

## THE CRISIS FACING POLITICAL PARTIES

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**Q:** *Issues 13 and 17 of Dialectiques published two interviews with you which dealt with the problem of power and the State in our times. Since then, your most recent book, The State, Power, Socialism was published and a new conversation has been instigated by Althusser's intervention at the Venice Meeting in 1977, which was published in both II Manifesto and in Dialectiques. What is your position on this debate?*

**A:** I should like to begin by noting that interesting debates on the State are currently underway in pretty much every country (England, the US, Germany et al.), though not in France. Here, we are essentially familiar, thanks chiefly to the *Dialectiques*, with what happened in Italy. What I am trying to say is that this conversation, even though it tables various crucial issues, is still marked by a latin provincialism.

Althusser's intervention was originally made in the form of an interview, which one cannot expect to display the rigour of a composed text. Nonetheless, the intervention does contain certain positions which give rise to serious reservations. Althusser's first position: the distinction between the capitalist State and civil society (in the sense of the "society of individuals") is simply a juridico-ideological construct of the bourgeoisie.

This position is entirely descriptive, correct and mistaken at the same time. It is very easy to avoid the real problem by criticising the way in which it is posed in bourgeois ideology. Let us therefore set aside in this interview the term 'civil society', which is freighted with ideological connotations, and replace it with the term 'social relations of production and reproduction'.

Althusser's proposal is, to some extent, correct. In my recent books, I have tried to prove that, contrary to Althusser's initial positions, the State cannot be considered a level in itself, entirely separate from the relationships of production and reproduction that already exist within it and reproduce in their essence — meaning it is not a State which is by nature autonomous among the different

modes of production.<sup>1</sup> The State is already present in the very constitution of the relationships of production and not just in their reproduction, as Althusser would argue later in his paper “Ideology and ideological mechanisms of the State”. The State, and in particular the capitalist state, which is a product and a fact of reality, has an eminent positivity. To understand this role of the State to which Althusser seems now to be referring, we must first pass by his concept of the state, as it is developed in the paper in question, and more generally a traditional conception of the State within Marxism: the conception which does not see beyond the negatives of State action, which is to say its repression (or prohibition) and its inculcation—however tangible it may be—of ideological legitimization (or obfuscation). The State is not identical with repression and ideology. We must consider, at its greatest extent, the economic role of the State in its specific materiality, its declared role as a political organizer of the bourgeoisie, ultimately all the disciplinary and normalizing procedures and techniques of State power.

However, Althusser’s proposition is partly flawed. As is often the case with my friend, his thinking is extreme, it goes from one extreme to the other “twisting the stick this way or that”. Marx clearly demonstrated that capitalism and its social division of labour are characterized by a related separation of the State from the social relations of production and reproduction. This separation is not only the basis of the power of the capitalist State, it is also—if not primarily—the foundation of its own materiality of its ‘special’ apparatus. This separation—a prerequisite for the singular presence of the capitalist State in the relations of production—is also the basis of the related autonomy of the contemporary State and of contemporary politics, which goes against the Third International’s tradition of economistic reductionism, as a number of us have declared. I repeat that this separation is in no way related to its judico-ideological reproduction: State-universality versus civil society—individualized subjectivities or totalitarian Moloch-State versus the explosion of the ‘social’ (*Touraine, Lefort, Castoriadis*, et al.).

If we follow Althusser and do not accept the separation of the State from the social relations of production, we will, whether we like it or not, end up with obviously negative results:

(A) On the one hand, we cannot periodize the capitalist State: this periodization is characterized by the different forms of this separation: the liberal state, the interventionist State, the Welfare State and today’s authoritarian statism. On the other hand, and for the same reasons, we cannot distinguish between “democratic parliamentary forms of State and the corresponding forms of states of exception (fascism, military dictatorship, etc.),

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<sup>1</sup> I have clarified my initial position on this problem, which differs somewhat from that of Althusser-Balibar, chiefly in two recent interviews in *Dialectiques*. See also my article in the *New Left Review*, “The capitalist state: a reply to Miliband and Laclau”, issue 95, Jan-Feb 1976.

even actual forms of totalitarianism: it is precisely this inability that led the Third International to adopt the theory of ‘social-fascism’”.

- a) If we follow a reverse course, somewhat paradoxically we run the risk of ending up with the most extreme aspects of the concept of State Monopoly Capitalism (SMC). Though some of those who espouse this view argue along the lines that, for the first time in our era, this separation no longer holds, Althusser seems content to merely question the degree to which this phenomenon is unprecedented, arguing in a way that it was always thus.
- b) I am afraid that we will be forced to reduce the various phenomena of power in the State, which is seen as having diffused organically throughout society, organizing it into a disciplined whole, and thus find ourselves bound once more to the statist conception of the Third International.
- c) Finally—and most importantly—we end up unable even to raise the issue of maintaining and deepening political freedoms under socialism. Maintaining and deepening political freedoms requires special institutions (those of representative democracy, needless to say radically transformed) to safeguard them. This implies some separation between the State and social relations, thus necessitating to some degree (let’s lay the deceptive figures to one side) a non-withering of the State. In short, without falling for a neo-liberalism of the Left, we certainly cannot negotiate this issue, which is essentially that of the Rule of Law, restricting it, as Althusser seems to do, to a simple “rule of the game” which organizes the multi-party system. If we were to do that, we would ourselves be blocking the way to a positive analysis of the exercise of power in the process of transition to democratic socialism—an analysis whose absence Bobbio has rightly ascribed to Marxism.

(B): Althusser’s second position, in relation to his first: we cannot talk today about a specific “enlargement” of the State, about a “politicizing of the social” peculiar to today’s capitalism, because the bourgeois State is already *semper allargato*, always enlarged “by dint of its constitutive principle”.

Which makes this proposal descriptive and simultaneously right and wrong, too. It is correct if it is applied to civil judico-political ideology. In my book *Political Power and Social Classes*, I stressed that “bourgeois political ideology does not countenance any theoretical or legal limit on the activity and the boundaries of the State in the so-called realm of the personal-private”. From Hobbes to Locke and from Rousseau himself to Hegel, this could not be clearer.

Still, this ideological construct is also right in part. Its value does not lie in its encompassing some natural principle of the enlargement of the bourgeois state; rather, it covers an historical tendency which is inscribed both in the materiality of that State and in its reproduction. I have underscored elsewhere that the separation of the modern state from its social relations does not relate to any *ex ante* delimiting—with inherent limits—of the public-political and the personal-private. The atomization of the social body is due to practices and techniques (economic, repressive, ideological, disciplinary, normative) applied by a state which, through the same procedure, incorporate the unity (the cohesion) of these divided units. The private individual is not an inherent obstacle to State action, rather a space which manufactures the State by tracing its contours: it is this that becomes a retractable horizon, while simultaneously serving as a centre of resistance to State action.

This does not mean that the extension of the State lacks defined historic boundaries, but rather than these boundaries are not the result of some neutrality of the individual-private. The State, then, is not always enlarged in accordance with its constitutive principle—as Althusser argues, as though it were some trans-historical nature of this State which manifests itself in different ways and/or is rendered concrete through the real. This expansion is a tendency which—unlike Keynesian or other delusions—encompasses its own limits, which are put in place by the production process and, simultaneously, the class struggle, but also by the very framework of the state. We can thus see that the boundaries of this enlargement, as they are drawn in different historical periods, are of singular importance. Who, what widens towards whom, towards what? From the liberal to the interventionist state after the crisis of 1930, to the Welfare State and the authoritarian statism of today, the terms themselves—public-private, State-social relations—between which State enlargement vacillates, have totally changed.

There can be no doubt that we are faced today with a new phase in this process, in which the state is directly present in the field of the production of surplus value and the reproduction of the workforce (collective consumption, health, housing, transportation, etc.). The prodigious expansion in the functions of the state, along with its expansion into the spheres of knowledge and science, and with the concentration of knowledge and power, are all markers of this new phase. We are also witnessing a radical reconfiguration of the spaces of the public and the private, the political and the socio-economic, and a significant change in their articulation (which raises, among other things, the problem of a new articulation of their respective organizations: the Party / trade union). The presence of the State's networks in the 'everyday' leads to what Ingrao calls the politicization of the social.

However, we must not lose sight of the limits of the current expansion of the state—a transcription of the separation of State and social relations in the social sphere—which impose limits on this politicization of society. I think those limits escape both Ingrao and Althusser: In Ingrao, when he uses the term ‘politicization’ to denote an exhaustive, possible, or even desirable “inclusion” of the social-private in the State-political “synthesis”. In Althusser, when he criticizes Ingrao for this perception of the politicization of the social, considering it a civil politicization (the political), while he argues—and I will come back to this—that another politics is possible, proletarian this time, but positioned entirely “outside” the State ( politics) in some illusory utopia. I think that, despite their differences, Althusser and Ingrao both adopt, to some extent, an identical essentialist topological conception of the State, although they arrive by different routes (total politicization of the social within the State in Ingrao’s case, proletarian politicization outside the State in Althusser’s) at the view that the social has an effective generalised panpoliticism.

Let us remain with Althusser for now: although he argues otherwise, all class struggles, all social movements—whether they be labour, ecological, regional, female, student, etc.—must, to the extent that they are political, or, rather, in their political aspects, be located in the strategic field that is the State. A proletarian politics cannot be positioned outside the state, just as a bourgeois politics need not necessarily be placed within the State field. If limits do indeed always exist on the expansion of the State, on the politicization of the social, this is precisely because class struggles and social movements always exceed by far the limits of the State, even in the broad sense of the term (including Ideological State Apparatuses-ISA<sup>2</sup>) insofar as everything is not political and that politics isn’t the only dimension in which the social exists. Overcoming the statist-institutionalist rigidity of the Third International, underscoring the importance of social movements (“civil society”) to our analysis, does not mean we wish to bestow on everything, and in every way, what is supposedly the ultimate honorary title (POLITICS), or to lie in wait, ready to seize any opportunity to disseminate the political or politics. Powers and struggles cannot be reduced solely to the State and to politics: and it certainly wasn’t Foucault who reminded Marxism of that! Though that is not to say, of course, that powers and struggles do not have political effects, that they are not politically pertinent, nor that the State does not impact on them...

**Q:** *You are referring to the position which Althusser developed in the interview in question, according to which the party of the working class must be ‘outside’ the State.*

**A:** Precisely. I believe that, in this sense, Althusser summarizes perfectly a classic 3rd International position on the State. I have explained on numerous occasions that this is an instrumental perception: the State is considered as a tool or a machine (there...the celebrated maxim...) to be manipulated at

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2 I.S.A. Ideological State Apparatuses

will by the ruling classes. Power would be a quantifiable entity, incorporated in the State, substantialized into an object. Passing from the mechanistic to the topological metaphor give us the following model, more or less: the State is a monolithic bloc whose only cracks are due to the dysfunctionality of its bureaucracy! Intrastate conflicts, as class conflicts, will never be relevant to its hard-core, but, at a pinch, they will be relevant to the I.S.A. This State remains a fortress impenetrable to the revolutionary struggles of the dominated classes. It is an instrumental but also essentialist concept of the State: either the popular masses are enclosed—“embedded” in it and infected by the bourgeois plague that has infested the fortress, or they remain uncontaminated, searching for its self / class consciousness (party), in which case they are situated entirely beyond the walls. Consequently, the conquest of the State’s power cannot mean—at least for its hard-core—anything other than the penetration of the fortress from outside, by means of a frontal assault, a war of manoeuvres or encirclement—a war of positions (Gramsci), which is to say always with a frontal strategy of the dual power type. The party can thus only be positioned entirely outside the State, functioning like an anti-State in the constructing of the second power (Soviet) which will replace the first (destruction of the State).

Refuting this essentialist conception, I proposed that the State be considered like a relationship—more precisely as a material condensing of a balance of powers between classes and class factions. The power in itself is not a quantifiable essence; it is a relationship. The State is literally constituted out of class antagonisms which, in a specific form, become intrastate conflicts—and this does not only apply to the I.S.A. State politics is the resultant of this contradictory *processus*: the decisive factor in state decision making is not what unfolds below or beyond the State, it is what takes place within the State. In lieu of the (topological) terms “inside” and “outside”, we should think in terms from the strategic sphere or *processus*: I repeat that popular struggles, in their political aspects, are always located within the sphere of the State. And though this is a permanent feature of the capitalist state, it is taking on new aspects today. The extension of the State into every area of daily life serves to intensify the contradictions at the state level, giving rise to a wholly singular crisis of the State today.

The Party could not, therefore, situate itself radically beyond the State. The conquest of state power relates to a long-term strategy of changing the balance of power within the State sphere itself through internal contradictions. However, unlike certain tendencies within the Eurocommunist parties, which accept these analyses up to a point, we must not forget that the State is not a simple relationship: it always presents a specific materiality of mechanism which we cannot radically transform simply by changing the balance of powers. On the other hand, however, that this party is placed within the State field does not mean—indeed, quite the opposite—that it should for this reason

espouse its materiality of mechanism by copying its administrative model or identifying with it. This is where the question of the autonomy of the organization of the working class and the popular masses lies, not in opposition to it outside the State.

Changing the balance of power within the State, and still more the radical transformation of the materiality of the State, is just one aspect of the democratic transition to socialism. The other aspect of the process is relying simultaneously on social grassroots movements to promote the development of loci of direct democracy—in short, relying on popular struggles which always surpass the State by far. Confining ourselves purely to the field of the State, even if we adopt the so-called ‘fault-lines’ strategy, inevitably entails ‘sliding’ unwittingly into social democracy: due to the specific gravity of the materiality of the State, changing the balance of forces within it can only be achieved if we also rely on the struggles and movements that transcend the State.

This applies now more than ever before. Faced with the new forms of statism and contemporary administrative procedures, with attempts at the neo-corporatist integration of the masses—which the State is making through the development of multiple control networks (social welfare, official police, psychiatric and legal services etc.) in the fabric of society—in the context of the economic crisis and the crisis of the Welfare State, which are inducing a potential and “creeping” crisis of legitimacy, though without breaching the consensus, the uprisings of the popular masses are finding expression in new forms. They no longer assume the forms they had during the ‘brutal’ crisis of 1930, and they do not occur either as general strikes or some alternative political ‘plan’ on a global scale. That, however, does not mean that these uprisings—which are often located outside the sphere of production—are marginal phenomena, as was the case some years ago; rather, they encapsulate diffused and widespread popular protest, while simultaneously shifting it into the cultural sphere: the student, feminist, regional, ecological movements, neighbourhood and citizen committees, etc. To these we must, of course, add the new forms of revolt within the factory itself. These movements are not detached from class contradictions—as Touraine posits through the opposition he establishes between “class conflicts / social movements”, given that they are organically linked to the contradictions (economic, but also in class politics and ideologies) inherent in the enlarged reproduction of capital. But these have a specific nature of their own: they condense and reflect class conflicts, though without being restricted to them. They are movements which far transcend the institutions of representative democracy, situating them in the self-management perspective.

The issue, then, is to link the two aspects of the process (transition): the problem this raises does not relate to “destroying” the institutions of representative democracy—which were also, if not primarily, an achievement of the popular

masses—to the benefit alone of extra-state struggles / direct democracy (this is the original Leninist solution, the essence of which Althusser adopts). Nor is it about abandoning, if not suppressing, the grassroots movements by promoting simple reforms of representative democracy (a classic social-democratic strategy).

These two aspects of the process (transition) should remain relatively distinct. And it is at this precise point that Ingrao's position, which is diametrically opposed to Althusser's, presents some problems. Ingrao is aware of the threat which corporatism, atomized or socio-professional re-privatization and fragmentation pose to the self-management movement. We know that for Deleuze/Foucault/Guattari et al., this is all reduced to a positive theory of social movements:

one-off micro-uprisings, scattered resistances, isolated cases of experimentation are the only way, as they see it, of avoiding a strategy which would threaten to ensnare the grassroots movements in the traps set by the political State, depriving them of their 'autonomy'. Needless to say, if I may dwell on these positions for a moment, this is the best way for these movements to be recovered by institutionalized neo-corporatism and the State's new system of vertical clientelism in their current form, and to incorporate them within the repressive tolerance of the State: we find that this recovery is already a reality more or less everywhere. What are the means Ingrao proposes for addressing this real risk—which is perhaps overemphasized by Italian and German intellectuals (Habermas, for example), who tend to generalize somewhat casually, which may perhaps be traced to the residue of fascism and Nazism in their countries. What is proposed, generally speaking, is the linking of the social movements with the process of State transition through their subordination to / insertion into the institutions of a democratized state: here, the State is considered a "moment of the whole", a "general synthesis"—a view which, though it may appear diametrically opposed to Althusser's position (State—object), nonetheless manifests, to some extent, the same essentialist view of the State (State—subject of social rationality in Ingrao).

Whatever the case, Ingrao's concept has been applied through the political experience of Austro-Marxism, which, seeking to remain equidistant from Bolshevism and social democracy, strove to articulate both sides of the process (transition), but did so by embedding the former (direct democracy social movements) within the latter (democratized institutions of representation). This experience has shown that, in this case, due to the specific materiality of the state apparatus, these social movements ended up breaking up in the "nets" set by the State through their incorporation / identification with its government circuit. I wonder if, and to what extent, a certain irreducible tension between these two aspects of the process (transition) is not a risk to be borne, and still more, whether this tension is not actually an organic element of the dynamics of the transition to democratic socialism.

**Q:** *It is here that problems present themselves in relation to the role the party plays today in these movements and the crisis facing Western communist parties.*

**A:** Exactly. Starting with the second problem, I do not see it as a crisis of the “form-Party” as some (notably Balibar) do. I think talking about a crisis in the “form-Party” is just as mistaken as talking about a crisis in the “form-State”. No, I believe this is, on the one hand, a generalized crisis of the political party “system”, which is linked to the new economic reality, with the crisis currently facing the State, and with its new form of authoritarian statism; a crisis in which the Communist parties of Western Europe are to some extent enmeshed. On the other hand, it is a crisis peculiar to the mass labour parties in countries where capitalism is now in its advanced stage.

In order to grasp the first aspect of the problem, we must attend before all else to current ideological processes. I shall reiterate that we must not consider repression, open violence and the organization of consent as the twin conditions of a power-quantity which belongs to the state, recalling the imagery of the Centaur. Doing so, we apply the essentialist-empiricist notion of “zero-sum power” to the State, so that a reduction in the degree of legality would automatically correspond to an inversely proportional increase in repression and vice versa. An increase in repressive violence by the State cannot but be accompanied by a marked reformulation of its legitimacy. This is precisely what is happening today, as the State’s response to its own crisis.

I cannot dwell here on the new repressive forms of the State today, which indicate a certain intensification of the open violence it employs (significant restrictions on freedoms, the generalized collection of personal electronic data, weakening of the law, redeployment of the police and judicial apparatus within what is now a joint arrangement, etc.), rather than simply increasing its so-called ‘symbolic’ violence. But all of this has been accompanied by a real restructuring of the ideology of the right, which had been seriously undermined by the growth in struggles after 1968 and which, once again, demonstrates the prodigious potential of cultural integration under capitalism (for example, its distorting ‘coverage’ of a whole range of issues that were raised in May '68). From this point of view, continuing to talk about Crisis ideologies seems utterly wrong to me, given that we are facing an actual restructuring of the dominant ideology. The originality of this reconstruction stems from the contradictory alignment of various tendencies, some of them quite old:

- a) irrationalism, which is typical of the general attack on Marxism and, simultaneously, on the rationalism of the Enlightenment. Irrationalism and neo-spiritualism, which are no longer a simple ideological product of the crisis, but cover, by preparing the way for it, a form of rationality which is already old and which tends to dominate the entire tissue of society: instrumental rational-

ity and the technocratic logic of experts, which are somewhat opposed to the logic of the law and the general will;

- b) Neoliberalism, manifested in an anti-state discourse masquerading as the liberation of the individual from the encroachments of the State. Although the supporters of neoliberalism often seem like devotees of an “anarcho-capitalism”, one must not think that they are proposing a return to “red in tooth and claw” competitive capitalism—which would, in any case, be unattainable: the State continues to play an organic role in the reproduction of capital. In essence, what they are proposing is the repeal—it has already begun—of the Social functions of the Welfare State (a crisis of the Keynesian state), which was an important victory for the popular masses.
- c) authoritarianism, meaning the new discourse about law and order, citizen security, necessary restrictions on the abuses of democratic freedoms (see “Trilaterale”<sup>3</sup>) etc.

The reconstruction of the content of the dominant discourse corresponds to—and indeed entails and implies—significant changes to the networks and devices that process and disseminate it. The primary ideological role is shifting from school, university and books to the mass media (cf. R. Debray). It is important to add that this shift refers—within government networks—to a more generalized shift in legitimization processes from political parties to the machinery of State, whose privileged interlocutors they were. The latter probably forms the basis of the former: the development of the mass media goes hand in hand with their increased—and increasingly multifaceted—control by the machinery of State; the logic and the symbolic which are activated through the media discourse reproduce, through their statement, today’s equivalent of the apparatus of administration.

All of these are at the root of the crisis and the decline of the political parties, which retained an important role until recently. And although they were no longer present in the places where decisions were actually taken—which were already moving away from Parliament towards the executive, they nonetheless continued to play a decisive role in the political organization and representation of class interests against the state administration, with which they were, thanks to this role, its privileged interlocutors. In addition, they constituted ideological mechanisms of the first rank in the way they processed and conveyed in its essence (fascistic parties form a different case) a discourse which was based in general desire and which subordinated the institutions of representative Republic—in short, the discourse of the Rule of Law.

<sup>3</sup> The Trilateral Commission is a non-governmental, policy-oriented forum that brings together in their individual capacity leaders from the worlds of business, government, academia, the press and media, as well as civil society. It was founded in 1973 by David Rockefeller, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Jimmy Carter (*note added by Spyros Sakellariopoulos*).

Today, the administration has been reduced to the main political organizer of the ruling classes and a privileged entity for the incorporation of the popular masses: it is establishing itself as the main decision-making space; to achieve this, it is addressing various socio-professional groups over and above parties (an institutionalized neo-corporatism which is evident primarily in the various tripartite committees). This brings about a representativeness crisis for the “parties in power”, and for the classes and sections of classes they represent. At the same time, the legitimization role is shifting towards the administration, providing the discourse of authoritarian technocratism, a privileged articulation space within the apparatus of administration. This is true, too, of the neoliberal discourse (the State as a neutral arbiter which simply puts rules of the game in place on social actors), which rejoins the traditional form of State auto-legitimation. This role of the administrative apparatus affects the dominant ideological discourse, standardizing it and downgrading it to a plebiscitary-populist forms of consensus linked to the hermetic nature of expert-talk.

This crisis of the party system is essentially impacting on the parties of power, those that participate in the government as part of a normal rotation of power and therefore include the social democratic parties. However, in some respects, it also affects the western communist parties to the extent that, regardless of whether or not they participate in the government sphere, they are present in the field of the State.

More generally, however, the mass workers’ parties are experiencing a crisis of their own, which relates primarily to the communist parties (it is, *inter alia*, a crisis in militancy). Some of the political and strategic orientations of these parties, along with certain aspects of their internal bureaucratic phenomenon, have certainly played a role in this crisis, though its causes are primarily social: and this is something that tends to obscure the conversation taking place around this issue in France. The Communist parties were built organizationally, essentially, not only as “workers’ parties” in the strict sense (even though the labour element was never dominant): and in society, too, their primary reference axes were the contradictions within the production system, within the factory (pairs: party-trade union / State-enterprises). Today, however, several key social movements relevant to the working class have made their appearance far from the places of production. Furthermore, the struggles and these movements (women’s, student, regional-separatist, ecological etc.) are now multiclass by nature.

And this is the root cause of a crisis, now that the workers’ parties must play a new role in articulating the transformations of the State and the evolution of social movements. Indeed, casting aside concepts like “autonomy” and the “social” in relation to political organizations (which should, supposedly, concern themselves with the State alone), it is clear that, confronted by the risks of corporatism and integration (even if it no longer seems possible to create a

broad Poujadist<sup>4</sup> fascist coalition to underpin these movements), and faced, too, with the risk of serious clashes between the two sides in the process (transition)—as happened in Portugal, the communist parties must be actively present in the new social movements.

It is clear that all the above is only feasible given significant changes within these parties—changes in their view of the new movements (which has ranged to date from the contemptuous to the defamatory, especially in the case of the French Communist Party), changes in their internal organization, in their relationship with the trade unions and mass organizations. The real question, though, is in which form the party should choose to present itself in this field. And here, too, Ingrao's position, which is one of the most promoted in this area, is problematic: in brief, Ingrao sees in the party the “globalization moment” of the new social struggles, in the sense that a transformed party should succeed in “synthesizing” these struggles, in orienting and even framing them into a constellation whose primary axis is the party. A position which accords with the one Ingrao adopts on the connection between the democratization of the state and the social movement.

Here, the problems relate partly to the party itself: to what extent can, or even should, it be transformed to “win over” the social movements, without it ending up a catch-all party<sup>5</sup> of the populist type? On the other hand, the problems also relate to social movements: it is far from certain that they will retain their individuality if they “integrate” themselves into a party, however transformed and democratized it may be. Especially since these movements have not (yet?) found special forms of organization (must they?) which allow their relationship with the Party to constitute new relationship with a mass organization party; consequently, there is a great risk that they will dissolve into the party. I wonder whether in this field, too, a certain irreducible tension between the workers' parties and social movements may not be a necessary condition of the dynamic of the transition to democratic socialism.

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4 Poujadism was a movement and a right-wing popular party in 1954, under the leadership of Pierre Poujade. Primarily supported by shop owners, it manifested itself in the form of short-term sectoral demands which resisted the modernizing transformation of French capitalism in the 1950s. Since then, the term has mainly been used to denote any social or political movement that is opposed to the “development” of social structures because they want to maintain the narrow privileges of certain social layers which cannot adapt to, or which are marginalized by, this “development”, and which opt for conservative forms of political organization and intervention. (*Translation of the Greek translator, Takis Kafetzis' note*)

5 We owe the term ‘catch-all party’ (*parti attrape-tout* in French) to Otto Kirchheimer, who coined it to create a new typology of Western European political parties in the post-war era. See Otto Kirchheimer, *The Transformation of Western European Party System*, in *La Palompara* (J), Weiner (M). *Political Parties and Political Development*, Princeton (N.J.), Princeton University Press, 1966 (*Translation of the Greek translator, Takis Kafetzis' note*).