

CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND PLURAL ECONOMY: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

by **Matthieu de Nanteuil** and **Jean-Louis Laville**

“Rebuilding a socially and ecologically sustainable economy means rethinking the ways in which the economy works, redefining the conditions of public action and establishing a new relationship with consumption. We believe that this is not feasible unless a set of non-capitalist economic practices, in which a different system of social relationships is very firmly established, is recognised. Through their very heterogeneity, SSE practices introduce real alternatives in both the north and the south ... It is important not to functionally confine them to one ‘sector’ of the economy... Therefore, the creation of legislation on this subject is essential. Some countries are ahead of the game in adopting such legislation, but a European framework still needs to be developed”.

The economic crisis – which picked up pace brutally in 2008 but has in fact much older roots – has sparked a desire for re-industrialisation: seen from this point of view, the social and solidarity economy (SSE) is interesting but does not really have that much to offer. It is viewed from a sector-based perspective, in which it completes the fabric of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with specific ownership-related features.

But the crisis can also be considered from the perspective of the relationship between the capitalist economy and society as a whole, the latter being regarded as a set of experiences, social relationships and institutions: in this case, the social and solidarity economy – and the avenues that it opens up – have an important role to play in ensuring a democratic outcome to the crisis. This is the approach that we will be pursuing here. Our argument is split into two parts: the first aims to redefine the crisis of capitalism by adopting an anthropological perspective; the second aims to underline the specific features of

the social and solidarity economy in relation to these difficulties³⁰.

The key to economic recovery lies not only in developing a large-scale industrial strategy, but also in defining measures to prevent a rift between economy and society, essential to preserving and deepening democracy. This is where the social and solidarity economy can play a pivotal role, far surpassing the quantitative importance of its component associations, cooperatives and mutuals.

FINANCIAL CAPITALISM, REDISTRIBUTION, CONSUMERISM: THE CONTOURS OF A SYSTEMIC CRISIS

It is important to make sure that the layers of meaning that have marked the history of capitalism are neither caricatured nor underestimated. We will follow in the footsteps of Max Weber, pointing out that accumulation is in itself a product of a specific ethos, combining cultural behaviours with religious dispositions (Weber, 2004 [1904]). However, this matrix has gradually

³⁰ This final chapter is more than just a conclusion. It is an invitation to extend the contributions in this special edition of L'Option. The decision to use the term 'anthropological' was driven by a desire to create a link between economy and society, which are usually considered separately.

disappeared under the effects of secularisation, individualism and, above all, the progressive empowerment of the market.

On this subject, the theory propounded by Karl Polanyi is the most well known. Polanyi argues that the capitalist economy has been disembedded from society, due to the progressive commodification of three fundamental things: labour, land and money (Polanyi, 1983 [1944]). This theory may be completed in two ways: firstly, by pointing out that the post-war growth period gave rise to national forms of re-embedding; secondly, by considering that we have now entered a new phase of disembedding, based on different mechanisms to those identified by Polanyi.

From the anthropological point of view, on which we are focusing here, Polanyi argues that the originality of the market economy lies in its autoreferentiality; it no longer aims to satisfy fundamental needs defined externally to itself, but to establish a world order according to its own logic. This school of thought has also changed considerably, bearing in mind that its forerunners were moral philosophers who aimed to combine the individualisation of social ties – to which their theories directly contributed – with ethical prerequisites such as sympathy or compassion. But unlike the social republicans and, subsequently, the promoters of Christian social thought, whether socialist or communist, these ethical ambitions were conceived on the periphery of the economy. Therefore, they are still linked with the selfish logic of material gain, generating an economic system that places individuals in opposition with each other and teaching them to work on the basis of principles – regarded as ‘natural laws’ – that are increasingly detached from the way people actually live. In the 1930s, the excesses of this system led to the consequences that we are all too familiar with.

The emergence of patrimonial capitalism

It should also be pointed out that the Second World War was followed by a period of re-embedding. Industrial capitalism was regulated on a national scale by Keynesian policies, social systems and collective bargaining procedures, as well as by regimes of particular significance to industrial work (professional values, class identity, etc.). In other words, this capitalism formed the backbone of an economic system in which

commodification was restricted by a set of socio-political factors.

Nicolas Postel and Richard Sobel show that these restrictions began to fall in the 1970s with the widespread floating of currencies, and in the 1980s with the growing flexibility of the labour market. “The commodification of credit money led to a significant rise in return. [...] With the revitalisation of the financial system, the goods, services and raw materials markets were once again constrained by competitiveness/price considerations” and, as a result, the Fordist social contract based on the de-commodification of labour and universal access to social rights was brought into question (Postel and Sobel, 2013, pp. 116-118).

It is in this context that we should understand the rupture initiated by the appearance of ‘financial’ or ‘patrimonial’ capitalism in the 1980s and 1990s (Aglietta and Berrebi, 2007; Aglietta and Orléan, 2002). This phase was characterised by the separation of financial activities from other sectors of the economy: constantly growing risk aversion and liquidity requirements, the use of full fair value accounting and a scarcity of bank loans for SMEs in favour of widespread intermediation by the financial markets. The above factors progressively pushed European economies towards becoming rentier economies, generating an unprecedented imbalance in the distribution of added value and creating a culture of ‘short-termism’ capable of threatening the entire economy.

The trend towards separation is not restricted to the financial sector. At the same time, competition policies have encouraged non-cooperative strategies and increased inequality between European countries. Philippe Herzog says: “The EU has given priority to market finance, thus leaving it up to the latter to drive the selection of investments. Some investments, for example in new information technologies, have been overvalued [...] while others have been neglected.” He adds that: “The competition policy has prevailed in the absence of an industrial strategy. [...]. Its doctrine has not changed, although technological changes and the emergence of new markets are upsetting its application” (Herzog, 2012, p. 3).

These various trends have fostered the development of extremely selective wealth creation processes and prevented the overall redefinition of

the productive system³¹. More broadly speaking, they have undermined the endogenous regulations that characterised the social market economy during the ‘thirty glorious years’ from 1945 to 1975. Having failed to effectively organise the transition, the European Union demanded that these internal regulations be dismantled, but did not propose any possible alternatives. Cooperation agreements, which were no doubt too limited but could have provided a basis for large-scale European regulations, broke down.

However, such an elementary analysis does not take into consideration the anthropological gravity of the crisis: to do this, an additional, critical analysis must be performed of the exogenous regulations that were at the origin of post-war re-embedding. These regulations encompassed both the philosophy behind public policy – which focused on redistribution – and the cultural matrix of industrial societies, which were marked by the emergence of virtually unlimited consumerism.

The inadequacy of redistribution

The essentially redistributive conception of the welfare state has two inherent weaknesses:

- *Firstly, public service users are treated as subjugates.* Most arbitration occurs through the channels of representative democracy (governing officials, employer and trade union representatives) and the voice of ordinary citizens is largely ignored. When Fordism prevailed in companies, excluding workers from decision-making while rewarding them with higher wages, ‘providentialism’ – to use a term coined by Paul R. Bélanger and Benoît Lévesque (1990) – increased within the welfare state: those who use social services have no say in their formulation, but their exclusion is offset by the fact that access to such services is virtually free.
- The second weakness lies in the fact that *redistributive solidarity is still dependent on economic growth*: imperceptible until the 1960s, this dependency became more and more significant with the slump in economic growth, which deprived social democracy of some of its means of action. This trend brought Keynesian methods and social transfers into question. In this context, the monetarist option struck a chord

with governments because it promised to bring back growth. Further to the application of these monetarist principles, the national framework of action – within which social democracy had been exercised – was deeply perturbed by deregulation and the increased international circulation of capital.

The sustainability of the redistributive states was undermined by their lack of democracy in terms of the expression of users and citizens (Jaeger, 2011) and by their endorsement of the idea that only the market can create wealth (Cassiers, 2011; de Nanteuil and Pourtois, 2005). Such states were consolidated at the end of the Second World War, but they confused protection with redistribution and were unable to adapt the social practices acquired to a different economic culture: definition of new public goods, ‘patient’ finance, long-term investment and the linking of training with innovation, as well as the plurality of economic forms, support for associations, etc.

The consumerism trap

At the same time, public policy played along with growing material demand, encouraging consumption behaviours that would very quickly exacerbate spiralling private debt.

Consumerism fast became the cornerstone of the Fordist model. Consumerism can be defined as “a type of individualistic consumption that is intrusive, hedonistic and focused on novelty, and that uses signs as well as objects and is very costly in terms of natural resources and human labour. [...] Having literally exploded after the Second World War, with the Keynesian state, oriented completely towards what, at the time, was called demand-side policy.” (De Munck, 2011). When it emerged after the Second World War, its inherent dangers were underestimated, because it helped to regulate capitalism as a whole: access to material possessions is a breeding ground for temporary rebellion faced with the constraints of industrial activity, which is itself linked to a chain of meanings associating the production of objects with a progress-oriented market, in highly-redistributive contexts.

This consumerism was exacerbated by flexible and global capitalism, whereas the market was

³¹ In a recent interview, Aglietta pointed out that EU policy should encourage the development of a European industrial project by reshaping public spending rather than by imposing widespread austerity (Aglietta, 2013).

freeing itself from society. It then became a trap, threatening to close around post-industrial societies. Its contribution to the ecological crisis has been proven: while the creation of a low-carbon economy is crucial, it does not seem feasible to organise the ecological transition (Juan, 2011) without redirecting consumption towards sustainable goods (Dupuy, 2002, 2005) and, more profoundly, without changing our subjective relationship with materiality (Arnsperger, 2005, 2009). The consumption standards imposed through media-diffused behaviour modules should be examined from a critical perspective.

This new challenge should not consign the question of work to oblivion: given the failure to combine consumption with meaningful professional activity, it is difficult to see how the conditions can be created for a mode of consumption capable of preventing compulsive behaviour adopted to compensate for existential disquiet. Critical consumption (Pleyers, 2011) means reinserting the act of purchasing into a set of anthropological signifiers, thanks to which economic agents can reconstruct a certain existential consistency faced with a feeling of anomie or dispossession generated by an economic regime devoid of any social ties. In this area, work still plays an irreplaceable role.

While an increasing amount of market share is being allocated to human activities, the disembedding phase that we are currently witnessing combines the disassociation of capitalist activities from one another – in the dual form of the empowerment of the financial sector and the widespread adoption of non-cooperative strategies –, an inability to renew public policy, and a consumer culture in which the ownership of goods and material wealth has acquired an importance out of all proportion. Added to this is the fact that the national framework itself is riddled with systemic contradictions. The opening up to competition of social systems in the EU combined with increasingly volatile movements of capital call for a complete redefinition of the notion of the 'political community', with the pro-

motion of the action potential of civil societies. In this respect, the SSE could have a valuable role to play.

THREE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES: RECIPROCITY, PROXIMITY, RECOGNITION

The importance of the SSE has been emphasised many times³². Capable of responding to needs arising on the periphery of both the State system and the market, the SSE fulfils a function in the general economy of demand – a function that is magnified in a service economy, in which productivity stagnates and quality of life demands increase³³.

However, we would be sidestepping the majority of the debate if we were to reduce the huge array of activities within the SSE to a strictly functional problem. The anthropological renewal driven by the SSE – which derives from the associationist tradition of the 19th century in countries experiencing profound changes in their industrial fabric – consists in changing the very rudiments of productive activity by reconciling a calculating rationality *with a solidarity or citizenship objective*. In other words, the SSE encompasses a set of practices that aim to build on the achievements of modern rationality, by combining the rules of calculation with objectives of a different kind and bearing in mind that this combination is not only shaped by public policy but must also be worked on at the *roots of social behaviour*. It is this dual task of combination and prevention that makes it different. How should it be interpreted?

In answer to this question, it should be pointed out that the crisis of capitalism is indissociable from the crisis of social democracy. The latter has linked social welfare to redistribution and regards users as mere receptacles of public action. "Social democracy is running out of steam because it has failed to effectively tackle economic and political reductionisms: a confinement of the market through redistribution, forgetting the diversity of real markets and the potential for reciprocity in the economic sphere, and a focus

³² See the figures provided in the introduction.

³³ It can be said that the SSE is particularly active in the following areas, although the list is not exhaustive: cooperative banking and mutual insurance, childcare and care of the elderly, support for young people in difficulty, integration, social housing, artistic and cultural creativity and various digital activities, not to mention attempts to re-embed economic activity in a regional social context (Systèmes d'échange local (SEL) [local trading exchange systems], Associations pour le maintien d'une agriculture paysanne (AMAP) [associations for the maintenance of family farming], local currencies, fair trade, etc.).

on the methods available within the framework of representative democracy that prevent citizen participation in the political sphere” (Laville, 2011, p. 49).

Moreover, this approach has increased spiralling consumerism, which has contributed significantly to the current ecological imbalances. However, the same applies to social democracy as to the market: the main objective is not to get rid of it altogether, but to radically reorient its fundamental principles. The strength of the SSE lies in its ability to raise this issue and to provide solutions to it on the basis of experiences in the *solidarity* economy, taking care not to restrict itself to promoting the kind of collective enterprise specific to the traditional social economy. It is characterised by three objectives.

Reciprocity

The first objective is reciprocity, which is often addressed through the ‘gift paradigm’ (Mauss, 1999 [1923], Caillé, 2000). This paradigm is based on the triple obligation of giving, receiving and reciprocating, and also on the combination of interest and disinterest involved in giving. Nevertheless, despite the many situations in which “the link is more important than the thing”, the risk of “giving without reciprocity” remains (Ranci, 1990). This is particularly apparent in philanthropy, where the giver can trap the receiver in a dependent position, thus creating a form of plutocracy.

However, this general objective makes it possible to go beyond the ‘formalist’ approach to economics and to adopt, according to Polanyi, a ‘substantive’ approach that takes into account the plurality of economic integration principles. The similarities with Weber are obvious, who contrasts ‘formal rationality’ and ‘material rationality’ of calculation or law. For both authors, the exchange is not identified in terms of its formal structure, as in Walrasian theory: it embraces the social links that it brings into play. But in what sense?

In this respect, the response of the SSE is precise: the non-distribution of dividends constraint opens the way to a much broader objective, which consists in *making a non-monetary contribution to social cohesion*. In the SSE activities mentioned above, this contribution has reference to the fundamental standards of democra-

tic life, particularly equality. Performing an act of solidarity or citizenship is equivalent to introducing the equality ideal into concrete economic practices. This has a decisive political meaning: democracy is not guaranteed by statutes, it relies upon the application of egalitarian reciprocity in the everyday relationships between those participating in service provision.

Hence reciprocity can be considered ‘a principle of integration’: the goal is not only to change the sequences of exchange, but to enable a redefinition and a re-appropriation of needs by the users themselves, thus opening the door to other productive procedures (Servet, 2013). Solidarity and citizenship should not be regarded as a mere palliative to redistribution or to representative democracy, but as a fulfilment of the requirements that go hand in hand with the principle of equality in civil society. Indeed, equality is indissociable from the creation of a social cohesion ethic, based on ‘equal dignity’ (Kis, 1989) and ‘participation parity’ (Fraser, 2005). This transformation has significant implications in terms of the democratisation of SSE organisations, although they should not be idealised. In practice, they come up against a number of obstacles.

Moreover, recourse to reciprocity does not provide a hermetic barrier to other economic practices, as various schools of socioeconomic thought across the world have shown. For example, market sociology – known as new economic sociology – stresses the importance of cooperation practices in the development of efficiency (Granovetter, 2008), as does the ‘economy of conventions’ (Eymard Duvernay, 2006) and the analysis of ‘conventions & management’ (Amblard, 2003; Gomez and Korine, 2009).

The same applies to organisations: innovation implies the development of relational dynamics that suspend the pursuit of immediate gain (Alter, 2013). As for the financialisation of capitalism, it can be seen as the reflection of a break in the link between the different sequences of economic and financial engineering responsible for generating profit. The ‘violence of money’ (Aglietta and Orléan, 2002), which is indissociable from the process of financialisation, appears as a consequence of the movement of separation that is running through the capitalist economy itself.

The importance of reciprocity as a distinctive feature of the solidarity economy is therefore in-

dissociable from the effects it produces: it makes it possible to go beyond state-market dualism and to hybridise the market with redistribution, as emphasised in various theoretical writings (Gardin, 2006; Dacheux and Goujon, 2011). The example that it provides is also applicable in a wider context: it facilitates the consideration of reciprocity-related requirements throughout the entire economy.

Proximity

The notion of proximity does not imply a drift towards localism by any means, it is a reflection on the development of an economy of proximity, capable of considering the economic exchange partner as a *socius* and not as a distant figure or, indeed, a stranger. Here, the focus is more on the structure of the interaction than on its purpose.

This aspect has also been underlined by some researchers. In regard to social services, Jean-Louis Laville and Marthe Nyssens distinguish between “objective proximity (defined by tangible space and time criteria)” and “subjective proximity (when the relationship between service provider and user is decisive in determining the quality of the service)” (Laville and Nyssens, 2013, p. 15). There is also a third definition of proximity, which we will refer to here as symbolic proximity. *Symbolic proximity* relates to the kind of social imagery manifested in economic exchanges, in terms of the (real or imagined) relationship of proximity between the exchange partners.

From this point of view, modernity can be considered a historic period of destabilisation of the local economy. With the abolition of corporations, followed by the repression of the associationist movement in the 19th century, liberal individualism definitively broke the links of proximity that structured Ancien Régime societies, within contexts of inherited inequality. This trend was prolonged by the class dynamic that accompanied the industrial revolution, particularly when this dynamic was theorised as a form of class antagonism.

However, by promoting the widespread growth of the middle class and, above all, the development of post-war social pacts – particularly redistributive policies – at national level, Fordism

helped to reverse the trend. Moreover, this explains why a large-scale collective bargaining movement – forming the basis of social democracy – was able to develop. The extent to which this movement required a specific anthropological foundation, based on the idea of a ‘continuum’ between the different players in the capitalist system, has not been stressed enough (Castel, 1995). Although though this continuum could be overtly conflictual, it nonetheless indicated the creation of a common imagery, against a backdrop of national identity³⁴.

The globalisation of exchanges has however taken apart the idea that social links develop essentially within national boundaries. At the same time, market capitalism has profoundly altered the forms of social cohesion continuity in the economic sphere. These changes have taken place subtly. Besides the fragmentation of the wage-earning classes, they are notably also reflected in the development of ‘emotional capitalism’ (Illouz, 2006), which aims to organise worker mobilisation on the basis of ‘emotional intelligence’ (Goleman, 2007), while keeping this dimension separate from actual conditions under which work is carried out and subjecting it to extremely powerful constraints of conformity (Hochschild, 2012, 1983).

However, the SSE could play a decisive role with respect to this issue of the practical, embodied, dimension of economic exchange. As pointed out by Mauss, a theoretician on gift exchange as well as a shrewd observer of ‘body techniques’, economic exchange involves corporeality with its learning, its technical features and its relationship with the question of ‘yield’ (Mauss, 1999 [1934]). In the new capitalism, this dimension is largely exploited. The SSE can reintroduce it by ensuring that inter-comprehension is based on face-to-face relationships, for example through the co-construction of services based on the expression of users, such as workers and volunteers.

Polanyi adopts another approach to proximity, based on the concept of householding, which Isabelle Hillenkamp suggests translating into French as *partage domestique* [domestic sharing] (Hillenkamp, 2013, p. 222). Loyal to Aristotelian tradition – which contrasts economics “based

³⁴ Belgium is a particularly good example of this trend. Although historically it is a federal country that has been divided since its creation by language, it has made social security a pillar of national unity.

on the self-sufficiency of a community united by a form of goodwill" [*ibid*] with chrematistics, in which there are no limits to commercial activity –, Polanyi addresses the issue of the self-determination of economic ends. Such self-determination implies a *community of links*, for which the 'household' (*oikos*) metaphor is mostly used.

Again, there is a degree of ambivalence. Either householding is a vehicle of submission that ratifies gender inequality, or it keeps commercial activity at a distance by setting the strength of a living community against it. This ambivalence has been clearly demonstrated in popular economic practices, particularly in Southern countries.

In any case, in view of the various successive phases of market capitalism, redistribution is a necessary but inadequate principle, particularly when it has a bureaucratic element. Like the market, the State is an instrument of rationalisation of daily life, which establishes physical and symbolic distance as the foundations of progress. No-one has understood this major innovation in modernity better than Émile Durkheim. Nevertheless, when the State – particularly in its progressive form of a welfare state – is content to compensate for the market-induced rupture of social links by the bureaucratic management of 'social affairs', then it loses sight of its *raison d'être*, which is to re-establish conditions enabling the collective 'inhabitation' of the world (Lévinas, 1961).

This has repercussions in terms of the relationship between human beings and nature: the industrial regulation of capitalism, which derives from a harmful alliance between productivism and statism, has fostered spiralling consumerism and the over-exploitation of natural resources. However, it also impacts the relationship between human beings themselves: in the workplace, where competitive individualism has gradually taken over from other relational standards, at the risk of dangerously undermining the conditions of civility (Dejours, 2010); at the boundary between production and consumption, where service sector workers find themselves subjected to a commoditisation constraint in their relationships with

clients and users, i.e. an obligation to treat those around them like strangers, in order to maintain flows (de Nanteuil, 2012). It therefore seems urgent to rebuild a link economy. However, this immediately begs the question of how far such action would be compatible with globalisation?

Recognition

This is where a third principle comes into play, that of *recognition*. Axel Honneth (2002, 2007) argues that recognition is not limited to interactions between individuals or groups governed by a principle of equality: it also encompasses the intersubjective conditions of access to the public space, above and beyond the physical and symbolic boundaries associated with the principle of proximity. The latter remains an important issue. They must nonetheless be supported by a grammar of social exchanges able to provide a *general framework* for the analysis of social relationships.

According to Honneth, the term 'recognition' has a triple meaning: a) there is a preliminary to the strictly cognitive understanding of social problems ("recognition precedes knowledge"); b) social relationships are characterised primarily by a lack of recognition (which he refers to as "contempt or disrespect"); and c) the construction of an undistorted social relationships is based on conflicted dynamics, in societies where demand for recognition is high ("struggles for recognition").

In his early works, Honneth upholds the idea that recognition can be broken down into three separate spheres: love, rights and solidarity. Inadequacies experienced in these three different spheres lead to the development of conflicts with a view to establishing a "positive self-relation"³⁵. However, the strength of Honneth's theory is that it emphasises the links of *continuity* between the three spheres, which are also fundamental elements of human experience. The recognition theme forms the basis of a grammar: it provides a criterion for *comprehending* social relationships and *evaluating* their leanings.

The strongest criticism levelled at Honneth is that he tends to underestimate the way in

³⁵ The concept of 'competitive individualism' can be used to describe the various dominant forms of individualism that have developed within the framework of market capitalism. It aims to highlight the effects of widespread competition associated with the promotion of individual interests. It is a similar concept to that of 'negative individualism', as described by Robert Castel (Castel, 1995). It does not cover the entire individuation process, which also includes an aspect of emancipation from the oppressive figures of the community tie (Lipietz, here).

³⁶ In regard to the three spheres mentioned, Honneth describes this positive self-relation as "self-confidence", "self-respect" and "self-esteem" respectively.

which economic anthropology structures social relationships, independently of the recognition theme. Two authors in particular have reproached him for this: Nancy Fraser, who argues in favour of a two-dimensional model of social justice, distinguishing between recognition and redistribution (Fraser, 2005); and Christophe Dejours, for whom the issue of the practical conditions of recognition in the workplace is not adequately addressed (Dejours, 2010).

This criticism is important. However, we believe that Honneth's efforts to redefine standards can be reconciled with issues specific to economics, this becoming particularly important in the context of globalisation. When applied to the SSE, Honneth's work has two implications:

- Firstly, it promotes the idea that economic relationships (not only between producers, but also between producers and consumers) cannot be limited to the indifferentiation towards which the development of the global market is pushing them. Such social links not only need regulatory bodies capable of balancing the relationship between capital and work, they also need relational standards aimed at increasing the social visibility of economic players who have been ignored or abandoned by the international division of labour. Thus recognition is a fundamental requirement in the social relationships brought into play by economic globalisation, without which no institutional changes are viable. From this point of view, the multiple different links between the popular economy in Southern countries and international productive sectors may be regarded as the expression of a movement to ensure that economic relationships satisfy other normative prerequisites than the pure balance of power, especially when it comes to organising consumption according to the recognition of working conditions and to local producer quality criteria. In other words, the goal is to *position the question of trust on the global economic stage*. As Honneth explains, this means conducting a critical study and updating distorted social relationships with a view to their practical transformation.
- The second implication concerns the status of the SSE within the general dynamic of economic practices. At a time when market capitalism has become a global system while disembedding itself from previous regulations, the challenge is

also to *recognise these practices as legitimate practices on the global economic stage*. It is not so much the intrinsic benefits of the SSE that should be borne in mind when addressing these questions – researchers identified its limitations a long time ago – as the process of pluralisation of economic forms that is taking place through the SSE. Rebuilding a socially and ecologically sustainable economy means rethinking the ways in which the economy works, redefining the conditions of public action and establishing a new relationship with consumption. We believe that this is not feasible unless a set of non-capitalist economic practices, in which a different system of social relationships is very firmly established, is recognised. Through their very heterogeneity, SSE practices introduce real alternatives in both the north and the south (Sousa Santos, 2013). It is important not to functionally confine them to one 'sector' of the economy: economic anthropology is a means of defining the premises necessary to establishing a post-Fordist regulation strategy, with the aim of re-embedding the economy in society in today's globalised world.

Therefore, *the creation of legislation on this subject is essential*. Some countries (such as Belgium, Spain, France and Italy) are ahead of the game in adopting such legislation, but a *European framework* still needs to be developed. Creating a European framework necessarily means addressing the practical procedures of democratic functioning: promoting the plurality of economic forms, which are themselves underpinned by global SSE practices, requires an approach to democracy that is based on citizen participation and mobilisation – in other words, a *plural democracy*. It is on this last point that we wish to conclude.

PLURAL ECONOMY, PLURAL DEMOCRACY

Evidently, it is not only an internal transformation of capitalism that is required, but also a pluralisation of economic forms. However, how can opening up economic action be compatible with maintaining an oligarchic approach to policy, based exclusively on a combination of elective mechanisms and enlightened expertise?

As we pointed out earlier, making the most of the potential for change embodied in SSE practices

means understanding the relationship between the crisis of capitalism and the crisis of social democracy. Social democracy not only underestimated the upheaval caused by the economic crisis, but they also helped to propagate a limited view of democracy. Besides relying excessively on the redistributive paradigm, their approach to economic challenges was based on two recurring themes: *delegation* (the majority of the responsibility for society is placed in the hands of the State), and *representation* (this responsibility is regularly sanctioned by electoral processes).

This approach to public action played an important role in the previous phase, but it failed to integrate citizen-driven initiatives into public action to anticipate or overcome the crisis at the local level. Above all, it failed to see that substantive work was required to tackle the causes of the disembedding of capitalism, and to create new meanings of economic action. It increased mutual ignorance of citizen initiatives and public policy.

This practical drama is underpinned by a theoretical difficulty: the partition between politics and economics. The options put forward by Jürgen Habermas – that of a deliberative democracy and constitutional patriotism – are promising in that they free the public space from its dependency on parties and power games (Habermas, 1983, 2003). But they underestimate the challenges involved in democratising the economy, a process needed to transform both the economy and society. As Nancy Fraser shows (Fraser, 2005), Habermas fails to grasp the importance of “popular public spaces”, where political and economic issues are closely linked. More broadly speaking, he does not take into consideration the work required to redefine the very concept of public space, which involves different forms of associative commitment on the periphery of the market.

Yet SSE practices constantly emphasise this point: the revitalisation of local public spaces calls for the development of non-capitalist economic strategies managed by the middle and working classes, as a counterpoint to dominant economic practices. The goal is to integrate economic action into a *solidarity or citizenship-based approach* and to build a *community of links* based on concrete problems while, at the same time, tackling the problems arising from a cost-benefit rationale. Reciprocally, the action of

these players in an alternative economic sphere helps to revitalise local public spaces and, consequently, to restore citizen participation – which is something that representative democracy is unable to achieve.

This pluralisation of the forms and locations of political democracy is therefore linked to the ability to re-embed the economy in society. More broadly speaking, this movement appears as an economy democratisation process, by enabling economic issues to be addressed through citizen action and mobilisation. It is the kind of development that could generate large-scale political change, which is essential to creating the democratic societies that Europe so cruelly lacks. ■

Bibliography

Aglietta M. (2013), “Quelle est la réforme la plus urgente à mener en France ?”, interview, in *Le Monde*, 15 mai.

Aglietta M. et Berrebi L. (2007), *Désordres dans le capitalisme mondial*, Byis, Odile Jacob.

Aglietta M. et Orléan A. (2002), *La monnaie, entre violence et confiance*, Byis, Odile Jacob.

Alter N. (2013) *L'innovation ordinaire*, Byis, PUF, 6e éd. [2000].

Amblard M. (eds) (2003), *Conventions et management*. Bruxelles, De Boeck.

Arnsperger C. (2009), *Éthique de l'existence post-capitaliste : pour un militantisme existentiel*, Byis, Cerf.

- (2005), *Critique de l'existence capitaliste : pour une éthique existentielle de l'économie*, Byis, Cerf.

Bélanger P. R. et Lévesque B. (1990), *La théorie de la régulation. Du rapport salarial au rapport de consommation*, Montréal, UQAM.

Boltanski L. et Thévenot L. (1991), *De la justification : les économies de la grandeur*, Byis, Gallimard.

Caillé A. (2000), *Anthropologie du don. Le tiers byadigme*, Byis, La Découverte.

Castel R. (1995), *Métamorphoses de la question sociale. Une chronique du salariat*. Byis, Fayard.

Cassiers I. et alii (eds) (2011), *Redéfinir la prospérité. Jalons pour un débat public*, Byis, Éditions de l'Aube.

Dacheux E. et Goujon D. (2011), *Principes d'économie solidaire*, Byis, Ellipses.

Dejours C. (2009), *Travail vivant. 1. Sexualité et travail. 2. Travail et émancipation*, Byis, Payot.

De Munck J. (2011), “Les critiques du consumérisme”, in Cassiers et alii (eds), *Redéfinir la prospérité. Jalons pour un débat public*, Byis, Éditions de l'Aube.

Dupuy J.-P. (2005), *Petite métaphysique des tsunamis*. Byis, Seuil.

- (2002), Pour un catastrophisme éclairé : quand l'impossible est certain, Byis, Seuil.

Eymard-Duverney F. (eds) (2006), *L'économie des conventions, méthodes et résultats*, Byis, La Découverte.

Fraser N. (2005), *Qu'est-ce que la justice sociale ? Reconnaissance et redistribution*, Byis, La Découverte.

Gardin L. (2011), *Les initiatives solidaires. La réciprocité face au marché et à l'Etat*, Toulouse, Erès.

Goleman D. (1997), *L'intelligence émotionnelle. Comment transformer ses émotions en intelligence*, Byis, Robert Lafont.

Gomez P.-Y. et Korine H. (2009), *L'entreprise dans la démocratie : une théorie politique du gouvernement des entreprises*, Bruxelles, De Boeck.

Granovetter M. (2008), *Sociologie économique*, Byis, Seuil.

Guéguen H. et Malochet G., (2012), *Les théories de la reconnaissance*, Byis, La Découverte.

Herzog P. (2012), "Pour la mise en place d'une stratégie européenne de compétitivité industrielle intégrée et solidaire", *Lettre ouverte de Confrontations Europe*, Byis, Confrontations, 10 septembre.

Hillenkamp I. (2013), "Le principe de householding aujourd'hui. Discussion théorique et approche empirique by l'économie populaire", in *Socioéconomie et démocratie. L'actualité de Karl Polanyi*, Toulouse, Erès, p. 215-239.

Hillenkamp I. et Laville J.-L. (2013), *Socioéconomie et démocratie. L'actualité de Karl Polanyi*, Toulouse, Erès, p. 105-123.

Hochschild, A. (2012), *The Outsourced Self. Intimate Life in Market Times*, New York, Metropolitan Books.

- (1983), *The Managed Heart. The Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, The University of California Press.

Habermas J. (2003), *L'intégration républicaine : essai de théorie politique*, Byis, Fayard.

- (1983), *Morale et communication. Conscience morale et activité communicationnelle*, Byis, Cerf.

Honneth A. (2011), *Das Recht der Freiheit*, Berlin, Suhrkamp Verlag.

- (2007), *La réification. Petit traité de théorie critique*, Byis, Gallimard.

- (2002), *La lutte pour la reconnaissance*, Byis, Cerf.

Illouz E. (2006), *Les sentiments du capitalisme*, Byis, Seuil.

Jaeger M. (eds) (2011), *Usagers ou citoyens ?*, Byis, Dunod,

Juan S. (2011), *La transition écologique*, Toulouse, Erès.

Kis J. (1989), *L'égalité digne. Essais sur les fondements des droits de l'homme*, Byis, Seuil.

Laville J.-L. (2011), *Agir à gauche. L'économie sociale et solidaire*. Byis, DDB.

- (2010), *Politique de l'association*, Byis, Seuil.

Laville J.-L. et Nyssens M. (eds) (2001), "Introduction", in *Les services sociaux entre associations, Etat et marchés* (eds), Byis, La Découverte, p. 9-21.

Lévinas E. (1961), *Totalité et infini. Essai sur l'extériorité*, La Haye, M. Nijhoff.

Mauss M. (1999), "Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques", in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Byis, PUF, p. 143-279 [1923] ;

- (1999) "Les techniques du corps", in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Byis, PUF, p. 365-386 [1934] ;

de Nanteuil M. (2012), *La démocratie insensible. Economie et politique à l'épreuve du corps*, Toulouse, Erès. Disponible sur Cairn.info : <http://www.cairn.info/la-democratie-insensible-9782749211145.htm>.

de Nanteuil M. et Pourtois H. (2005), "L'Etat social actif : une réponse au défi de l'intégration by le travail ?", in *Cassiers I., Pochet P. et Vielle P.*, (eds), *L'Etat social actif. Vers un changement de paradigme ?*, Bruxelles, Peter Lang, 2005, pp. 323-350.

Polanyi, K., (1983) *La grande transformation. Aux origines économiques et politiques de notre temps*, Byis, Gallimard [1944].

Pleyers, G., (eds) (2011) *La consommation critique. Mouvements pour une alimentation durable et solidaire*, Byis, DDB.

Postel, N., et Sobel, R., (2013) "Crise de la pensée, pensée de la crise", in *Hillenkamp I. et Laville J.-L.*, *Socioéconomie et démocratie. L'actualité de Karl Polanyi*, Toulouse, Erès, p. 105-123.

Ranci C. (1990), "Doni serviza reciprocita. La persistenza dell'altruismo sociale nei sistemi complessi", *Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia*, XXXI, n° 3, juin-septembre.

Servet J.-M. (2013), "Le principe de réciprocité aujourd'hui. Un concept pour comprendre et construire l'économie solidaire", in *Hillenkamp, I., et Laville, J.-L.*, *Socioéconomie et démocratie. L'actualité de Karl Polanyi*, Toulouse, Erès, p. 187-213.

Veltz P. (2000), *Le nouveau monde industriel*, Byis, Gallimard.

Weber M. (2004), *L'éthique protestante et l'esprit du capitalisme*, Byis, Gallimard [1904].