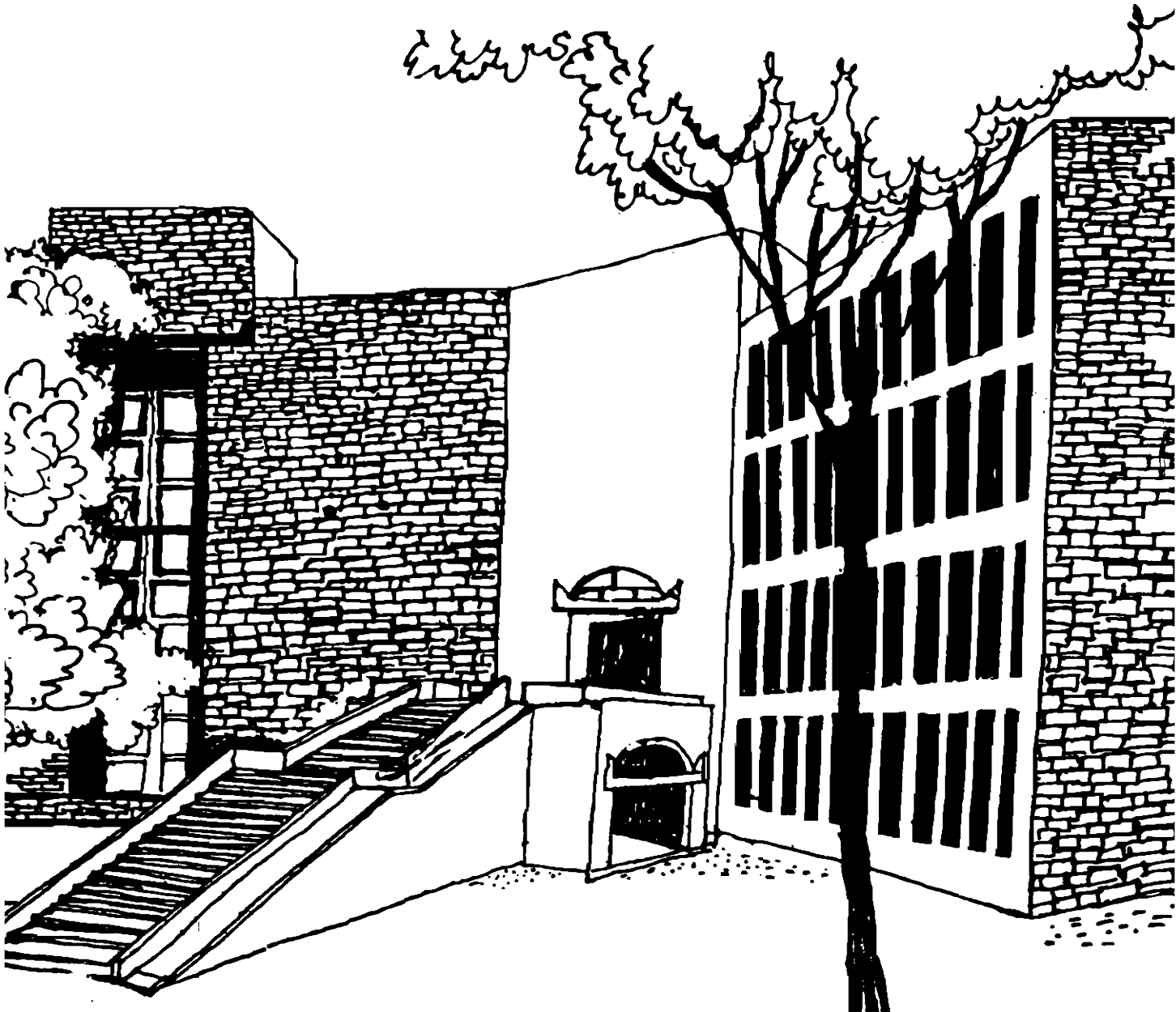




Working Paper




**DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND THE CHALLENGE
OF TRANSFORMATION**

By

Ananta Giri

W.P. No.1163
January 1994

WP1163

WP
1994
(1163)

The main objective of the working paper series of the IIMA is to help faculty members to test out their research findings at the pre-publication stage.

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DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND THE CHALLENGE OF TRANSFORMATION¹

But the democratic process does not exist, and cannot, exist as a disembodied entity detached from historical conditions and historically conditioned human beings. Its possibilities and its limits are highly dependent on existing and emergent social structures and consciousness. Yet because the democratic vision is so daring in its promise, it forever invites us to look beyond, and to break through, the existing limits of structure and consciousness.

-Robert A. Dahl (1989: 312)

But the typological differentiation between man and overman no longer makes sense, if it ever did. For the overman constituted as independent, detached type refers simultaneously to a spiritual disposition and to the residence of free spirits in a social space relatively insulated from reactive politics...If there is anything in the type to be admired, the ideal must be dismantled as a distinct caste of solitary individuals and folded into the political fabric of late-modern society. The 'overman' now falls apart as a set of distinctive dispositions concentrated in a particular caste or type, and its spiritual qualities migrate to a set of dispositions that may compete for presence in any self. The type now becomes (as it already was to a significant degree) a voice in the self contending with other voices, including those of resentment.

-William Connolly (1991: 187)

THE PROBLEM

Ours is an age of democracy. Democracy as a form of government, characterized by elections and the installation of a "representative" government, has been becoming a global

¹ This is the revised version of a paper presented at the national seminar on "Schools for Life and the Challenges of Tomorrow" at Trivandrum, organised by Mitraniketan and Danish Folk High School Association in September, 1993. The author is grateful to the organizers and participants of the seminar for comments and criticism and would be grateful to the readers for the same. The author's contacting numbers are: (0272) 407241 (telephone); (0272) 427896 (fax); and agiri@iimahd.ernet.in(Email).

phenomenon. The fall of the socialist world and domestic and global changes in Latin America, Africa, and Middle East have brought democracy to places and shores where it was undreamt of a few years ago, giving people a taste of freedom. But the globalization of democracy as a form of more legitimate representative government has not been accompanied by genuine efforts to tackle the problems of democracy (such as the tension between equality and liberty, the dictatorship of the majority, the actual as well as manufactured disinterest on the part of the so-called citizens not to participate in the electoral process resulting in as much as 50% of them not fulfilling their constitutional obligation to vote¹ -- the problems highlighted by no other than the most thoughtful observer of democracy as a practice, Alexis de Tocqueville --) and to widen the universe of democracy in accordance with the historical changes taking place in social systems as well as in the light of a desired agenda of transformation. The present paper aims at presenting some of the crucial gaps in the theory and practice of democracy and suggests ways we can rethink democracy as a prelude to a genuine transformative engagement.

PROBLEMS IN THE EXISTING THEORY AND PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY

The demise of the socialist systems has led to euphoria on the part of the advocates of market and western models of democracy. But a majority of our legislators and interpreters have not subjected the existing arrangement of democracy in

advanced industrial countries to a critical scrutiny nor they have looked critically at the process of political and economic liberalization in the peripheries. In fact, a narrow definition of both economy and politics in the existing discourse of democracy has reduced it to just a formal kind of political arrangement, whose most important function lies in ensuring regular (supposedly) legitimate reproduction of the existing system. But factors which are considered extraneous to the theory and practice of democracy such as economic inequality between citizens (which play a determinant role in the very process of politics), the deprivation of the actors, the immorality of the professionals who constitute an unquestioned elite in the management of social systems etc., have not been given systematic consideration in the agenda of democratization. But issues such as economic equality, professional morality, and entitlement of citizens are important ones for democracy at the contemporary stage of what Robert Dahl (1989) calls "third democratic transformation". It is perhaps for this reason that Dahl writes: "In an advanced democratic country the economic order would be understood as instrumental not merely to the production and distribution of goods but to a much more larger range of values, including democratic values" (ibid: 325). Therefore economic democracy is an important theme which is conspicuous by its absence in our contemporary obsession with entrepreneurial rights and freedom of choice and requires serious attention from those who are genuine about democracy.

THE AGENDA OF ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

At present market economy is being portrayed as a natural ally of democracy. But as markets are being promoted as holding the panacea to all human ills their advocates are forgetting the challenge of making markets "people friendly" in their zealous drive to make governments market friendly (Streeten 1993). Few realize that "our current version of market institutions jeopardize freedom on both a large and a small scale"; and even fewer are interested in articulating an "alternative institutional definition of market" (Unger 1987: 482, 480).² Even after the supposed death of Marxism it is true that "we find the legal tools of privilege hold over capital reciprocally linked, through a series of mediating institutions and preconceptions, to the forms of privileged access to state power" (ibid: 490). In advanced capitalist societies, the stability of the established institutional arrangements, including the arrangements that define markets depend upon a "long-standing social demobilization" (ibid: 491)--not very different from the veiled Soviet case. For Roberto Unger, such social demobilization is being encouraged and even deliberately sought "by the constitutional organization of government" (ibid).

Unger provides us a blueprint of the desired economic reconstruction that should be an integral part of the democratization process. In order to reorganize the economy Unger stresses on "the rotating capital fund and its democratic

control" as well as on decentralization and the recovery of the small-scale as a unit of creative economic production. Unger, like Streeten (1993), believes that the State has a moral responsibility to preserve the small-scale (which is subject to the threatening logic of international capital) and create conditions for its better functioning in the contemporary context. This retrieval of the small-scale, which is not meant simply for museum display, has to be accompanied by institutional encouragement towards decentralization, upholding the "broader commitments of empowered democracy" rather than merely handing over decisions to local elites (Unger 1987: 475). Its objective is no less than facilitating "the self-organization of society outside government" (ibid: 476). "Decentralization refers, at a minimum, both to the number of agents who are able to trade and produce on their initiative and for their own accounts and to the extent of their independence" (ibid: 503). An empowered democracy, taking decentralization seriously, encourages "both more economic deconcentration and more innovation in the organizational form of production and exchange..." (ibid: 383). It must encourage "variety in the ways of doing business, and organizing work" (ibid) and multiple strategies of production and reproduction-including those which are not guided by market and follow the idioms of its exchange--rather than subject them to the control of the market (Giri 1993c).

In this context Unger's idea of rotating capital fund also

ought to draw the attention of those who look at democratization as promotion of market in the economic sphere as well as those who look at democracy as a process of seeking for total transformation. Unger argues that the key idea here is the "breakup of control over capital into several tiers of capital takers and capital givers" (Unger 1987: 491). For instance, "the collaboration among small-scale and medium-scale farmers on the basis of government supported arrangements for the pooling of financial, marketing, and technological resources modestly prefigures the multi-tiered system of rotating capital allocation the programme of empowered democracy embraces" (ibid: 436).³

Such an agenda of economic reconstruction does posit a great deal of significance in government, which has almost been made a taboo in the current discourse of privatization. This agenda is integrally linked with efforts to revitalize governments and transform the state.⁴

The agenda of economic reconstruction cannot dispense with public institutions and takes seriously the task of enhancing the "functioning and capability" of individuals through welfare programs, which are meant not to reduce them into clients but transform them into agents of well-being and freedom (see Sen 1986, 1989, 1991). Therefore the neo-liberal view that "in any government's war on poverty, it is poverty that always wins" (Streeten 1993: 1284) cannot be allowed as an excuse to disband

the welfare functions of government since the ultimate justification of such welfare engagement lies "not on grounds of social justice or human needs, but on grounds of human capital formation, of reducing barriers to income-earning opportunities, and of promoting social stability" (ibid: 1284). In fact, a stress on functioning and capability of individuals, instead of on the discredited modes of justification such as the fulfilment of basic needs can help the government "struggle against the tendency of some of its constituents to adopt a clientalist attitude to state..." (Unger 1987: 435).

COLLECTIVE MOBILIZATION AS COLLECTIVE CREATION:

TRANSFORMATIVE MOVEMENTS AND THE BUILDING UP OF NEW INSTITUTIONS

Imagining Alternative Institutional Arrangements

The agenda of economic reconstruction briefly outlined above requires building up of new institutions. For realizing the program of empowered democracy it is not "enough to change the way in which we describe and explain the formative contexts of social life; it is also necessary to imagine institutional arrangements now available in the world" (Unger 1987: 365). But this requires a shift in the way we think about institutions, namely institutions as legal entities. For this, among other things, we need to make a shift from the model of analytical law that provide the foundational vision to modern institutions. For instance, David Apter argues that now there is a need to make a move from "law as an analytical discourse" to law as an

emancipatory and enabling one⁵. Institutions of a democratic society ought to be founded upon a broader conception of law and rights whose model of law "cannot be confined to the realm of criminal justice, as Herbert Spencer and the state minimalists would prefer" (Whitehead 1993a: 1257). In the agenda of an empowered democracy law "must be expanded and adapted to govern the very different issues raised by the welfare state and the mixed economy--to universalize full citizenship--and therefore Bobbio in *From Structure to Function* regards shrinkage of the scope of public law as an indicator of social decay" (ibid). Insofar as the realization of full citizenship is concerned, it is important to realize that "citizenship does not stay within the confines of the political" (O'Donnell 1993: 1357). The inherently public dimension of private relationships is "violated when, for example, a peasant is *de facto* denied access to the judiciary against the landowner. This 'private' right must be seen as no less constitutive of citizenship than the 'public right' of voting without coercion" (ibid). "Even a political definition of democracy..should not neglect posing the question of the extent to which citizenship is realized in a given country" (ibid: 1361)⁶.

Speaking of law, citizenship, and institutionalization of democracy Unger argues that it is essential to grant citizens in an empowered democracy immunity rights and destabilization rights. Unger's discussion of rights is part of his argument that

economic and social reconstruction must be integrally linked with efforts to create a new constitution. The same argument is also offered by Clause Offe and Ulrich Preuss who emphasize upon "new constitutional procedures which will help to improve the quality of citizens' involvement in the democratic process" (Offe & Preuss 1991: 170). While "immunity rights protect the individual against oppression by concentrations of public or private power, against exclusion from the important collective decisions that influence his life, and against the extremes of economic and cultural deprivation" "destabilization rights protect the citizen's interest in breaking open the large-scale organization or the extended areas of social practice..." (Unger 1987: 524, 530).⁷

BEYOND INSTITUTIONALISM:

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INCORPORATING THE CREATIVITY OF CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES

Bhikhu Parekh has argued that "strictly speaking liberal democracy is not representative democracy but representative government" (Parekh 1992: 167). In fact, democratization has been a statist agenda and even the institutionalists in the discourse of liberal democracy have not gone beyond state and taken seriously the work of culture and communities (Apter 1991). In the words of Apter: "Democracy tends to separate the state from society at a decision-making level even as it becomes closer to it in terms of public support. Insofar as this renders the content of politics relatively empty of meaning, it becomes

precisely what critical theorists consider false consciousness" (Apter 1992: 166). In this context, the Latin American experiment of bringing back community to the discourse and practice of democracy deserves our attention. Liberation theology and the base community movement in Latin America have striven to revitalize communities as locales of action, dialogue, and critical intervention. The search for lost community in Latin America has been accentuated by the disintegration that has taken place in society as a result of its globalization and transnational integration (Lechner 1991)⁸.

Of the Latin American experience, one observer tells us: "The majority of citizens in our countries prefer democracy to any other regime. In practical terms, this preference appears to be motivated by identification of democracy with the restoration of community" (Lechner 1991: 548). But the same observer thinks that since "community emphasizes a monistic view of society which represses both particular interests and a comparison of alternatives" and does not permit a creative view of conflict "it is problematical whether a political culture of this kind can build a sound democracy" (ibid: 546). This objection also reminds us of the Indian debate on this issue and the same skepticism of liberals such as Ambedkar and Nehru towards the Gandhian agenda of making village community an unit in the democratic process. It is true that the "emphasis laid on the expression of the collective curbs any centrifugal movement" in

communities but this cannot be the reason for throwing the baby along with the bath water. The challenge here is to introduce the desired concerns such as "creative view of conflict," "recognition of pluralism" (Lechner 1991) and the issue of human rights within communities through the work of transformative movements.⁹

***BUILDING COMMUNITIES AS A TRANSFORMATIVE STRIVING:
THE REVITALIZATION OF PUBLIC SPACE
AND THE RECOVERY OF PUBLIC MORALITY***

It is here that Unger's plea for a transformed conception of community holds the key to the genuine dilemma that the above critic has highlighted. For Unger, "a transformative conception of community" constitutes a "unifying theme of the cultural-revolutionary program" (Unger 1987: 560). For Unger, the kernel of the revised ideal of community is "the notion of a zone of heightened mutual vulnerability, within which people gain a chance to resolve more fully the conflict between the enabling conditions of self-assertion...." (ibid: 562). Reconceptualizing communities as zones of mutual vulnerability also helps us to re-imagine and relive the familiar categories of modern democracy such as the "public sphere" (Habermas 1989) and "public spaces" (Melucci 1992) as communities of discourse rather than simply a locale for bringing the possessive individuals for half an hour, only to disperse to their respective shells later. For Melucci (1992), consolidating independent public spaces--whose main

function is "rendering visible and collective the questions raised by the movements" (Melucci 1992: 72) and which (i.e. this act of consolidation) is a reflection of the "collective signifying processes in everyday life" (ibid: 71)--can go a long way in retrieving and creating community in complex societies where it does not exist as a natural datum.

The reassertion of community in the institutional reconstruction of democracy has also a potential to creatively respond to the short-circuiting of the flow of time that takes place in liberal democracy. "Democratic institutions generate time: for example, they space out future time in a schedule of successive elections" (Lechner 1991: 546). Thus elections constitute the markers of time and after elections people in power usually forget the promises of a longer-time horizon that they had given during elections. While it is true that "democracy makes it possible to forecast the future on surer foundations than the *de facto* duration of dictatorship" it is also true that "liberal representation can cope with substantive complexity (interdependence) but not with temporal complexity (permanence of decision making)" (Kitschelt 1993: 25). But culture and communities usually have a longer-time horizon than state and market and, in fact, they only hold the key to the resolution of the problem of contemporary "space-time compression" (Harvey 1989). Thus it is no wonder that Lechner writes: "The time factor shows clearly that, over and above institutional

difficulties, a reform policy comes up against obstacles which may be described as of a cultural nature. Paradoxically...the major challenges to democracy in Latin America come from the cultural context" (Lechner 1991: 546).¹⁰

The revitalization of the public space as an object of transformative seeking must go hand in hand with a recovery of public morality. The process of "consolidating democratic institutions and stabilizing market relationships is not just a matter of extending the machinery whereby individuals are empowered to make autonomous decisions, it also involves the affirmation of a revised and elaborated code of conduct" (Whitehead 1993a: 1248). Here we can take note of the re-entry of public morality to the stage of modernity in general and democracy in particular (ibid) (also see, Etzioni 1988; Giri 1993a; Habermas 1990). For Whitehead, "one manifestation of this is the prominence of the religious sentiments emerging in the course of many democratic transitions, and the influence (at least in Latin America) of Catholic social thought as a counter-weight to the doctrines of unfettered market liberalism" (ibid).¹¹

INSTITUTIONS AS EDUCATORS OF DESIRE

Institutions of democracy must aim at providing transformative challenges to individuals so that it is not only their egoistic preference which becomes the criterion of accountability but their enlightened preference. Democratic

institutions must refine and educate the preference of the actors and must create conditions for a new trend of "enfranchising" where the conflict is not only between different social groups but between different kinds of desires -- the "inner conflict between what the individuals themselves experience as their more desirable and their less desirable desires" (Offe and Preuss 1991: 166). The challenge is to build institutions which would create opportunity for refining one's preference since such preference learning is a democratic way of creating enlightenment within citizens -- a moral resource, which is absolutely essential for institutions of transformed democracy. Institutions should "upgrade the quality of citizenship by putting a premium on refined and reflective preferences rather than 'spontaneous' and content-contingent ones.¹² Such reflectiveness may be facilitated by arrangements that overcome the monological seclusion of the act of voting in the voting booth by complementing this necessary mode of participation with more dialogical forms of making one's voice heard" (ibid: 170). At the same time, the challenge for those concerned is to strive towards building institutions which are transparent and accountable to people.¹³

INSTITUTIONAL RECONSTRUCTION AND TRANSFORMATIVE MOVEMENTS

In putting into practice an alternative institutional design transformative movements have played and continue to play a significant role. Transformative movements, first of all, affirm

the "primacy of institutional reforms over the redistribution of wealth and income" (Unger 1987: 433). "By engaging people in conflicts and experiments required for the development of new institutions, the movements give them a focus of concern other than immediate redistribution. It thereby establishes a bond with ordinary working men and women stronger than the gratitude or love that people may be expected to show a paternalist welfare state" (ibid: 433). Exploratory movements contain germs of "de-differentiation" "beneath a politics reduced to administration, and on the periphery of a highly mobilized economic system" (Habermas 1984: 25) and offer a "more complete experience of self-assertion through attachment than we can find in the everyday world of work and exchange" (Unger 1987: 431). According to Kitschelt, "some residues of direct democratic practice persist in the self-transformation of contemporary social movements, even though in a muted and constrained way" (Kitschelt 1993: 23) when direct democracy refers to the process where "actors discover their common objective in a communicative process of political deliberation" (ibid: 20).

But proliferation of critical social movements in advanced democracies does not mean that movements can replace complex economic and political institutions. The emergent configuration in advanced democracies "indicates less a polarization of different modes of participation and democratic decision-making than the opportunity for a new complementarity" (ibid: 28).

Kitschelt helps us make sense of the contemporary predicament and possibility vis-a-vis institutions and movements:

In advanced capitalist democracies, citizens' personal resources to engage in direct democratic practices have increased. At the same time, the scope and depth of policy issues that give rise to discrete point decisions vulnerable to challenge by social movements appear to have increased... Advanced democracies face the problem not of replacing complex political and economic institutions with social movements but of finding way to accommodate spontaneity, individuality, entrepreneurship, and responsiveness in a bureaucratic and commodified society (Kitschelt 1993: 28).¹⁴

BUILDING MOVEMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS:

THE TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGE

The challenge of building new institutions of democracy is no where more urgent than in the emergent transnational sphere. Democracy today is no longer confined either to the boundaries of the city state--as was the case in the first stage of democratic transformation--and to those of the nation-state as it was the case in the second stage of democratic transformation (Dahl 1989). Democracy now is part of a transnational process since all societies are now part of a transnational world, characterized by the globalization of their economies and politics. "The proliferation of transnational activities and decisions reduces the capacity of the citizens of a country to exercise control over matters vitally important to them by means of their national government. To that extent the government of countries are becoming local governments" (ibid: 319). The democratic idea must be "adapted to the new change in scale" (ibid: 320). For Dahl, "the most obvious is to duplicate the second transformation on a

larger scale: from democracy in the national state to democracy in the transnational state" (ibid).

But the existing practice of democracy is still bound to the models of state-centric discourse. Ours is the "Age of Democracy" and now there is a global euphoria about the emergent democratic spaces in the East and in the South. But "nations are heralding democracy at the very moment at which changes in the international order are compromising the possibility of an independent democratic nation-state" (Held 1991: 138). Nation-states have usually been treated as self-contained units, but democratic theory and practice bound within the logic of the nation-state is incapable of preparing us to face the challenge of living in a transnational world. Democratic politics remaining fetishized, even fossilized, within the electoral politics of the nation-state, offers outmoded statist solutions to the global contingencies-- be it global warming or global terrorism. While "the very process of governance seems to be escaping the categories of the nation-state" (Held 1991: 147), "the state deploys... diverse set of objects to organize discourse" (Connolly 1991: 210).

Connolly (1991) provides us a picture of the theatre of the nation-state playing out familiar responses to the contemporary global contingencies. The state receives a fund of resentment from those whose identity is threatened by the play of difference

(such as represented by the terrorists and the welfare underclass) and then construct differences as the dangerous Other to protect identities they represent. Thus electoral politics in advanced capitalist societies become a "closed circuit for dogmatism of identity through translation of difference into threat and threat into energy for the dogmatization of identity" (ibid: 210). This process of scapegoating and the late capitalist state's culture of sacrifice is easily noticeable in its construction of terrorism and welfarism. The erasure of the external Other in the construction of terrorism coincides with the erasure of the internal other in the construction of welfarism. Terrorism is now a global phenomenon which "challenges or supersedes legitimacy, explodes conventionality" (Apter 1987: 42). But the construction of terrorism in the discourse of the state provides an easy excuse to both the state and citizens. The state protects its sovereignty and veils its inability to modify its action while the domestic constituencies are provided the security of an agent of evil to explain the experience of danger. Construction of welfarism in the late-modern state also creates a "culture of sacrifice" by constructing the welfare class as dependent and inefficient which "becomes a dispensable subject of political representation and an indispensable subject of political disposability" (Connolly 1991: 208). It is in this context that there is a need to build new institutions that enable actors and governments to resolve global contingencies which defy state boundaries democratically as well as address the

so-called internal problems in a moral and universal manner. ¹⁵

NEW DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

AND THE COMPLEXIFICATION OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS

The inter-connectedness among societies and the rise of transnational processes, including global contingencies, which heighten the urgency of a global democracy has gone hand in hand with the evolution of social systems in the advanced industrial societies. Social systems have become increasingly complex now, with science and technology becoming crucially important in determining their scale and organization. At the same time, the rise of the complex systems in all domains of our everyday life has made professionals with expert knowledge of these complex processes important in not only managing these systems but also in determining their destiny. But the increasing systemic significance of professionals has not been accompanied by any institutional effort to arouse moral consciousness within them not to use their expert knowledge and power for exploiting the ordinary people who don't have such power and knowledge. In fact, apart from legislation there has been not much effort to subject professionals into a public scrutiny as a result of which professional have become the new demigods in the system world.

But the distortion that professionalism introduces in the work of a democratic polity is no less, and in fact more dangerous, than the factor of economic inequality. However, the

existing practice of democracy has not taken adequate steps to come to terms with this threat to democracy. As Dahl cautions us: "...I am inclined to think that the long-run prospects for democracy are more seriously endangered by inequalities in resources, strategic positions, and bargaining strength that are derived not from wealth or economic position but from special knowledge" (Dahl: 333). Now important policy issues are so complex that not only the government seeks the help of the professionals to come to a satisfactory and convincing judgement but also the ordinary citizens themselves who "no longer understand what would best serve their interest (ibid: 337). In the context of the complexification of not only social systems but also the issues which affect the actors of these systems the uncritical advocates of democracy have to recognize the gap in the existing practice, since "complexity threatens to cut the policy elites from effective control by the demos" (ibid: 335).

Thus the challenge of institutional reconstruction at the contemporary phase of democratic transition is immense and our creative response would determine whether the contemporary democratic transition is going to be ephemeral or enduring. ¹⁶

THE CHALLENGE OF SELF-TRANSFORMATION

The commonsense that moral quality of citizens and their enlightened understanding is crucial to democracy becomes an imperative when we reflect upon the complexification of social

systems. The complexification of social systems at the contemporary juncture is part of what Daniel Bell (1973) called two decades ago "the coming of a post-industrial society". Post-industrial societies are characterized by the proliferation of what Roger Benjamin (1981) calls "*collective goods*," which requires an ability within the citizens to overcome the temptation to be a "free rider" and to contribute meaningfully towards their creation, maintenance, and appropriate imagination. In fact, an "enlightened understanding"¹⁷ on the part of the citizens is essential to the idea of the common good. The same challenge for enlightenment and self-transformation seizes us when we are confronted with the need to expand democracy, for example, to a transnational universe, as discussed before.¹⁸

RETHINKING CITIZENSHIP

Thus it is not enough just to reiterate the familiar themes of citizenship and civil society but to ask what is the model of man (woman) that underlies the aspired for citizenship in a democratic polity. If democracy, as Alain Touraine argues, "is not just a competitive market; it implies the ability of each individual to act as a citizen" (Touraine 1991: 261) then the question that is often ignored is what is the model of citizenship that underlies the discourse and practice of democracy? Here it is important to realize that models of citizenship differ from one model of democracy to another. While liberal democrats look at citizens as "self-regarding individuals

who experience political involvement as a burden to be delegated to a specialized group of professionals" organizational democracy looks at them as "other-regarding and therefore contributing to mass-parties" (Kitschelt 1993: 20). But it is only in the framework of a direct democracy that a new model of citizenship is promoted where citizens are viewed as "other-regarding [but at the same time] involved in politics as an opportunity for self-realization and self-transformation, not as a burden on one's time and energy" (ibid).

In direct democracy "an alternative definition of the spirit of the constitution emphasizes an ideal of personality and psychological dynamic" (Unger 1987: 575). For Unger, "the citizen of the empowered democracy is the empowered individual. He is able to accept an expanded range of conflict and revision without feeling that it threatens intolerably his most vital material and spiritual interests" (ibid: 579). What makes him participate in struggles is not just the urge to improve "the material circumstances of his life but nature and structure of groups to which he belongs and even his preexisting sense of personal identity" (ibid). At the same time, the citizen is prepared for renunciation and has "learned the secret of how to be in [conflicts] but without being entirely of them" (ibid: 579). But this perpetual readiness for renunciation is not perceived as a sacrifice by the citizen not only because of "the guarantee of immunity afforded by a system" but because of a spiritual

commitment to transformation. In the words of Unger: "Its higher spiritual significance consists in the assertion of transcendence as a diurnal context smashing" (ibid).

But the citizen renounces not to make himself a hero but to give herself more meaningfully in this world, conceptualized as a perpetual celebration of the sacrifice of creation¹⁹. An urge to share rather than to dominate rescues him from the vicarious pleasure and danger of "the aesthetic of empowerment" (Unger 1987: 584). It also frees him from the "corrupting association with the cult of leaders and of violence" since his "driving force is the desire to do justice to the human heart, to free it from indignity and satisfy its hidden and insulted longing for greatness in a fashion it need not be fearful or ashamed of" (ibid: 585).²⁰

The ideal citizen is able to resolve the dualism between individual and collective rationality, and embody in his transformative striving the moral resource of reciprocity. But this requires a change in the way we think of actors, institutions and discourse. The standard route here is one of dualism, reduction and fixation and if "reciprocity" is the ideal and also the saving language then we would have to go beyond a reductionist view of the relationship between individual and institutions, self and the other. The challenge is no less than to work out a transformative view of the self. In terms of

political theory the task is to realise that a theory of discourse, when discourse by definition means only those utterances which has political significance, is not a theory of self-transformation²¹ and the language of need is inadequate to describe the moral topography of the self. Democracy is not an instrumental mechanism to satisfy human needs, when these needs themselves have been let loose from the beginning to be limitless, but a process of cultivating a more meaningful and caring self, where the development of the individual becomes a precondition for the development of society.²²

WIDENING THE UNIVERSE OF DEMOCRACY:

SELF, OTHER, AND BEYOND

In widening the universe of democracy the starting point is a reflection on self, which strives to put food and freedom and the local and the global in the same space of transformative strivings. The challenge here is to start with an alternative account of the self, not simply as a locus of desire, utility, and interest but as a seeker of transformation. But "providing an alternative account of the self, however, has so far proved more difficult than critique. Part of the reason is that expansive democratic theories also suffer from *under-developed assumptions about the self*" (Warren 1992: 11; emphasis added)²³. Thus we have to have a transformative view of the self in order to widen the universe of democracy. This is possible only when we take the moral and spiritual dimension within the self (which is usually

conceptualized as a mere functional role and a sociological individual) seriously and try to cultivate it through our individual strivings including our conduct in the public sphere. Thus democratic theory and moral theory has to be relinked. As Warren argues:

...I assume that a description of the self in terms of interests can be redescribed in moral terms, in this way linking democratic and moral theory. This is because self-identity includes ideal representations of the self to self, anchoring a person's conception of their interests in a moral representation of who they would like to be (ibid:17).

DEMOCRACY, SELF

AND THE IDEAL REPRESENTATION OF THE SCHEME OF BECOMING

Thus the ideal representation of our scheme of becoming is important here. Important also here is a characteristic of the self, which seeks to and has the courage to be, and has the capacity to distinguish values from appetites and interest. Democratic theory is now in need of a transformative self, and this we find in the work of Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, G.C. Pande, and Charles Taylor among others. G.C. Pande argues that "it is only a self which is conscious of its ideal universality that can distinguish value from appetites, pleasures, and selfish interests and can become the moral subject. It is the notion of the ideal self which is the source of the moral law on which social unity and cohesion depend" (Pande 1982:113). For Gandhi, the self is characterized not only by the political and economic dimension but also by the *dharmic and satyagrahic* dimension. It is this moral dimension within the self, with its desire for

truth, that democracy must put it at the centre of the social system, as it must help develop this dimension. Gandhi's political practice of satyagraha, civil disobedience and attachment to non-violence provides help in expanding the universe of democracy and anchoring it in a truth-seeking moral self, which is courageous to fight evil in a non-violent manner. For Gandhi, "the highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind.." (quoted in Pantham 1989). Such practice of the self is neither a reiteration of the existing opposition between self and other nor a submission of the self to the appetite and ego of the other. As Pantham interprets the Gandhian agenda of emancipation: "unlike the cultural relativists who assert and cling to the radical essential separateness or otherness of the to-be-colonized Other from the ethnocentric-imperialist self, Gandhi bases his emancipatory struggle of satyagraha on a post-liberal / post-relativist conception of the human 'self,' namely, a self that is hermeneutically implicated with other selves" (Pantham 1989: 15).²⁴

In this search for a hermeneutic self Charles Taylor (1989) provides us probably one of the rare modern accounts of the work of the self as an agent of critique and construction. For Taylor, a moral and a spiritual intuition characterizes the work of self and when we reflect upon "the self in moral space" "the sense that human beings are capable of some kind of higher life

forms part of the background for our belief.." (Taylor 1989: 25). Self provides us an identity and to work on self is to know what one is²⁵. The moral space of the self is a space of orientation, having a "crucial set of qualitative distinctions," which tells us that "some action, or mode of life, or mode of feeling is incomparably higher than the others which are more readily available to us" (ibid: 19).

LIFE POLITICS AND THE REFLEXIVE MOBILIZATION OF THE SELF,

Ronald Inglehart's (1990) description of the culture shift in advanced societies around the axis of the emergent postmaterial values and Anthony Giddens' (1991) work on self and society in the late modern age provides us some engaging descriptions to relate these ideas of self to the agenda of a desired democratic politics. Giddens stresses that "the self in high modernity is not a minimalist self..." (Giddens 1991: 181). For Giddens, "the reflexive project of the self generates programmes of actualization and mastery," which is manifested, among other things, in the choice of a particular lifestyle and participation in new social movements (ibid: 9). The reflexive project of the self, "which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continually revived biographical narratives" is not an "extension of the control systems of modernity to the self" but a project of moral choice and transformative seeking, which gets manifested in the actors' participation in transformative movements.²⁶

In this context, Giddens speaks of "the emergence of life politics" (ibid: 209). Giddens argues that life politics is a politics of choice-- "a politics of lifestyle," rather than "a politics of life chances" (ibid: 214). It is a politics of self-actualization where the power that defines the field is not hierarchical but generative.²⁷ Life-politics brings to the fore "problems and questions of moral and existential type" because it centers on "how we should live our lives in emancipated social circumstances" (ibid: 224). In this context, Giddens urges us to take note of the significance of "new forms of religion and spirituality," which "represent in a most basic sense the return of the repressed, since they directly address issues of the moral meaning of existence which modern institutions so thoroughly tend to dissolve" (ibid: 207).

The reflexive mobilization of the self that is at work in life politics is different from the opposition between the Self and the Other as manifested, for instance, in familiar models of emancipatory politics. While emancipatory politics is usually a politics of negation life politics "is aimed not at reducing the negativity of otherness, as embodied in the colonial, the subaltern, the prisoner, vis-a-vis the mainstream, but to 'liberate' the mainstream from itself" (Apter 1992: 162). The task here is to simultaneously criticise the Self and the Other, thus going "beyond emancipation" and realize the dialectic between the dimension of dichotomy and the dimension of ground in

the agenda of transformation (Laclau 1992).²⁸

BEYOND EMANCIPATION AND THE CHALLENGE OF FREEDOM

The agenda of democracy is an agenda of freedom (see Dahl 1989). At the same time, the discourse of liberal democracy, especially in its current manifestation of libertarianism, is based upon a narrow view of freedom, and haunted by the problem of dualism. It has not addressed the question of the meaning of freedom as an object of transformative seeking. The work of Isaiah Berlin and Amartya Sen have made us aware of the distinction between negative freedom and positive freedom (Sen 1989).²⁹ But even in Amartya Sen's continued quest for freedom the spiritual dimension within freedom has not received enough attention. But the dualism between negative and positive freedom is still a problem even in Amartya Sen, and there is a need to transcend this dualism at some level in order to be able to meaningfully imagine the agenda of democratic transformation. Only by having a view of freedom as a spiritual process of transformation and the agent of freedom as a transformative self, which begins with self-control³⁰ of one's lower self and cultivation of one's higher self, can we go beyond good and evil, positive and the negative. For instance Sri Aurobindo (1950) argues that standards of conduct and the practice of freedom must be anchored in a spiritual plane where the goal of freedom is not only to have the freedom to choose but also to transform our needs and desires. A spiritual seeking also helps us discover the "secret

Godhead within us," a discovery that helps us create a universal ground within us where the social distinction between individual and the collective, negative and positive freedom get a new frame of reference for criticism and transcendence even if it does not get out-rightly dissolved. ³¹

DEMOCRACY AND THE SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION OF SELF AND SOCIETY

The spiritual challenge of freedom is one of transcending the opposition between self and other and creating communities of discourse and practice where both can live as seekers of freedom. In fact this act of creation of communities is itself a spiritual act. The challenge here thus is as much for religion as for democracy. While in religion the challenge is to realize that the contemporary competitive existence "that divides what is to be a man and a woman, a white or a black, is a form of human suffering" (Bellah et. al. 1991:210) in terms of actual challenges for the theory and practice of democracy it means looking at it primarily as a mode of paying attention (ibid). Democracy means paying attention to the needs and care of the self, family, neighbourhood, communities, country, mankind, and the mother earth. "Attending means to concern ourselves with the larger meaning of things in the longer run, rather than with short-term pay offs" (Ibid). For Bellah et al. channel-flipping TV watching, compulsive promiscuity, and alcoholism is a form of distraction while spending time with one's spouse and children, and repairing the broken car of a neighbour is a form of

attention.³² Bellah et. al. make it clear that we must understand this plea for attention in the normative sense. In their words:

...as in the religious examples, we mean to use attention normatively, in the sense of 'mindfulness,' as the Buddhists put it, or *openness to the leadings of God*, as the quakers say. On the face of it, it may seem hard to tell the difference between attention and obsession. But as we shall use the term here, attention implies an openness to experience, a willingness to widen the lens of appreciation that is appropriate, and this obsession is incapable of doing. Obsessive 'attention' in this normative sense is not attention at all but distraction, an unwillingness to be genuinely attentive to surrounding reality (ibid: 256; emphasis added).

But this attention to the self and surrounding reality is hard to see in a democratic society such as contemporary American society. In the words of Bellah et al. "Americans have pushed the logic of exploitation about as far as it can go" (ibid: 271). This is manifested in addiction to conspicuous consumption where goods take precedence over man and God as objects of attention, the rise of homelessness and in the decadence of the built environment of the cities.³³

In this context of dislocation, distraction and despair Bellah et al. plead for a *politics of generativity and a pattern of cultivation*. For them, "The major problems that come to light require the virtue of generativity to solve--indeed, a politics of generativity. The most obvious problem is the perilous neglect of our own children in America: levels of infant mortality, child poverty, and inadequate schooling just as at or near the bottom

in these respects among industrial nations" (ibid: 274). A pattern of settlement and cultivation is interested in creating communities. As Bellah and his colleagues say: "A pattern of settlement and cultivation allows not only the nurturing of ethnic and racial cultures within communities of memory but an open interchange of learning between such communities, a kind of global localism" (ibid: 275).

This concern for attention is very different from a preoccupation with either money or power as the ultimate measure of life. It is also very different from a clinical preoccupation with whether one's own country would continue to remain number one in the new global environment. Here a genuine transnational spirit must be the guide for action, reflection, and intervention.³⁴ Johan Galtung (1980) had argued long ago that transnational politics is a politics of individual human beings. Widening the universe of democracy means making a move towards both sides: towards the supranational collectivities as well as towards one's reflexive self which is not bounded to the dogmas of social roles and statist citizenship, and which has the capacity to criticize familiar institutions and turn them into islands of problematic justice (see Giri 1993a, Habermas 1990a). Bellah's agenda of democracy as paying attention and a pattern of cultivation falls in line with the argument of this paper that self-transformation is the key issue while coming to terms with the challenge of democratic transition and the complexification

of social systems. It is a moral and spiritual awareness that can make professionals treat other citizens as human beings and with dignity and respect. It is a spiritual awareness that provides us "freedom from fear" in the context of the all-pervasive "fear of freedom" and help us realize what Aung Sun Kyi says: "It is not enough merely to call for freedom, democracy and human rights. There has to be a united determination to persevere in the struggle, to make sacrifices in the name of enduring truths, to resist the corrupting influences of desire, ill will and fear" (Kyi 1991: 153). It is this awareness which is crucial to build solidarity and "de-differentiation" (Beck 1992; Habermas 1984) in the infinitely differentiated but tightly integrated regime of the system worlds. It is the discovery of the universal Self within oneself and the inner Godhead that is essential to build a transnational democracy. Thus self-transformation is the key challenge in the face of the current democratic transition and evolution of social systems. Bellah and his colleagues best articulate this challenge for us:

We can indeed try genuinely to attend to the world around us and to the meanings we discover as we interact with that world, and hope to realize in our experience that we are part of a universal community, making sense of our lives as deeply connected to each other. As we enlarge our attention to include the natural universe and the ultimate ground it expresses and from which it comes, we are sometimes swept with a feeling of thankfulness, of grace, to be able to participate in a world that is both terrifying and exquisitely beautiful. At such moments we feel like celebrating the joy and mystery we participate in. The impulse towards larger meaning, thankfulness, and celebration has to have an institutional form, like all the other central organizing tendencies in our lives, so that we don't dissipate it in purely private sentiment (ibid).

NOTES

1. Political scientists Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward (1988) make this observation about the voting pattern in American presidential elections.

2. As Unger argues, on a large scale market institutions leave a "restricted number of people with a disproportionate influence over the flows of investment decisions" while on a small scale these undermine freedom by "generating and permitting inequalities of wealth that reduce some people to effective dependence upon others..." (Unger 1987: 483).

3. Unger develops his idea of rotating capital fund thus:

The ultimate capital giver is a social capital fund controlled by the decisional centre of the empowered democracy: the party in office and the supporting representative assemblies. The ultimate capital takers are teams of workers, technicians, and entrepreneurs, who make temporary and conditional claims upon divisible portions of this social capital fund. The central capital fund does not lend money out directly to the primary capital users. Instead, it allocates resources to a variety of semi-independent investment funds. Each investment fund specializes in a sector of the economy and in a type of investment. The central democratic institutions exercise their ultimate control over the forms and rates of economic accumulation and income distribution by establishing these funds or by closing them out, by assigning them new infusions of capital or by taking capital away from them, by charging them interest (whose payment represents the major source of governmental finance), and, most importantly, by setting the outer limits of variation in the terms on which the competing investment funds may allocate capital to the ultimate capital takers. The investment funds may take resources away from one another, thus forming in effect a competitive capital market, whose operations are also overseen by the central representative bodies of democracy (Unger 1987: 436).

4. David Osborne (1988) has described several experiments in the United States to make government competitive and fulfil its social obligation more efficiently (also see Giri 1993c; and Osborne and Gaebler 1992). In this context, what O'Donnell writes deserves our attention:

There is no question that in most newly democratized countries the state is too big, and that this leads to numerous negative

consequences. But, in this context, the antonym of big is not small but lean; i.e. an effective and less weighty set of public organizations that is capable of creating solid roots for democracy, for progressively solving the main issues of social equity, and for generating conditions for rates of economic growth suitable for sustaining the advances in areas of both democracy and social equity (O'Donnell 1993: 1358).

5. In the words of Apter: "The old institutionalists used law as an analytical discourse, both as history and system. Democracy, the systemic alternative to arbitrary power, consisted of law, participation, and accountability, so fashioned to produce a moving equilibrium in the political sphere parallel to the moving equilibrium in the economic" (Apter 1991: 467).
6. In his words: "The denial of liberal rights to (mostly but not exclusively) the poor or otherwise deprived sections is analytically distinct from, and bears no necessary relation to various degrees of social and economic democratisation. But, empirically, various forms of discrimination of extensive poverty and their correlate, extreme disparity in the distribution of (not only economic) resources, go hand in hand with low-intensity citizenship. This is the essence of the social conditions necessary for the exercise of citizenship" (O'Donnell 1993: 1361).
7. For Unger, "the theory of immunity rights rests, in part, on the empirical hypothesis that freedom from violence, coercion, subjugation, and poverty...enters into people's ordinary conception of essential security. These goods are rivalled in importance only by the more intangible sense of being accepted by other people as a person, with a place in the world" (Unger 1987: 524).
8. In the words of Lechner: "Latin American society becomes a 'two-thirds' society, with the remaining third of the population unemployed and living on what is cast off by the rest" (Lechner 1991: 542).
9. I owe this point of introducing the concern of human rights into the functioning of communities to a discussion I had with Shri B.D. Sharma, a tireless champion of the cause of the tribals and the downtrodden of India and the author of *The Webs of Poverty*, in March 1992 in Delhi.
10. Here it is worth remembering the seminal work of Anthur E. Morgan one the most engaging advocates of community in modern times. It is no wonder that Morgan who pleaded for

creation of communities in complex industrial societies also pleaded for understanding the significance of a longer-time horizon.

11. But Whitehead himself makes clear that "public morality is by no means reducible to religion" (Whitehead 1993a: 1248).
12. Offe and Preuss tell us what they mean by reflective preferences: "By reflective preferences we mean preferences that are the outcome of a conscious confrontation of one's own point of view with an opposing point of view, or of the multiplicity of view points that the citizen, upon reflection, is likely to discover within his or her own self" (Offe & Preuss 1991: 170)
13. For instance, Whitehead believes that if institutions are "soundly based, with high professionalism and good standing in the society, i.e., 'transparent' and 'accountable,' then they may serve to absorb and even reconcile clashes" between economic and political liberalization." In the words of Whitehead: "Two of the most vital areas for liberal institution-building are the legal system and the apparatus of economic management. Both of these are often severely affected both by economic disorder and by authoritarian abuse. If the process of economic and political liberalization is to become routinized these institutions will have to be reformed and reorganized to provide the necessary continuity and support" (Whitehead 1993b: 1386).
14. Unger also makes a similar argument when he writes "Empowered democracy attempts instead to change the relation between large-scale, inclusive institutions and non-institutionalized collective action, to make the former into a more congenial home for the latter. The closer the movement comes to its moment of power -- and therefore also to its hour of institutional definitions -- the less room there is discrepancy between means and ends" (Unger 1987: 173-174).
15. Here I draw upon the arguments of Habermas. While discussing the problem of poverty within a country and inequalities between the North and the South, Habermas argues that "a dynamics self-correction cannot be set in motion without introducing morals into the debate, without universalizing interests from a normative point of view" (Habermas 1990b: 20).
16. A contemporary critic helps us understand this and go beyond the euphoria and illusion in the wall streets: In the contemporary world, the joyful celebration of the advent of democracy must be complemented with the sober recognition of

the immense (and, indeed, historically unusual) difficulties its institutionalization and its rooting in society must face...In addition, there are no immanent historical forces which will guide the new democracies toward an institutionalized and representative form, and to the elimination of their brown areas and the manifold social ills that underlie them. In the long run, the new democracies may split between those that follow this felicitous course and those that regress to all-out authoritarianism. But delegative democracies, weak horizontal accountability, schizophrenic states, brown areas and low-intensity citizenship are part of the foreseeable future of new democracies (O'Donnell 1993: 1367).

17. Here what Mark Warren argues deserves our attention:

Public material goods present unique opportunities for self-transformation when compared with other goods. Although they are inherently conflictual and do not depend on commonality for their value, they can only be gained through common action. Combined with expanded democracy, this characteristic presents individuals with opportunities to change the way they make trade-offs between individual and public material goods, as well as to discover other, non-conflictual goods associated with the common deliberation and action that public goods require (Warren 1992: 21; emphasis added).

18. However, such an agenda of moral criticism and self-transformation has been peripheral to the discourse of modern democracy since it was preoccupied with supplanting the medieval hero worship and collectivism with people's verdict and individualism without thinking deeper about the nature of the person who is supposed to be at the centre of the drama of democracy, not simply as a viewer but primarily as an actor (see Ado 1984). But Warren argues that "transformations of the self are important for expansive democrats because they view democracy as justified not so much because it allows maximization of political wants or preferences as because it maximizes opportunities for self-governance and self-development" (ibid: 11).
19. Here I have in mind Rabindra Nath Tagore's line, *Jagate Anandajagye Amar nimantrana*, meaning "I am invited to the world of the sacrifice of Ananda [pleasure]".
20. David Harvey (1989) cautions us against aestheticization of politics.
21. I owe this argument to Mark Warren (1993).

22. As Warren argues:

Fortunately, the self-transformation thesis requires only a very weak theory of needs, one that focuses on the general functional requirements of the self [what Amartya Sen calls 'functioning' and 'capability'] in relation to classes of goods that would satisfy them. This is because democratic theory is not a theory of welfare (although there are essential welfare requirements) but a theory of choice, public decision making, and self governance... A stronger account of needs is unnecessary and undesirable, since the point of expansive theories of democracy is to recommend institutional arrangements under which individuals develop control over their own need articulation... (Warren 1992: 16; emphasis added).

23. The same problem of underdeveloped accounts of the self haunts even anthropology and cultural studies even when they self-consciously want to be self-critical and transform themselves into critiques of culture. For instance, in anthropology the champions of self have not been able to go beyond the liberal-bourgeoisie model of individualism.

24. In the words of Pantham:

The satyagrahis regard their initial truth-claims as well as those of their opponents or oppressors to be relativistic. They then go through a rigorous discipline of hermeneutically testing the truths of the rival claims. The discipline of satyagraha includes hermeneutical and dialogic interpretations of the competing truth-claims and a set of actions based on the refusal to do harm even to one's opponents. These actions include self-purification and self-suffering, the vow of ahimsa, showing love and charity or doing good to the opponents, etc. In this way, for the satyagrahi, truth-seeking is not a mere attempt to secure a mirror copy of some out-there object. The attempt is rather to transgress the relativity of their initial truths as well as that of their opponents and thereby to move on to a postrelativist plane of truth. In this transgressive move from relativism, there is no submersion of the individuality of the satyagrahi. It is also not a passive or quietest stance. It is rather a hermeneutical move" (Panthom 1989: 14).

Rolph Templin, writing about democracy and non-violence nearly thirty years ago, also acknowledges the signal contribution Gandhi has made to modern man's search for truth and says:

In the West, to experiment with truth is now

practically unheard of or, at any rate, not regarded as scientific. It is this lack in Western science that has given the phenomenon of Gandhi's life, movement, experiments and death their special significance against the western background. Future historians may regard Gandhi as the most consistent pursuer of his age of the truth which makes men free, and the most valiant experimenter with truth in the greatest of all laboratories, the human community (Templin 1965: 192).

25. In the words of Taylor: "To know who you are is to be oriented in moral space, a space in which questions arise about what is good or bad, what is worth doing and what is not, what has meaning and importance for you and what is trivial and secondary" (Taylor 1989: 28).
26. In the words of Giddens: "It becomes more and more apparent that lifestyle choices, within the settings of local-global interrelationships, raise moral issues which cannot simply be pushed into one side. Such issues call for forms of political engagement which the new social movements both presage and serve to help" (Giddens 1991: 9).
27. In the words of Giddens, "life politics is the politics of a reflexively mobilized order--the system of late modernity--which, on an individual and collective level, has altered the existential parameters of social activity. It is a politics of self-actualization in a reflexively ordered environment, where reflexivity links self and body to systems of global scope. In this arena of activity, power is generative rather than hierarchical" (Giddens 1991: 9).
28. As emancipatory politics has shown us the significance of the particular and negation, now life politics must enable us to have a ground where we are concerned with "the destiny of the universal" (Laclau 1992: 132). Laclau helps us make sense of the challenge of the ground against the backdrop of modernity:

If, on the one hand, modernity started by strictly typing representability to knowledge, the constitutive opaqueness resulting from the dialectic of emancipation involves not only that society is no longer transparent to knowledge, but also--since God is no longer there to substitute knowledge by revelation--that all representation will be necessarily partial and will take place against the background of an essential unrepresentability. On the other hand, this

constitutive opaqueness withdraws the ground which made it possible to go beyond the dialectic of incarnation, given that there is no longer a transparent society in which the universal can show itself in a direct unmediated way. But again, as God is no longer there, ensuring through his word the knowledge of a universal destiny which escapes human reason, opaqueness cannot lead to a restoration of the dialectic of incarnation either. The death of the ground seems to lead to the death of the universal and to the dissolution of social struggles into mere particularism (ibid: 131-132).

It is probably for this reason that Laclau concludes his engaging account of beyond emancipation with the following plea:

We are today coming to terms with our own finitude and with the political possibility that it opens. This is the point from which the potentially liberatory discourses of our postmodern age have to start. We can perhaps say that *we are at the end of emancipation and at the beginning of freedom* (ibid: 137; emphasis added).

29. For Sen, enhancing the "functioning and capability" of individuals is an engagement in positive freedom, while preoccupation with one's individual rights and security alone is an instance of negative freedom (Sen 1989).
30. It has to be noted that no less a person than Joseph Schumpeter speaks of the significance of democratic self-control. It is important to read Schumpeter when he writes: "It is easier for a class whose interests are best served by being left alone to practice democratic self-restraint than it is for classes that naturally try to live on the state" (quoted in Whitehead 1993a: 1253).
31. Again the following long extract from Sri Aurobindo may clarify what I have in mind when I speak of the spiritual dimension of freedom:

all conduct and action are part of the movement of a power, a force infinite and divine in its origin... This power is leading towards the Light, but still through the ignorance. It leads man first through his needs and desires; it guides him next through enlarged needs and desires modified and enlightened by a mental and moral ideal. It is preparing to lead him to a spiritual

realization that overrides these things and yet fulfils and reconciles them in all that is divinely true in their spirit and purpose. *It transforms the needs and desires into a divine will and Ananda. It transforms the mental and moral aspiration into the powers of truth and Perfection that are beyond them.* It substitutes for the divided training of the individual nature, for the passion and strife of the separate ego, the calm, profound, harmonious and happy law of the universalized person within us, the central being, the spirit that is a portion of the supreme Spirit... This is the high realisation in front of all our seeking and striving, and it gives the sure promise of a perfect reconciliation and transformation of all the elements of our Nature. A pure, total and flawless action is possible only when that is effected and we have reached the height of this secret Godhead within us (Sri Aurobindo 1950: 193-194).

32. As Bellah et al. argue:

For we have not experienced the potentialities of ourselves and our relationships, and so we have not reaffirmed ourselves in the larger contexts that give our lives meaning. If, after a stressful day, we can turn our attention to something that is mildly demanding but inherently meaningful—reading a book, repairing a car, talking to some one we love, or even cooking the family meal—we are more apt to find that we are 'released' (Bellah et al. 1991: 255).

33. In the words of Bellah and his colleagues:

The record of city growth [in the United States] over the last half-century graphically demonstrates that without sustaining institutions that make interdependence morally significant, individual attention becomes fragmented in focus and limited in scope. Vast social inequality is rendered invisible by residential separation, and an often shocking indifference to human misery and environmental degradation goes generally unremarked (Ibid: 268).

34. As Bellah et al. argue: "The whole argument about whether the United States is in decline or is as strong as ever is also besides the point and fundamentally distracting. Clearly we are headed toward a future in which a number of highly successful national or regional economies will coexist; rather than worrying about where the United States is in the hierarchy, we should be worrying about creating a humane economy that is adequate to our real purposes, and a healthy international economy that operates for the good of all people" (ibid: 272).

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