. The transnational capitalist class, to put it bluntly, systematically subverts the emancipatory potential of generic globalization. For example, architects and urbanists with computers already have the capacity to create sustainable, affordable, and decent housing for all – even now to “print“ them via 3-D printers. It is the capitalist market not lack of design talent or resources that prevents it from being readily available and affordable for all. The digital revolution is already contributing to the eradication of racism, Orientalism, sexism, and related forms of prejudice and discrimination (as well as reinforcing these reactionary sentiments). It could also contribute to dealing with one of the central structural problems of the state in capitalist society, namely the question of size.

In 1973 E. F. Schumacher published a book, *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*, challenging many of the orthodoxies of capitalist and socialist economics, notably the obsession with growth. For this he was called a crank – his book is certainly half-baked. Schumacher’s response to critics was characteristic: “What’s wrong with a crank? It’s a small instrument, very simple, it does not involve great capital investment, it is a relatively non-violent technology, and it causes revolutions“ (BBC Radio 4, 2016).

Huge transnational corporations and huge corporate states, serviced by huge professional and consumer goods and services organizations increasingly dominate the lives of people everywhere, so it seems obvious that smaller scale structures might work better and enable people to live happier and more fulfilling lives. My vision of an alternative, radical, progressive, non-capitalist globalization is based on networks of relatively small producer-consumer co-operatives (P-CC) co-operating at a variety of levels to accomplish a variety of societal tasks. Why producer and consumer cooperatives? This, I would argue, is the only way for us to re-connect with nature, to create communities where everyone is responsible to a greater or lesser degree for all the necessities of life and a decent standard of living. To accomplish this, we need to move beyond hierarchy and the state and create forms of non-capitalist, non-exploitative, alternative globalizations.

Prospects for Change in the Long-Term

This is a project of many generations, a project that begins with damaged parents and communities gradually acquiring the insights and incentives to nurture children through new forms of upbringing and learning. This would include biological and social parenting, learning from existing communities where all adults accept a at least some responsibility for all their children. New generations will be less damaged, these children in their turn nurture their own children to be a little less damaged, and on and on. Kafka wrote: “nobody wants to introduce as many reforms as children do” (caption in Kafka Museum, Prague). In her book *Why Love Matters*, Sue Gerhardt (2014) provides ample evidence from neuroscience for the potential of love-based parenting. The design of communities all the way from villages to large cities could play an important part in this process. Transformations in housing, transport, nutrition, and other necessities of a decent life would free up space for everything that the capitalist market squeezes out or whose pleasures it compromises. The culture-ideology of con-sumerism has socialized populations all over the world to crave all the material rewards that capitalist consumerism flaunts. Better, more love-based parenting could help people to strive for other, less destructive, life goals and social structures to achieve them.

Our present reality is capitalist globalization. How, then, could P-CCs be organized to release the emancipatory potential of generic globalization (by which I mean the electronic revolution, critical postcolonialism, and new forms of cosmopolitanism) in a non-capitalist world? The simple and encouraging answer is that they would work, in the early stages of transition at least, much as millions of small scale co-operative groups work at present in enclaves all over the world.

The digital commons (open source movement) already makes it possible for millions of like-minded people hungry for change to communicate across the globe for the common good. The viability of global networks of P-CCs rests on many untested assumptions: what would people eat? How would they learn? What would they do for healthcare? Who would provide the power to run the computers? How would they be safe? This would depend on a multitude of people who now work in the private or public sectors, directly or indirectly, establishing P-CCs in their local communities producing food, organizing transport, setting up places of learning and transmission of skills, providing healthcare, running power systems, and so on. The state, of course, cannot be abolished overnight, though a reconstructed political community could create more genuinely democratizing forms of economic, social, and political organization to encourage and facilitate networks of P-CCs. The transition from the present capitalist-statist hegemony to the new form of society will, certainly, be lengthy and problematic, but even the flawed forms of democracy that political systems throw up all over the world should provide openings for radicals to win elections and, at the very least, provide conditions that will not seriously impede those wishing to escape the capitalist market and the hierarchic state. Many existing progressive social movements and what Bill Carroll calls “transnational alternative policy groups” (TAPG) in his book *Expose, Oppose, Propose* (Carroll 2016) at all levels will have an important part to play in the transition, but only if they seriously come to grips with the dead ends of the market and the hierarchic state. The inability of the Left to think through the withering away of the state has its roots in the often pointless disputes and antagonisms between Marxists and Anarchists over the last two hundred years. Unless this changes, capitalism and the hierarchic state will persist until they collapse under the stress of their own contradictions threatening the end of the planet itself.

People can change, innovatory socio-economic forms outside the capitalist market and the capitalist state are emerging all over the world on a small scale but such initiatives struggle within the present global system. Neoliberal ideologues argue that there is no alternative to capitalist globalization. If we refuse to believe them and start creating alternatives and these alternatives prove to be successful in their own terms then the logic of the market can be refuted, undermined, or simply ignored and the hierarchical state would eventually wither away.

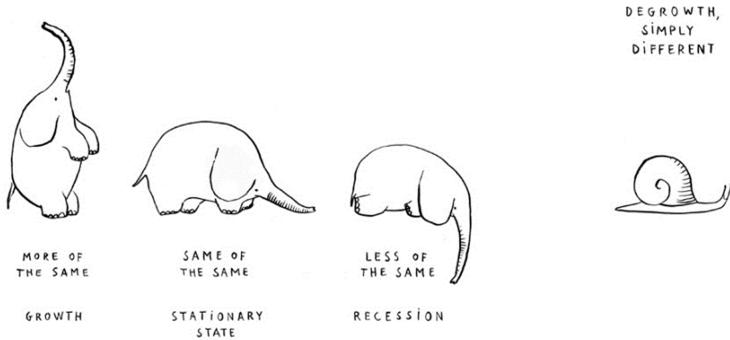
The Global Village Construction Set

Though not explicitly challenging the hegemony of the capitalist market, a promising start in this monumental endeavour was launched by Marcin Jaku-

bowski (a Physics PhD disillusioned with academia) in 2003 under the auspices of Open Source Ecology (OSE). OSE is a network of farmers, engineers, architects and supporters, whose main goal is the eventual manufacturing of the Global Village Construction Set (GVCS). As described by Open Source Ecology “the GVCS is an open technological platform that allows for the easy fabrication of the 50 different Industrial Machines that it takes to build a small civilization with modern comforts” (Jakubovski 2011). Though it is very early days, it is worth speculating that – give or take a few more or less machines – the GVCS might provide some clues about the size and scope of the optimum P-CC or local network of P-CCs. While it is unclear what the political agenda of OSE is (or, indeed if they have one that goes beyond producing basic machines that are much cheaper than their corporate counterparts), this type of initiative is invaluable for all those who wish to escape the domination of the market and the state while retaining (and, hopefully) improving scientific and technological advances. Smaller-scale democratic control and accountability would make more equitable distribution of the fruits of these and future advances. OSE is fairly well represented on the internet, where you will find a good deal of information on the successes and difficulties so far encountered. The network is moderately transnational but the impression I have is that most of the burden falls on small groups of dedicated enthusiasts, as is the case for most radical practical endeavours. It is also important to emphasize that – as yet – there seems to be no systematic attempt to connect OSE with a future without capitalism and the state.

Growth, and Degrowth

The irony is that there is a large volume of research that is critical of many facets of capitalist society but practically none of it calls capitalism itself into question or raises issues around non-capitalist society. This would involve challenging the dogma of ever-increasing growth, the mainstay of capitalist globalization, orthodox Marxism, social democracy, and the developmental state. This is beginning to be discussed through the idea of convivial degrowth, a theory-driven activist movement that aims to decolonize the imaginary of growth (continuous economic growth as the ultimate good) and establish degrowth as the common sense conception of a sustainable and convivial future. This is expressed graphically as follows:



(Image courtesy of Bàrbara Castro Urío http://www.labarbara.net/?page_id=1149)

The history and multiple aims of the degrowth movement are spelled out in the collective volume edited by D’Alisa et al in 2014, *Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era*. The movement, mostly based in Europe, is increasingly active, for example (BUDAPEST DEGROWTH WEEK 2016) where many more imaginative half-baked projects are on show.

What would degrowth mean in a period of transition to a non-capitalist community gradually withdrawing from the hierarchic state. First, the culture-ideology of consumerism would be replaced by a culture-ideology of human rights and responsibilities, prime among which would be a serious commitment to a decent, sustainable standard of living for all. It would certainly mean that the richer would become less rich and the poorer would become richer in material possessions – and everyone would benefit in non-material riches, eventually. But for this process to start, all the existing critiques of capitalism must abandon the hope that progressive alternatives can thrive by directly challenging the market. Only by ignoring the market can we escape the inevitable catastrophic consequences of capitalist globalization. Admittedly, this does sound quite utopian (my view is that we can learn a good deal from past and present utopian communities) but only if we fail to acknowledge the Achilles heel of global consumerist capitalism which is that it is based on consumer sovereignty. Consumers cannot be forced to consume junk food and drink, junk culture, junk addictions. If people can create the confidence to produce the food they need by themselves, there would be no need for a global food industry which puts profits before nutrition and healthy food and drink. The power of capitalist marketing, advertising, and the ideological corporate-state apparatuses is formidable, but in the last resort if adults can be brought to full awareness of how the market damages them and the children they care for, there is still hope for the planet and all those who live on it.

Revisiting Anarchist Thinking on the State and Hierarchy

In his book on non-violent anarchist thought and practice, *Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow*, David Goodway quotes Colin Ward: “a society which organizes itself without authority, is always in existence, like a seed beneath the snow buried under the weight of the state and its bureaucracy, capitalism and its waste, privilege and its injustices, nationalism and its suicidal loyalties, religious differences and their superstitious separatism ... [non-violent anarchism] far from being a speculative vision of a future society ... is a description of a mode of human organization, rooted in the experience of everyday life, which operates side by side with, and in spite of, the dominant authoritarian trends of our society”. Goodway continues: “Acceptance of this central insight is not only extraordinarily liberating intellectually but has strictly realistic and practical consequences”, as Ward says: “anarchism is already partially in existence ... humans are naturally cooperative ... current societies and institutions, however capitalist and individualist, would completely fall apart without the integrating powers, even if unvalued, of mutual aid and federation”. In this reading of political theory and practice, anarchist thinking can be rescued from its violent, “anarchic” past, and transformed into a political theory and practice that gradually replaces hierarchy with democratic order, replacing elite authority from above with popular self-realization from below, and – most crucially – replacing the whole idea of the state with self-governing democratically organized communities, ideally networked for the universal good in a peaceful world. But, to repeat, this can only succeed over the long-term by the transformation of parents (indeed all adults) and children in communities. The state will never abolish itself, but if enough people want to find a better framework for their lives, the state can wither away, it can become redundant, it can be replaced by networks of self-governing, self-reliant, sustainable communities of producer-consumers.

Put like this, these proposals will certainly alarm many people, and I join with those who see the importance of detoxifying and rethinking anarchist and socialist theory and practice, and learning the lessons of crimes committed in their names. Parallel to this, progressive people need to think more deeply about the lingering appeal of authoritarian communism and fascism – a good place to start might be Susan Sontag’s controversial article in the *New Yorker* (1975) “Fascinating Fascism”. Of course, many progressive anti-capitalist people would not wish to be associated with the labels anarchist or socialist and certainly not fascist (though the slippery idea of democracy still retains its positive allure for the moment). So perhaps the defining vision for the non-capitalist society will need to find a new name. As I hope I have made clear, this is a very long-term project, so there will be plenty of time to think of a new language to describe what may be the last hope for saving the planet and all who live on it – starting

with degrowth, the end of capitalism and profit-driven markets, and the culture-ideology of consumerism. Maybe we could call ways of thinking, writing and doing that contributes to these ends, “anarching”.

In all radical projects for change getting from here to there is, clearly, a major problem. And that is why the protagonists of so many such projects assume that there are only two ways forward. The first is to tinker with or reform the present system, in our case capitalist globalization within a system of hierarchic states (usually inaccurately labelled nation-states). These turn out to be more like shifting the furniture around than creating a new system for a radically new self-sustaining genuinely democratic global society. The second, and much more discredited, way forward is some form of revolution, involving various degrees of confrontation and, eventually, violence. Historically, this route to change has proved highly controversial, and there is very little evidence that under the conditions imposed by capitalist globalization and the hierarchical state that goes along with it, such a strategy could succeed. This suggests that to create a new world along the lines I am proposing would require new modes of thinking, new imaginaries, new men, new women and new children – new mentalities. Top-down change from states, politicians and bureaucrats always results in inequalities and class polarization. That is why we must start with parenting (biological and social) and education, for that is where voluntary bottom-up change begins.

The values on which the new global society could be built already exist in principle, but are rarely to be seen in practice, precisely because they conflict with the necessities of capitalist globalization (driven by the culture-ideology of consumerism) and the hierarchic state (embodied in varying degrees of crisis in authority and legitimation). This can be represented in a series of dichotomies: principles of teamwork and cooperation vs. practices of self-centred individualism and ruthless competition; principles of stewardship of the planet for the common good vs. reckless exploitation of nature for private profit; principles of international friendship and aid vs. practices of cynical diplomacy and imperialist exploitation; principles of genuine corporate social responsibility vs. practices of corporate crime and profiteering; principles of the dignity of labour and the re-evaluation of labour itself vs. practices of the “race to the bottom” and class polarization; the list goes on and on. Reformers and revolutionaries have been trying to shore up the principles and change the practices for centuries – arguably the global situation today is as bad as it has ever been. That is why we have to abandon the hope of challenging the hegemonic alliance of capital with the state and look for other answers.

Most families and other close social groupings everywhere want the best for the children in their care, and since the rise of capitalist globalization in the middle of the 20th century, facilitated by the electronic and then the digital revolution, the

“best” has increasingly been seen in terms of the culture-ideology of consumerism. This is the belief (supported by a vast infrastructure of institutions and practices) that happiness is to be primarily found in our possessions and in our consumption of them. This has been the dominant value system across all the major political, cultural, religious, and national divisions of the world. It is probably the most important thing they have in common. It is like a virulently addictive drug (shopping and drug dependencies of various types being major symptoms). Its economic correlate is the dogma of endless growth. Unless the culture-ideology of consumerism can be replaced with the principle of a decent standard of living for all, the planet and its population have no long term future. However, the principle of a decent standard of living for all is a very complex idea and I want to argue that the new global society must be constructed on the basis that different communities might not all want the same things. A truly democratic society would provide the opportunity for people to choose what their basic needs are and to organize how to handle the consequences. This is the conviction that lies behind the proposal for self-governing P-CCs. For example, one P-CC or network of them may decide to go vegetarian and another decide to maintain the option for meat-eating (eliminating the culture-ideology of consumerism would make everyone more conscious of the consequences of meat-eating); some communities might wish to sustain religious beliefs, others might find the new society gives their lives meaning in itself (eliminating the culture-ideology of consumerism could also have consequences in this sphere); and on through all the other dilemmas of human existence.

As argued above, this new post-capitalist, post hierarchic state global society will only become a possibility if individual and community mentalities change over generations, if adults are able and willing to bring the children in their care up on radically different values than those that appear to dominate societies globally today. “Appear” is the key here. I speculate that most parents would prefer to bring up their children to be non-violent, to be empathetic, to respect all other living beings as equals rather than competitors for scarce resources, thus creating a climate of altruism and cosmopolitanism. However, most parents are afraid that bringing children up like this would condemn them to failure in a world dominated by capitalist competitiveness and chauvinistic nationalism promoted by the hierarchic state. So, if we ever got to a stage when networks of P-CCs start to emerge that begin realistically to work outside the capitalist market and the hierarchic national and local state then we can assume that they will be peopled by those who already strive to live by the new values. Prime amongst the new values will be the belief that we must abolish money and all modes of exchange that sanctify what Marx identified as socially necessary labour time (SNLT) – the root of capitalist exploitation. If the goal is to create communities based on the value “from each according to capacity, to each according

to need”, the foundation of democratic socialization, then it follows that there will be no money, no exchange on the basis of equivalences, and no rationing. People will take what they need, they will give what they can. Adults and children will consider this normal, all will participate to a greater or lesser extent in the production of food and the other necessities of life, some will take more than they need and give less than they can, people will work out for themselves what is the best way to live in a community that is connected to the rest of the world. These ideas are complex and controversial, even in Marxist circles (You Tube 2010).

In the next section I address some of the many basic questions that will inevitably arise if ever such a society seems possible. Others, no doubt, will think of many other questions. I do not have answers to any of these questions – that is why I call this paper “half-baked” – my purpose here is to pose the questions and to engage with others who try to provide answers.

Questions Around how to Organize the Necessities for a Decent Life for All, Delivered through P-CCs (or their Equivalentents)

(1) FOOD

Could P-CCs by themselves or in networks ever be self-sufficient in food? Can there be a nutritious, healthy, non-industrial food system at the level of the P-CC or local networks of them? Would there be a place for laboratory-produced food? At what geographic scales would transfers of food take place between networked P-CCs? Vegetarian or carnivorous? How would land for the production of food be distributed? How to transform diet? Is the Global Village Construction Set (GVCS) up to the task?

(2) SHELTER

How would the existing housing stock be distributed? How would land for new housing stock be distributed? Would 3-D printing create enough new housing to satisfy the demand of those without adequate housing? How could the balance between communal and family living be managed? Where would the materials for housing repair come from? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(3) HEALTH

Would P-CCs have clinics and networks of P-CCs have hospitals? To what extent would changing patterns of living in the new society reduce the need for the types of health systems we already have? Could the system of production of medical drugs, equipment, and machines be de-industrialized? How would the medical pro-fession – if there was one – be organized? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(4) UTILITIES (ENERGY, WATER, RECYCLING/WASTE, INFRASTRUCTURE, etc?)

Would each P-CC be responsible for its own utilities system? Would different P-CCs have widely varying utilities requirements? Would networked local utilities systems work for groups of P-CCs? How would the balance between fossil and non-fossil fuelled energy systems work out? Would the new society inevitably lead to significantly reduced demand for utilities? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(5) EDUCATION

Could education be built on the basis of empathy? Who would decide what (and when) children were taught? Would anarching (as defined above) actually produce the new mentalities necessary for these transformations to be possible? How would the relationships between parents, other family members, and the community be managed for teaching and training? How would the teaching profession – if there was one – be organized? Would life-long education be a viable basis for community? How would science and technology be organized? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(6) SECURITY

Could the system of potentially or actually antagonistic nation-states ever be transcended? How could the world be de-weaponized? Can violence and aggression be eliminated and/or minimized? If not, would we always need police forces or armies, or some other institutionally sanctioned instruments of defence? Could P-CCs keep the peace without any sort of police force? If money is abolished and all goods and services are freely available, would crime wither away within and between P-CCs? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(7) LEISURE

Is it reasonable to assume that if a new society came into being that individual and/or collective levels of creativity in all cultural fields would entirely transform leisure from a largely passive to a much more active phenomenon? What could replace the tourist industry? What would happen to “entertainment”, competitive sport? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(8) PRODUCTION

Who would decide what and how much to produce? How would goods and materials move between P-CCs, locally and globally? Can we move beyond brands to generic products? How would the division of labour be re-organized? Is the GVCS up to the task?

(9) DISPUTE RESOLUTION

To what extent would empathetic, non-competitive, love-based parenting eradicate the need for dispute resolution? As with most of the questions, is it realistic to assume that as the new mentality becomes more and more prevalent, disputes over resources, interpersonal relations, and free-rider problems would eventually wither away? Would the need for a local and/or global legal system all wither away?

(10) COMMUNICATIONS

Does digital open-source provide a viable model for P-CC networking in all of the above areas? To what extent would it be necessary for members of the P-CC to travel? To what extent would members of the P-CC want to travel? How would a P-CC cope with visitors, or people wanting to move permanently from one to another? Is the GVCS up to the task?

Conclusion

As I said above, no doubt there are other areas in which questions will be asked, my intention here is simply to encourage others to start thinking along these lines. As always, the key to significant and permanent social change lies in how mentalities can be changed and how people and communities put these changes into practice. I am only too conscious that more or less all the ideas put forward above have been suggested at one time or another (even thousands of years ago) by many other people. Today, if anything, the longing for alternatives to capitalism is increasing, as evidenced by internet searches. There are many superficially attractive ideas in this Marketplace – that is what it is under conditions of capitalist globalization. The problem is that most of these “alternatives to capitalism“, as far as I understand them, would rely on the state, especially in the transition period. For example, the popular idea on the Left of a universal minimum wage, of course, would entirely depend on the state and tax revenues. The Social Democratic view that the election of socialist candidates will eventually democratize the economy and capitalist relations of production is another popular idea. This has been tried many times and although it has brought considerable benefits to some sections of the working class in some countries, it has nowhere eradicated the market or socially necessary labour time – the foundation of capitalist exploitation. Recent history suggests that if social democratic reforms cannot take us beyond capitalism and the hierarchic state when these are in a weakened condition, then there is very little prospect that it will be any different in the current and probably future stronger conditions of capitalist globalization and its integral hierarchic state. This is a hard conclusion to accept

but, if we want to move beyond capitalism and the state, I don't see any other more viable option. It is time to start imagining the end of capitalism and the state in order to avoid the end of the world. To re-appropriate a phrase originally used to justify the inevitability of capitalist globalization: "if we want to survive, there is no alternative to ending capitalism and the hierarchic state".

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² Editor's note: Bibliography and references were made by editor, with instructions from Editor-in-Chief.