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Toward a synthetic theory for P2P alter-globalization

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Abstract

This chapter presents peer to peer theory and practice in the context of alter-globalization and planetary perspective on change. It begins through a short elicitation on peer to peer theory. It then synthesizes a dialogic engagement between P2P theory and nine perspectives on planetary change: reform liberalism, post-development, relocalization, cosmopolitanism, neo-marxism, engaged ecumenism, meta-industrial, autonomism / horizontalism, and co-evolutionary perspectives. The chapter then presents a synopsis of a ground breaking effort in the application of P2P theory, the FLOK (Free Libre Open Knowledge) project in Ecuador, which provides a concrete example of P2P as an alter-globalization practice.

Key words: Peer to peer (P2P) theory, alternative globalization, reform liberalism, post-development, relocalization, cosmopolitanism, neo-marxism, engaged ecumenism, meta-industrial, autonomism, horizontalism, co-evolution, peer production, the commons.

1. Introduction

Our world has inherited the legacy of exploitation and power imbalances of many kinds. From the legacy of colonialism, the system of capitalist accumulation that underpins today's consumerist ideology, and the overbearing power of the state and its espoused monopoly on violence, to patriarchal forms of oppression and the exploitation of natural and living 'resources', multi-faceted forms of exploitation have today brought us to the brink of global crisis – and transformation. Consequently the 20th century has seen massive social upheavals and social mobilization across many fronts, some disparate and some coordinated, which have aimed to create an alternative to the world as we know it.

Most recently, over the last 40 years the forces of capitalism, practicing both primitive and advanced accumulation, have sharpened and quickened. Neo-liberalism's ascent and global informational architecture has unleashed a tsunami of privatization, de-regulation and trade / investment liberalization. The grievances of common people were also unleashed, from the streets of Cochabamba, to the streets of Seattle, a new counter-hegemonic struggle has emerged among common people to protest and organize against an emerging neo-liberal world order.

The turn of the millennium provided a fitting backdrop and context for the future century. 9/11 helped legitimate a neo-conservative turn in the USA, and strengthened the surveillance / security state globally – henceforth militarized neo-liberal globalization. Meanwhile, across the world in Porto Alegre, the World Social Forum (WSF) launched with the proclamation that 'Another World Is Possible', kicking off an epic process of dialogue to envision and articulate an alternative globalization and post-capitalist world. A WSF vision slowly emerged: democratic and participatory control over our ecological, economic, cultural and political commons (Ponniiah 2006). A vision in opposition to the power of Wall Street bankers, Russian Oligarchs, Middle Eastern Oil Barons and Chinese Princelings alike. Recent revolts, Los Indignados, the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and others, embody the spirit and commitment toward creating this Other Possible World.

It is concretely in this context of historical struggle and transformation where this article seeks to make a contribution. Peer to peer (P2P) theory and practice is an integrative body of thinking and projects that

draw from numerous intellectual traditions and theoretical positions. It starts from the analysis of an emergent ‘contributive’ economy, in which the new technological affordances create the possibility of open and transparent production systems, and that thereby creating a new economic logic that is not based on labor creating capital, but on contributors creating commons. This shared knowledge, software and design resources created the double possibility of either an economy based on sustainable production and solidarity-based economic entities, or of the capture of such commons by private capital. However, the P2P theory is focused on extirpating and making explicit the emancipatory potential of this techno-social change, and to observe the emergence of new political, social and economic forms. It changes the focus from seeing labor as the key subject of change, towards looking at the associated peer producers, i.e., the newly precarious cognitive and affective working class engaged in the creation of common goods, as a key driver of change. From this perspective, other and previous social movements can be analyzed to the degree in which they recognize the current transformations, or not.

This chapter is organized through theoretical and practical engagements. In section two, the theoretical dimensions of P2P theory’s intersection with globalization discourses is described. A number of counter-hegemonic discourses are then presented, and connections, critiques and synergies are identified. In section three, a case study which exemplifies P2P alter-globalization, the FLOK (Free Libre Open Knowledge) project in Ecuador, is presented. The chapter concludes with some reflections and potential next steps in both theorizing and practicing P2P alter-globalism.

2. Critical globalization studies and P2P correspondences

Critical Globalization Studies (CGS) is an approach to the study of globalization which is a multidisciplinary, multi-perspective convergence of scholarship on ‘globalization for the common good’ (Applebaum, 2005; Mittelman, 2004, p. 40; Robinson, 2005). CGS is not only concerned with the empirical dimensions of globalization, but also the standpoints, epistemological assumptions and frames used to establish cultural hegemony. These include an awareness of the political and material conditions that correlate with globalization research; the historical origins / social interests that influence globalization research (including the reliance on Western perspectives in constituting a perspective on globalization); gender dynamics on constructing our understanding of globalization; examinations of the historical (and ahistorical) constructions of globalization; local / regional discourses of globalization; the crossovers between different academic branches of globalization research; and counter hegemonic, emancipatory visions for a transformational globalization.

This section is intended to be an in depth exploration in the tradition of CGS, which engages multiple perspectives to develop, build and refine an integrative P2P theory of global political economic transformation. The engagement originated from a dialogue between Michel Bauwens and Jose Ramos in 2012-2013, on the relationship between P2P thinking and alter-globalization discourses, on the P2P

Foundation wiki (<http://P2Pfoundation.net/>). Our thinking has subsequently been refined through further dialogue, editing and most importantly the FLOK project led by Michel Bauwens himself.

Our engagement with critical and alter globalization literature and thinking has been both broad and in-depth. This chapter did not have the space to hold the nuance and detail of the engagement. It does provide a summary, however, that we hope is useful in establishing the integrative and synthetic dimensions of P2P theory and practice within a wider body of scholarship. We can preview this engagement by saying that a P2P perspective:

- Disagrees with the Reform Liberalist approach of a reformed capitalism, e.g. promoting ‘green’ capitalism and accepting ‘netarchical’ capitalism, which we feel will ultimately lead to a deeper crisis.
- Sees a synergy with the Post Development discourse through building shared innovation communities and commons, selective de-globalization and the combination of neotraditional and P2P/transmodern approaches.
- Agrees with much of the Relocalization discourse on the need to re-localize much of our production and consumption, but sees a danger in over-romanticizing the local, or in ignoring the role of global solidarity systems and knowledge commons. Smart localization means ‘Cosmo-localization’.
- Agrees with the Cosmopolitan discourse’s emphasis on the need to create post-national structures to solve global problems, but would add the phenomenon of ‘Phyles’ (explained later) and would de-emphasize CSOs and NGO and re-emphasize the critical role of global collaboration communities.
- Would reframe the neo-Marxist discourse’s commitments to global class formation, into the need for a global coalition of the commons, the forces of social justice (workers and labour movements), the forces for the defense of the biosphere (green and eco-movements) and the forces for a liberation of culture and social innovation (free culture movement), as the constituent blocks of a new hegemony.
- Agrees with the Engaged Ecumenist view on the need for spiritual awakening, but would argue that secular forms of spirituality which emphasize the unity of humankind, nature and cosmos, are as important as the non-secular. A peer to peer spiritual practice is based on a common exploration of the spiritual inheritance of humankind, independent of, but not opposed to, denominational religious affiliations.
- Agrees with the Meta-Industrial and Gender perspective that it is vital to take into account all peoples that have historically been excluded, with the female gender as paradigmatic example. A danger exists, however, for a reformed neoliberalism to embrace gender and sexual minorities and replace them with other inequalities and displacements. Therefore a ‘conscious’ P2P approach is needed, aware of both structural externalities and the internal subjective and cultural characteristics which continue to drive inequality.

- Accepts from Autonomism and Horizontalism the logic of the network form, but argues a global movement requires coherence and needs to draw on the principle of 'diagonality'. A purely horizontalist orientation, which disowns leadership, embodied responsibility, as well as sequential and programmatic social development, cannot wage an effective struggle in the face of hostile and ruthless state and market forces.
- Sees itself as eminently compatible with Co-evolutionary viewpoint: in particular because the advent of the P2P projects and communities are inherently global in their cooperative dynamics, and coincides with other scale shifts toward a planetary mode of thinking and action.

2.1 Reform liberalism

Reform liberalism takes issue with centrist neo-liberalism and the institutions that convey these ideas, arguing that, overall, global economic integration does not automatically lead to prosperity (Krugman, 1996; Sachs, 2005; Soros, 1998 ; Stiglitz, 2002). It argues for a general need to reform global institutions like the IMF and World Bank (WB) to make them more accountable and transparent, and to create mechanism that can moderate the excesses of the global system (Mittelman, 2004b, p. 51). It is strongly associated with neo-Keynesian economic policy and the concept of the Third Way, popularised by Giddens (2003). The following can be summarized:

- Its historical view is that Keynesianism got it right, but then neo-liberalism skewed global institutions like WB and IMF.
- It sees a healthy (regulated) global market as the foundation for global society, through processes of comparative advantage, economic interdependence, enterprise and technological innovation.
- Its mode of agency is through state-based policy intervention, introducing social redistribution, human welfare systems and social entrepreneurship.
- The image of the future is for a capitalist globalization with strong 'steering' and regulation to create innovation and prosperity.

Reform liberalism recognizes the reality of globalization, but absolutizes it. P2P distinguishes between the material aspect of globalization, which is subject to a severe resource and environmental crisis; and the immaterial, cultural, aspects of globalization, and especially the possibility of global cooperation, as a value to be maintained - 'smart material relocation'.

A P2P perspective looks at interlocking cycles: Apart from the long wave Kondratieff cycle, which ended in a systemic shock in 2008, it recognizes a deeper cycle of civilisational decay due to the unsustainability of the present system. Transformation has to go beyond the mere reorganization necessary for a new Kondratieff cycle, but needs to preserve and strengthen enough post-capitalist elements so that the

transformation can go deeper. It is adaptive, and takes a meliorist approach, for an improved and reformed capitalism, that continues to make progress on social justice.

But it is not possible to have an infinite growth system, based on compound interest and other factors, within a limited natural environment. Thus it is not possible in the long run to have a reformed capitalism. Short term a reformed capitalism that integrates ‘green’ and ‘P2P’ aspects, is only temporary and leads to a crisis at a later time. Proto-capitalist formations strengthened the feudal system in crisis; peer production mechanisms can strengthen a reformed capitalism but, at the same time, build the seeds of its ulterior transformation. To achieve this, we need an attitude that is not centered on the enemy, i.e., the abolishing of capitalism, but rather a constant engagement with the separate interests of the peer producers: we take what we can within capitalism, strengthening alternative social logics, and we strive for the optimally possible social contract under post-capitalism. The co-existence of P2P with capitalism is not a zero sum game, i.e., an advantage of capitalism does not necessarily mean a negative for peer production.

Capitalism should also be distinguished from generic market mechanisms. P2P proposes a pluralist economy, centered around the commons, under supportive collective conditions of a Partner State, but also with a vibrant private sector, a ‘reformed market’ as it were. Thus the era of quantitative growth is over, but can be replaced by qualitative growth, under the aegis of a steady state economy and degrowth, compensated by well-being policies.

2.2 Post or alternative development

The post development discourse subverts the historical view that the West has progressed through stages into the most advanced form of civilisation. For much of the world (India, China, Indonesia, etc), colonialism ended relatively recently and the collective memory of the colonial experience is that of being ‘de-developed’ and economically exploited by the West (Marks, 2002; Sardar, 1993; Zinn, 2003). Historians like Marks turn this ‘Rise of the West’ conception of history on its head. For him the so-called ‘rise of the West’ is better understood as conquest, theft and genocide on a grand scale, which allowed the West to ‘de-develop’ the non-West, gaining key advantages in trade, technology, and transport (Marks, 2002).

After colonialism, ex-colonial countries or de facto spheres of influence (such as Latin America under the ‘US backyard’ policy) attempted to develop economic autonomy from their ex-colonial masters, through dependency economics which advanced import substitution as a pathway toward economic development. Projects for Southern development emerged, such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which articulated a New International Economic Order (NIEO), as well as the birth of the non-aligned movement (NAM). In this context, led by the US, the West offered ‘development’ assistance to the global South. However, this was often the economic carrot, and proxy

war or assassination the political stick, that formed parts of a strategy of containment (of socialism) and the extension of influence (of liberalism and capitalism) (McChesney, 2004). The key aspects of the ‘alternative’ or ‘post’ develop discourse can be summarized as:

- A rejection of expert / outsider intervention and embrace of endogenous national / community building.
- A rejection of a ‘social-evolutionist’ model of history, and appreciation of imperialisms link to development or de-development.
- Critical structures are therefore aspects of state power within a geo-political arena, and a view that development is far more plural than economic growth.
- The future vision is for plural development paths depending on a nations or communities situation.

From a P2P perspective, countries of the South could employ a P2P model of shared innovation communities and commons, coupled with new forms of industrial and agricultural tools and technologies which enables a new type of selective de-globalization and dynamic localization, using P2P as a strategy for selectively nurturing innovation commons that suits their own priorities.

Between pre-capitalist social models and post-material priorities, a dialogue between both forms (e.g. ‘neotraditional’ economics) means that contemporary humanity critically engages with the conceptions of societies following ‘immaterial priorities’ rather than material priorities. This combination of neotraditional and P2P/transmodern approaches is an important political proposition. It will re-ignite local development and bring in global knowledge that can stimulate internal innovation. Second, open approaches, unlike intellectual property importation, create profound local knowledge. Thirdly, combining those strategies with distributed manufacturing is an important part of restoring local sovereignty and resilience. The successful regions and countries will be those who can create and attract the best contributors to the global innovation commons, and link them to local physical production capabilities. At the same time, the existence of the global innovation commons, and the intricate embeddedness of every local activity in such a global cooperative web, also makes sure that the localization is not regressive, but inscribed in the further evolution of humanity as a global cooperative organism.

2.3 Re-localization

Localization or re-localization has become a powerful current of thought in the debate around alternatives to economic globalization. Recent proponents of localization include the International Forum on globalization (IFG) (Cavanagh, 2003; Mander, 1996, 2005), the New Economics Foundation (NEF) (Boyle, 2003) which came out of the TOES summits (Schroyer, 1997). Hines gives the most elaborated

argument for localization (Hines, 2002). The intellectual movement goes back to the 1950's, also drawing upon ancient traditions for inspiration. "The Breakdown of Nations" is given as the first instance of such theory formation - an attack on the gigantism he experienced in the wake of World War II (Simms, 2003, p. 4). Schumacher is also cited as an important influence for *Small is Beautiful* (Simms, 2003, p. 3). The Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* questioned assumptions regarding the sustainability of economic growth in a world system. Daly linked key localization concepts (i.e. subsidiarity) with a post growth, steady-state vision of a global economy (Daly, 1977; Daly, 1994). Illich is also credited as a contributor for *Energy and Equity* (Simms, 2003, pp. 5-6). Sale is significant as one of the pioneers of bio-regionalism (Sale, 1996). Goldsmith has been an important contributor to the field, in particular through his critiques of industrialisation and calls for de-industrialisation (Goldsmith, 1988). Shiva has linked localization with cultural and ecological diversity (Shiva, 2000a, 2000b). While much diversity exists, the following points summarize the perspective:

- Historically relocalization views industrialisation as a critical phase, emerging from the exploitation of cheap embodied energy (fossil fuels) at ever increasing scales outstripping our environment's carrying capacity. It is both a cause of and produced by corporate globalization.
- This industrial expansion has real limits, such as finite resources, peak oil, to ecological resilience (sinks), the effects of climate change. Critical factors are ecology and geography (bio-regions) and energy.
- The vision or image for the future includes a return to local scale, stronger communities, local economies, bio-regional governance, and a re-valuation of local knowledges and culture.
- The critical agents of change are social movements contesting corporate globalization and localised communities rejecting global production, building local culture, building local economies and strengthening ecological sensitivity.

The P2P perspective broadly agrees with the historical necessity for re-localization, as a necessary corrective to the pathologies of capitalist globalization. However, a danger in this perspective is in over-romanticising of the local, a reliance of dwarfish forms which cannot out-cooperate capitalist forms and ignoring the global conditions which are necessary for relocalization to occur.

The recognition of the global commons is a very important aspect of contemporary relocalization. This is part of the necessity to combine both 'smart' localization and smart alternative globalizations. One of the latter is the generalisation of global and shared innovation commons and the end of artificial scarcities that impede global sharing in science and culture, but also joint global governance to deal with global problems that cannot be solved on any pure local level. Faced with a deterritorialized ruling class that has upended national sovereignties, there needs to be a counterforce. Mere localization is never enough, and would be counterproductive as well as too weak to effect change, it's the reconfiguration of the local and global which is the key.

Last but not least is the necessity of global mutualist 'phyles', i.e. global material production cooperative entities that are the condition for localized open and distributed manufacturing. Phyles are the P2P answer to global corporations and are a necessary coordinating mechanisms between local actors who need global cooperation. They are mission-oriented, community supportive entities responsible for the social reproduction of commons that cannot be conceived as purely local. Peer to peer dynamics can and must operate on both local and global levels, and smart re-localization must take that into account.

2.4 Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism describes 'the view that all human beings have equal moral standing within a single world community' (Hayden, 2004, p. 70). Hayden writes that 'legal cosmopolitanism contends that a global political order ought to be constructed grounded on the equal legal rights and duties of all individuals' (Hayden, 2004, p. 70). This view does not put the individual at the centre of global politics (in an exclusively self-interested way) but rather re-articulates the individual as part of a global polity with new rights and obligations.

Descriptive accounts focus on the way planetary governance is being constructed as 'cosmocracy' (Keane, 2005) 'civil society going global' (Kaldor, 2003) or as 'sub-political' agency (Beck, 1999). Cosmocracy is described as an emerging empirical phenomenon, with the development of planetary governance (which is at once ad hoc and full of 'clumsy institutions' (Keane, 2005, pp. 34-51). The normative thrust of the cosmopolitan vision articulates the creation of a 'transnational, common structure of political action', 'a global and divided authority system – a system of diverse and overlapping power centres shaped and delimited by democratic law' (Held, 1995, p. 234), and 'proposes the end of sovereign statehood and national citizenship as conventionally understood and their re-articulation within a framework of cosmopolitan democratic law' (McGrew, 2000, p. 414). In summary the key tenets within cosmopolitanism are:

- Historically we have seen the birth, rise and spread of the nation state (from the Treaty of Westphalia onward) and associated enfranchisement of people into democratic citizenship.
- Yet we face a crisis of the state and 'communities of fate' transcend the limitations of nation state to create global governance, universal enfranchisement and global citizenship.
- Social change comes from global civil society or global citizen movements – 'globalization from below' and 'sub-politics'.
- Key structures to transform the inter-state system and associational economic, political and cultural domains.

From a P2P perspective we need post-national structures to solve the global problems facing us, such as global warming; and in terms of citizens' rights, for example regarding the rights of settlement and travel,

urgent post- or transnational improvements are needed. the current form of globalization is both negative in environmental terms, socially unjust, and politically regressive because it disempowers local and national participation. and there is distrust towards global governmental structures, especially in the context of democratic deficits. Thus we need global treaties to establish rights that sovereign states will agree to. This becomes a matter of social struggle. To establish socially-sovereign social charters that have a moral force against the failed responsibility-taking of the nation-states system and weak international institutions.

A more pragmatic solution is the creation of Phyles, i.e. networked organizations that can take care of their members or issues on a global basis. Given the deficiencies on a national scale, and the failure of global governance mechanisms that can be instituted by national and international institutions, peer-based initiatives are paramount. An example of a small contemporary, but trend-setting peer phyle is lasindias.net. The P2P Foundation cooperative also intends to be organized as a phyle, showing global solidarity for its members.

A P2P perspective insists that civil society does not only consist of formal NGO's and CSO structures, but of the very important emergence of global collaboration communities, such as those involved in global 'informal' activism, peer production, and shared innovation commons. Peer producers, creating globally oriented commons that they love and want to defend, are the critical agents of social change. Peer production is nothing else than the concrete condition of freely cooperating cognitive workers, but also an important aspect of every productive citizen. Once such citizens are networked and creating common value, a process that is most often inherently global, then you have the slow creation of an agent that wants to create global rules and protections.

2.5 Neo-Marxism

World Systems Theory, Global Systems Theory, and associated neo-Gramscian visions of a global (counter hegemonic) civil society explore and articulate alternatives to status quo globalization. World Systems Theory (WST) pioneered the conceptual link between capitalism (and its alternatives) and world-historical dimensions of social analysis. As Sklair argues, WST prefigured globalization discourses, influencing early critical conceptions of globalization (Sklair, 2002, pp. 40-41). From the 1960s on, writers such as Wallerstein, Chase-Dunn and others developed WST into a large body of scholarly work (Chase-Dunn, 1999; Chase-Dunn, 2005; Wallerstein, 1983). By contrast, Global Systems Theory (GST) is much newer, emerging in the mid 1990s through the work of scholars such as Robinson and Sklair (Robinson, 2004; Sklair, 2002). As with the other discourses, many varieties of analysis exist. However, the following is a general summary:

- The historical view is that capitalism, which had been tamed by the nation state after the new deal, went global after the 1970's, with the advent of Reagan and Thatcher's rise to power, in conjunction with developments in information technology.
- The critical elements in contemporary globalization include the economic through Trans-national Corporations and their owners, politically through a transnational capitalist class, and culturally through the hegemony and ideology of consumerism.
- The image of the future sees an emerging crisis of capitalism (of both ecological and social dimensions) that has the potential to lead to transformation - the preferred vision being a socialist globalization based on human rights and responsibilities.
- The agents of social change are organic intellectuals who can map and mobilize an emerging global class formation.

From a P2P perspective and agreeing with the GST perspective, global markets are a 'real' autonomous force, not just using the nation-state. The current post-2008 meltdown and its reaction clearly indicates that the nation-state is captured and victimized by global forces which have instrumentalized even the European Union.

Yet P2P forces cannot simply abandon the nation-state to their enemies, and neither can they afford, in the long run, not to challenge the global corporate media and financial class and its dynamics. Similar to neo-Marxist commitments toward global class formation, we need a global coalition of the commons, which combines the forces of social justice (workers and labour movements), the forces for the defense of the biosphere (green and eco-movements) and the forces for a liberation of culture and social innovation (free culture movement), as the constituent blocks of a new hegemony.

We need to use the remaining essentiality of the state form. Even in its weakened form, it must be transformed and be made to serve peer producers, requiring a profound transformation of the present forms of the state. While the neoliberal corporate welfare state is the enemy, the social welfare state is also insufficient for the new social demands and must become a Partner State. Equally important will be to transcend such national limits and to create global networks and alliances that can tackle the global financial powers and their institutions, and replace them with new internetworked institutions.

2.6 Engaged Ecumenism

Religions form an important part of the globalization process (Beckford, 2000; Lubeck, 2000) and religious orientations have been an important part of visions for an alternative globalization. A survey of alter-globalization activists at social forums showed the majority belonged to some religious tradition, which 'seem[s] to point to the important role religion plays among the social groups fighting against neo-

liberal globalization...’ (Santos, 2006, p. 90). A spiritual or religious ‘ecumenism’ movements for another globalization.

Gandhi is the seminal figure in this process, with direct and lasting influence on spiritual social activism globally. Notable campaigns influenced by Gandhi include: Martin Luther King’s leadership during the US civil rights movement, the Dalai Lama’s struggle against the Chinese occupation of Tibet, Thich Naht Hanh’s peace work during and after the Vietnam war and Cesar Chavez’s farm worker justice campaigns in California (Ingram, 2003). In this broader context Gandhi represents the marriage of political action and spirituality, the offspring of which is non-violent ‘ahimsa’ confrontation and (non) participation (Schell, 2003, p. 117). As a summary the following points are offered:

- The historical dimension of engaged ecumenism is founded on the development of wisdom traditions / religions, the stories, narratives and lessons of great sages and teachers, and their transmission into a world of ignorance and suffering.
- To address ignorance and suffering, Gandhi’s conception of satyagraha (truth force), and ahimsa (compassion / non-violence), expresses the core logic of engaged ecumenist agency. ‘Satyagraha’ (moral spiritual truth in practice) was the force that moved people to accept change. This was not the ideal truth of one’s campaign or convictions (which others must accept) but the truth revealed through a person’s practice of living according to their conscience, which then moves other people’s conscience to change. Moral action and non-violent civil disobedience actualizes and instantiates satyagraha.
- These traditions provide metaphors for the brotherhood and sisterhood of all humankind, and the spiritual unity of humanity with the ecos and cosmos. The foundational reality is unity and therefore most forms of exploitation are contradictions in human behaviour.
- And therefore the image of the future is toward collective spiritual transcendence, a world free of exploitation, with with love and care through the vehicle of moral community.

From a P2P perspective it is important to include secular and post-secular spiritualities, i.e. the recognition that secular views are also spiritual views and can and do exhibit the same or similar moral qualities, even if there is no explicit recognition of transcendental realities. It is perfectly possible to have a sense of humankind's and nature's unity, directly from a place of perceived immanence.

Secondly is the recognition of the efficacy and interest of psycho-spiritual technologies that assist in recognizing such unity in diversity, technologies that are of course embedded, but also relatively autonomous from the tradition in which they were embedded. This opens the way for a peer to peer spiritual practice that is based on a common exploration of the spiritual inheritance of humankind, independent of, but not opposed to, denominational religious affiliations.

Social change is an integrative process in which the outer and the inner cannot be properly distinguished, and true emancipation requires inner spiritual transformation, while structural changes in unequal societies can be an enormous catalyst for massive 'personal' change towards a civilisation of love and care. What peer to peer brings to the table is the stress on the horizontal aspects of our relations to each other and how peer to peer dynamics are the most liberatory of all human relationships. As we move to true P2P dynamics in the production of common value, peer governance and peer property, we will also develop new spiritual forms, beyond those that were developed in gift-economical, hierarchical or market-based societies. Spiritual and engaged ecumenism is part of that evolution, but not the whole of it.

2.7 En-gendered Globalization and the Meta-industrial Class

Milojevic states that hegemony and ideological control through 'the imposition of a one-dimensional 'global' futures vision'' is a fundamental problem associated with masculinist globalization (Milojevic, 2000). Hawthorne argues as well that economic globalization is deeply gendered, and that 'the dominant global forces at work are capitalist, masculine, white, middle-class, heterosexual, urban, and highly mobile'... which propagates a false universalism and homogeneity based on masculine, Western, scientific and neo-liberal ways of knowing (Hawthorne, 2002, pp. 32-33).

Salleh introduces a new concept of class that allows for a sharper analysis of the neo-liberal displacement of value (surplus) and costs (externalisation), which she calls the 'meta-industrial class'. She argues that this class not only suffers from industrial capitalism's displacement (externalisation) of costs, but this class is also 'regenerative' in that it underpins industrial capitalism's capacity to survive: 'Meta-industrials include householders, peasants, indigenes and the unique rationality of their labour is a capacity for provisioning 'ecosufficiency' – without leaving behind ecological and embodied debt' (Salleh, 2009, p. 6).

She argues, 'by the logic of men's 'exchange value', he who bombs a forest with dioxin is considered to generate worth and is highly paid accordingly, whereas the woman who builds her hut of hand-cut wattle and daub, then births a new life within, creates only 'use value', is not considered to be working or 'adding value' and remains unpaid' (Salleh, 2009, p. 12). Likewise, Waring argues that the systems used to measure 'growth', 'development', and 'progress' have excluded the majority of the work that women do (Waring, 2009).

The eco-sufficiency of the meta-industrial class can be contrasted with the sustainability crisis that industrial capitalism faces. Salleh notes that the energy consumption of industrial cities has 'created a 'metabolic rift' ...with environmental degradation the result', and as such the very survival of capitalism is based on appropriating the meta-industrial class's sustainability to redress its own inherent unsustainability: 'the entire machinery of global capital rests on the material transactions of this

reproductive labour force' (Salleh, 2009, p. 7). This includes the unacknowledged work of women of the global South. The above epistemic inversion in the attribution of sustainability defines meta-industrial knowledge and practice (and low impact sufficiency livelihoods) as 'prefigurative', giving it critical 'political leverage' in the global policy debates (Salleh, 2009, p. 7).

From a P2P perspective the present system has historically relied on inequalities, and that the gender inequality has been a primary factor of enclosure and primitive accumulation of capitalism. It is vital to take into account all peoples that have historically been excluded, with the female gender as paradigmatic example. On the other hand, a reformed neoliberalism may very well embrace gender and sexual minorities and replace them with other inequalities and displacements. In this context, gender inequality is a marker for all inequalities in the system.

A purely naturalized peer to peer conception would fail to address this core issue of inequality. For example, while open source and free software production have no overt discrimination, we can see that its meritocratic logic leads to particular forms of (male) dominance, because it does not challenge inequalities that are external to itself, as well as cultural habits of a traditional male-dominated field which may drive out differently gendered minorities. We therefore need a 'conscious' P2P approach, which is aware of both its structural externalities and the internal subjective and cultural characteristics which continue to drive inequality. This approach would find its expression in positive use of social design and 'protocolary power', i.e. institutional design that is especially geared to ensure pluralism and diversity, and can work on specific issues such as the lack of gender equality both within its own community, and outside of it.¹

2.8 Autonomism and Horizontalism

Anti-globalization protests drew inspiration and knowledge from the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico. The Zapatistas launched their armed struggle on January 1st 1994, the first day of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as a statement against racist treatment by the Mexican state, and against the threat posed by corporate globalization to their livelihoods. Their strategic 'global framing' through new media approaches communicated a prismaticism that prefigured the WSF(P) – theirs was a local struggle and a planetary one, a 500 year struggle against colonialism and racism as well as a contemporary one. Their uprising catalysed international solidarity, which culminated in 1996 in the First

¹ A good example of this is the institutional structure of OccupyWallStreet's General Assembly, which along with its Working and Operating Groups, also has institute 'Caucuses', which are specific circles for minorities and oppressed 'majorities', who have certain privileges to block measures that would have discriminatory effects. These types of solutions need to be generalized within commons-oriented peer production.

Intercontinental Meeting for Humanity and Against Neo-liberalism (Steger, 2009, p. 102). Their savvy use of (digital) media, poetic culture jamming, and extensive networking prefigured the ICT intensive strategies used by the anti-globalization movement (and AGM) (Castells, 1996). They were dubbed by the New York Times as the first ‘postmodern revolutionary movement’ (Gautney, 2010, p. 40). Zapatismo as a cultural formation was also foundational, leading to the formulation of key organizational ‘hallmarks’ in the nascent AGM which defined ‘the network as one without formal membership or leadership, and emphasized a shared commitment to decentralized, autonomous (independent) modes of organization and opposition to capitalism’ (Gautney, 2010, p. 40). Their ideas for a post neo-liberal world that contained organizational diversity and pluralism, a horizontalist utopianism, clearly prefigured the utopianism of the WSF(P) (Smith, 2008b, p. 20). The Zapatista inspired Peoples Global Action (PGA), a network which emerged from the 1996 encuentro in Chiapas, became an important cornerstone of the new network processes in the anti-globalization movement (Gautney, 2010, p. 40). The WSF(P) contained organizationally what the AGM expresses culturally: a movement toward a diversity of struggles in relationship, rather than a unitary movement with a set agenda.

The network form that makes a global struggle / project viable requires a cultural counterpart, and this came to be seen as a culture / ideology of "horizontalism". From this vantage point, then, autonomism is not only a distinct ideological movement, it is actually a strong 'meme' deeply woven into the very fabric of the global movement / project. Hence Occupy movement assemblies resemble Zapatista ‘encuentros’.. Adbusters is extensively autonomistic in orientation and Anonymous' symbolism and practices also resemble this orientation. Autonomism and horizontalism involve the rejection of hierarchy, the emphasis on carving space outside of the dominant political economy, instantiating ideals through micro life-worlds, the mesh networked nature of the collaboration and deliberate employment of swarm tactics in protests and occupations, and the deliberative nature of decision making in *encuentro* style gatherings.

The movement not only resists neoliberal capitalism, but incorporation into an ideology and movement dedicated to overcoming neoliberal capitalism. Symbolic of this double-negation, this Janus face of the movement, was the issuing by Marcos in 2003 of a declaration entitled ‘I Shit on all the Revolutionary Vanguard of this Planet.’ (Tormey, 2005, p. 2)

From a P2P perspective the specific weaknesses in autonomism and horizontalism are:

- Consensus decision making may lead to lowest-common denominator unity and therefore suppress 'mainstream' alternative approaches; for example in Occupy WS consensus unity is partly responsible for its relative defeat and for the resulting fragmentation, of all the submovements that wanted to go further than the Occupy agenda.
- The Assembly format seems to require too heavy a continuous investments in human effort, and seems to decay after a few months, devolving in the hands of the more radical minorities.

- The new movements seem to have an ability to mobilize rapidly and often massively, but their staying power seems questionable; especially in terms of human solidarity when faced with material hardship.

Thus P2P, the commons, and 'horizontalism', might all be core aspect of the new modalities, however, any principle that is considered as an absolute, becomes in itself problematic. Our approach should be integrative, and still take into account long-term movement building, the construction of more lasting institutions that are able to provide more long-term support. A global movement requires coherence and organization, drawing from peer to peer movement principles of 'diagonality'. A purely horizontalist orientation, which disowns leadership, embodied responsibility, as well as sequential and programmatic social development, cannot wage an effective struggle to create another world in the face of hostile and ruthless state and market forces. Autonomism thus needs to be mixed and fused with other alter-global / world-changing modalities and energies.

2.9 Co-Evolution

A discourse on 'co-evolution' can be discerned through literature on world futures (which preceded alternative globalization research by decades (Jungk, 1969)), and futures studies, with associated aspects of the evolutionary sciences. This emerging co-evolutionary vision incorporates somewhat eclectic and wide-ranging influences. The evolutionary discourse is valuable because it dramatically transforms of the ontological and temporal frames which are generally used to make sense of human life (and as contrasted with other discourses in this study). Unlike other discourses, it situates humanity outside of history, as part of millions / billions of years of biological evolution, and thousands / millions of years of cultural evolution.

In conceptualising the dynamics of change, Laszlo and Raskin use concepts like 'punctuated equilibrium' to describe movements from dynamic equilibrium states, turbulence and bifurcation points to new system states (Laszlo, 2001, p. 172; Raskin, 2002). Their frameworks correspond with systems theories, complex adaptive systems, and complexity research, where the evolutionary branching model is used (Gunderson, 2002). Agency in this respect can be seen as humanity's wise intervention and skilful action when faced with planetary (tipping) points of turbulence, 'bifurcation points', and critical thresholds (Raskin, 2006). Such authors argue for requisite consciousness toward planetary sensitivity in understanding potential tipping points in the planetary system we live in as a species, for example Spratt and Sutton's discussion on potential climate change induced tipping points (Spratt, 2008). In this context, agency implies co-evolution (Hubbard, 1983), expressed as wise or unwise co-evolution within the ecological contexts of the species. The future is expressed as a vision of human co-evolution in and with an evolving Earth (transcending anthropocentrism) and the development of planetary consciousness.

From a P2P perspective a co-evolutionary approach should neither deny materiality, nor deny human agency, but sees them in a mutual feedback loop. It puts human freedom in a realistic context, by bringing deterministic factors into awareness. These approaches also generally recognize emergence, i.e. that the new complexified layers of reality, bring with them new capabilities. It is possible therefore to map peer to peer in the co-evolutionary understandings, not in a monological and deterministic way, but as a common factor which is changing our different social systems, both (inter)objective and (inter)subjective, in feedback loops that strengthen each other. This creates new 'potential' capabilities and affordances, but which are subject both to material determinisms, and social conflict. Hence the need to work with potential scenarios, in which the P2P dynamics can take different form. P2P is eminently compatible with the co-evolutionary viewpoint.

P2P dynamics corresponds to a revolution in consciousness, because it is a 'full value' revolution, as important as that of the christians vis a vis the values of the Roman Empire, or liberalism and socialism vs. the feudal value system. Through its linkage with the global network, many P2P communities are 'born global'. By their very nature, the digital commons operate on a global scale, despite limits of language. If one participates in a knowledge commons (which is not restricted to the immaterial realm since knowledge commons are linked to 'physical' practices such as 'making things', or an engagement in eco-agriculture or what have you), one is inherently working on a global scale. While the link between human activity and consciousness is of course not direct, one cannot avoid that this has, in time, effects on human consciousness, and in the creation of global-local subjectivities. Peer production is also a synergistic process, i.e. it is not limited on the theoretical win-win dynamics of capitalism, and its structural denial of externalities, but it is a 'four-win' process, since it is a conscious cooperation around a commons social object (the third win), which benefits human society in general (the fourth win). Peer production integrates the common good in the very design of the human cooperation. It shifts the core of value creation to the commons, it shifts many practices from owning to sharing, etc ... What this does is set the stage for a new 'capacity', an 'affordance' which facilitates a shift to normalizing more global forms of human awareness.

The key question is therefore, how do we shift from this naturalized practice which 'predisposes' towards a planetary, co-evolutionary point of view with care for the whole, to its actualisation and manifestation as a dominant form of human consciousness. This in my view is a social and political project, i.e., the active work of co-evolutionary minorities, individuals and groups, to enable this shift to take place, comforted in the view that greater masses of human beings are becoming more receptive for this phase transition. An integrative strategy that combines microscale prefigurative practices (which include ownership and governance), the building of social and political movements, and an active orientation towards changing human consciousness, have to be developed to facilitate and quicken such transformations.

3. The FLOK Case Study

At the end of 2013, three governmental institutions of Ecuador asked a team of international and national researchers to draw up a participatory process in order to craft a transition strategy for a society based on “free/libre and open knowledge” (FLOK). The project was primarily rooted in a particular local context: Ecuador is still essentially in a dependent situation vis-a-vis the western-dominated global economy, which means that it needs to export raw material at low added value, and import consumer goods at high added value. Moreover, a large part of this extraction is based on non-renewable finite resources such as oil. It is a scenario for permanent dependency that the progressive government wanted to change. Following the lead of Rene Ramirez, who is National Secretary of the National Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (SENESCYT), the project aimed to envisage an economy that would no longer be dependent on limited material resources, but on infinite immaterial resources.

The proposals of the research team consisted of a generic Commons Transition Plan (CTP), and 18 legislative proposals including a dozen pilot projects, which were validated in the Buen Conocer Summit at the end of May 2014. The synthetic proposals, based on a participatory process which involved both local and foreign input, were then presented by the research team at the end of June 2014, and are still being refined for scientific publication. The proposals are now being processed in the Ecuadorian administration, and subject to local politics and balance of forces. Some projects, such as an open agricultural machining project in the Sigchos district, are pushed forward by committed local leaders and populations. Several aspects of the Ecuadorian process were highly innovative, such as the intense participatory process, and the openness to both local and foreign input, which is quite unusual.

However, the FLOK project and the CTP also significantly transcend the local context and have a global significance. The first important aspect of the process is of course its very existence. This is the first time that a transition plan to a commons-based society and economy was crafted. There are “new economy”, climate change centric, green, and other transition plans, but none of them focuses on re-organizing society and the economy with the commons as the core value creation and distribution system. We could argue that while previous plans start from real problems and wished for and necessary steps, the Ecuadorian plan is the first one to take into account the ongoing transitional (commons-oriented) paradigms.

The second important aspect are the conceptual innovations and analysis on which the transition proposals are based. The CTP is based on an analysis and observation of the already existing commons-oriented processes and economies, and the value crisis that they provoke within the current political economy and the new form of “netarchical capitalism” in which proprietary platforms both enable human cooperation but also extract value from it (for an analysis of the conflicts within the digital economy see also Kostakis and Bauwens, 2014). The CTP is based on a simultaneous transition of civil society, the market and the state forms. For most of the history of industrial and post-industrial capitalism, the

political conflict has been one between state and market, to either use reinforce the state mechanisms for redistribution and regulation of the excesses of the market players. Or on the other side, to re-privatise activities towards market players. This has been called by some the lib (for liberal) vs lab (for labour and its derivative social movements) pendulum. In our current political economy, the latter has often been discarded as a historical legacy without future, and indeed, the remaining physical commons that exist globally, mostly in the South, are everywhere under threat.

But the re-emergence of digital commons of knowledge, software and design, do not only recreate commons-oriented modes of production and market activities around it, it also shows that value is now created through contributions, not labor in se, and creates commons, not commodities. Through its contributions, it can be said that:

- Civil society has now become productive in its own right, and we can make a leap from contributor communities to a vision of civil society that consists of commons contributed to by citizens.
- The entrepreneurial coalitions that are created around the commons, and necessarily should be in alignment with the commons, induce the vision of an ethical economy, a non-capitalist marketplace that integrates externalities, and re-introduces reciprocity in the market's functioning, while co-creating commons and creating livelihoods for the commoners.
- The emergence of commons-based foundations (e.g. Apache Foundation, Mozilla Foundation, Wikimedia Foundation) in the commons economy, organizations that maintain the flow of cooperation through the maintenance of its infrastructures, point the way to a new state form, which we have called the Partner State.

Thus, the commons not only introduces a third term next to the state and the market, i.e. the productive commons-producing civil society, but also a new market and a new state. The changes must happen concurrently in all three aspects of our social and economic life.

In a nutshell, the CTP introduces three interrelated concepts along with certain policy proposals for their realization:

- First, we should re-introduce the concept of reciprocity in the marketplace through “commons-based reciprocal licenses” (see Bauwens and Kostakis, 2014). We see this as an essentially non-capitalist market, since instead of enclosing the commons, or exclusively capturing its value for profit maximization, it is a market which actually generates capital for the commons. Hence, we should move from a condition of “communism of capital”, in which capital uses the commons, to a condition of “capital for the commons”, in which the new form of capital strengthens the commons and the commoners.
- Second, we propose a second innovation for the ethical entrepreneurial coalition surrounding the commons, i.e. a new corporate format, that of “open cooperatives” (see Bauwens and Kostakis, 2014).

- The report also specifically innovates the concept of the state, and through the “Partner State” concept, proposes the creation and use of public-commons partnerships, and the commonification of public services, and other innovative concepts and practices that could fundamentally renew our political economy. The concept of the state is derived from the emergence of the for-benefit FLOSS Foundations in the micro-economy, as key new institutions created by the peer production communities. Just as these foundations enable and empower the cooperation to take place, so would a Partner State, at the macro-level, enable and empower the individual and collective economy of citizens, as producers of value and contributors to the common good. A Partner State is not a market state which favors market forces, but a democratic and participatory collective institution, or set of institutions, that enables social production and an autonomous civil society with a thriving ethical economy.

So what now? What comes after the experience in Ecuador? First of all, through a new website and wiki at commonstransition.net, the P2P Foundation and its partners are making an effort to create an open public forum for further commons-driven and commons-oriented policy-making, that is distinct from its first iteration in Ecuador (flokociety.org), and is open to all contributions from commoners globally. With the CTP as a comparative document, a “force de proposition” as they say in French, we intend to organize workshops and dialogues to see how other commons locales, countries, language-communities but also cities and regions, can translate their experiences, needs and demands into policy proposals. The Plan is not an imposition, but something that is intended as a stimulus for discussion and independent crafting of more specific commons-oriented policy proposals in various specialized contexts. As part of this process, we have already concluded a workshop with the Reseau Francophone des Communs in Paris in September, and workshops with Syriza officials in Greece. The idea is not to support or choose any political or social movement, but to enable all progressive and emancipatory forces to look for commonalities around their approaches, and renew their political visions with the commons in mind.

This project therefore, is itself a commons, open to all contributions, and which should benefit all who need it. In the CTP, we are making also very specific organizational proposals, to advance the cause of a commons-oriented politics and a “peer production of politics and policy” on local, regional as well as global level. It is important to keep in mind the limitations of the first CTP. Indeed, the remit of the FLOK project in Ecuador, was the implementation of a “social knowledge economy”, i.e., an economy that is centered around knowledge commons. Therefore, this plan did not include a transformation strategy for other commons, such as the Polanyan triangle of land and nature, labour, and money. We partly went beyond this limitation by putting a lot of attention to the material and immaterial conditions, and feeding mechanisms, which would guarantee the successful existence of the immaterial commons of knowledge, however, that is not sufficient. Thus, the CTP is waiting for its next iteration, in which the knowledge commons are not the only commons to be considered a priority, but would be rather seen as a more general, fully physical, transformation towards a commons economy based on the commonification of land, money and labor as well.

4. Conclusion

This chapter provided an engagement between P2P theory and the current challenges being faced in our global era. The chapter began by engaging theoretically with the large body of alter-globalization theory, much associated with the World Social Forum and counter-hegemonic movements generally. From this engagement points of synergy emerged across discursive and theoretical lines. The chapter then provided a foundational case study in the application of P2P theory in a national and localized context. This engagement applied P2P theory and led to robust experience in experimenting with the creation of the “Partner State” model. P2P is then both a theory and project for transformation. It is dialogically open to the multiple voices for change, but with its distinctive perspective and contribution. In this sense, this chapter has been both a theoretical and practical hostel, which is part of a much longer journey.

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