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Defending Democracy Against Neo-Liberalism: Process Philosophy, Democracy and the Environment[1]

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Abstract— The growing appreciation of the global environmental crisis has generated what should have been a predictable response: those with power are using it to appropriate for themselves the world's diminishing resources, augmenting their power to do so while further undermining the power of the weak to oppose them. In taking this path, they are at the same time blocking efforts to create forms of society that would be ecologically sustainable. If there is one word that could bring into focus what is wrong with this response it is 'democracy'. Democracy means power in the hands of the people, which, by definition, means opposition to the concentration of power. It is inconceivable that if we had genuine democracy, where people were fully informed of the issues, they would not choose to share the burdens of scarcity and organize to live in accordance with the limits of their environment. Yet the notion of democracy is problematic. Those striving to concentrate power are pursuing this in the name of democracy. They have identified democracy with the imposition of free markets and the freedom of people to use their wealth to dominate others. In this paper I will show how process philosophy provides the basis for justifying and further developing the traditional notion of democracy to counter this reformed notion, providing a vision of a democratic form of society that could address environmental problems. To achieve this, I will argue, it is necessary to reformulate the grand narrative of civilization on the basis of human ecology, a science which, construing humans as participants in a creative nature, can replace economics as the master science for formulating public policy.

Key words—Environment, democracy, neo-liberalism, neo-conservativism, liberal fascism, economics, freedom, culture, Hobbes, Castoriadis, Montesquieu, Fichte, Schelling, Herder, Hegel, John Stuart Mill, grand narrative, human ecology.

Introduction: Environmental Destruction and Neo-Liberalism

Each year the Worldwatch Institute publishes a book, *State of the World,* which sums up the latest research on environmental problems and the attempts to address them. While these books indicate some achievements, overall it is clear that environmental problems are not being effectively addressed and the threat they pose to the future of humanity is increasing. In fact, as Joel Kovel has pointed out, in the thirty years since environmental issues became a significant political issue, the rate of global environmental destruction has accelerated. As he noted:

- human population had inceased from 3.7 billion to 6 billion;
- oil consumption had increased from 46 billion barrels a day to 73 billion;
- natural gas extraction had increased from 34 trillion cubic feet per year to 95 trillion;
- coal extraction had gone from 2.2 billion metric tonnes to 3.8 billion;
- the global motor vehicle population had almost tripled, from 246 million to 730 million;

- air traffic had increased by a factor of six;
- the rate at which trees are consumed to make paper had doubled, to 200 million metric tons;
- human carbon emissions had increased from 3.9 million metric tons annually to an estimated 6.4 million …
- fish were being taken at twice the rate as in 1970;
- half of the forests had disappeared;
- half of the wetlands had been filled or drained… (Kovel, 2002: 3f.).

Indicating just how dramatic are the changes being wrought, in the summer of 2000 the North Pole melted for the first time in 50 million years. Yet as far as the general public is concerned, environmental problems are of decreasing significance. People are less concerned about the environment than they were in 1990.

This does not mean that governments are ignoring environmental issues. In fact, much of recent international and domestic politics becomes more intelligible against the background of global environmental problems. Most obviously, increasing tensions around the world centre on the quest to control resources; most importantly, oil. Domestic politics also becomes more intelligible if we take into account imminent scarcities. Governments are pursuing policies which are simply cutting out increasing proportions of their populations from participation in the benefits of the economy, concentrating wealth while radically curtailing civil liberties and increasing government powers to coerce their populations.

In my view, the best way to comprehend the global situation is through the historical materialist approach of Stephen Bunker and his colleagues (Bunker, 1988). Bunker pointed out the difference between economies of the core zones of the world economy based on production of goods and those in the semi-periphery and periphery based on the extraction of resources to trade for such goods. Extractive economies, as they 'develop', use up their reserves and are impoverished, while the productive economies of the core zones, as they develop, increase their power to dominate and exploit the extractive economies. Bunker showed in detail the destructive effects on peripheral regions such as the Amazon basin of the international economy, how:

> Once the profit-maximizing logic of extraction for trade across regional ecosystems is introduced … price differentials between extractive commodities and the differential return to extractive labor stimulate concentrated exploitation of a limited number of resources at rates which disrupt both the regeneration of these resources and the biotic chains of co-evolved species and associated geological and hydrological regimes. (p.47).

His study of the exploitation of Amazonia illustrated how the transferral of most of the usable energy in living and fossilised plants to a small part or the world is generating ecologically costly over-exploitation of natural resources and socially costly hypercoherence. Hypercoherence is the state in which the ruling elites are so powerful that they have become impervious to the needs and demands of those they dominate. Bunker argued that:

> Hypercoherence ultimately leads to ecological and social collapse as increasingly stratified systems undermine their own resource base. … The exchange relations which bind this system together depend on locally dominant groups to reorganize local modes of production and extraction in response to world demand, but the ultimate collapse will be global, not local. The continued impoverishment of peripheral regions finally damages the entire system. (p.253).

A new phase in this whole process is emerging in which USA has attained total military ascendency in the global arena, and the power elite that has gained control of its political institutions and mass media, is moving to ensure that this domination remains permanent (Donnelly, 2000; Research Unit, 2002). USA is to become the new Roman Empire and those within USA who oppose this policy are to be declared unpatriotic and deprived of their civil rights, while governments outside USA are to be constrained or coerced to act in the interests of this Empire (Johnson, 2004). The new transnational capitalist class has allied itself with this US power elite, with its members acting as a fifth column in countries other than USA (Sklair, 2000). Through control of the mass media, this power elite has deceived the general public not only about its goals, but also about the dire state of the global environment (Rowell, 1996).

Domination as the Imposition of Freedom and Democracy

The intensification of exploitation of the peripheries by the new elite is characterized as the war against terrorism in the defence of freedom and democracy. It is the notions of freedom and democracy that are crucial here. Nobody could object to the defence of freedom and democracy. Most environmentalists see themselves as fighting for freedom and democracy. However, these terms are being given a particular interpretation. In the name of freedom, people in USA are being stripped of the civil liberties by the Patriot Act and the proposed Domestic Security Enhancement Act. International law is being contravened. The military in Turkey was criticised by US Deputy Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz, because it did not intervene to prevent Turkey's parliament bowing to pressure from 95% of its population and refusing to allow USA to use it as a base to launch an invasion of Iraq (Leicht, 2003). The defence of freedom and democracy is apparently consistent with the support for, and possibly the orchestration of, an attempted coup to overthrow the popularly elected president of Venezuela. Clearly, the notions of freedom and democracy are being used in a new way.

Freedom is equated with the imposition of the market throughout the world to mediate all aspects of economic, social and political life. Electoral systems have been reconceived on market principles as political parties competing with each other to sell packages of promises to their electorates for votes, with the victors being rewarded with the perquisites of office (Downs, 1957; Macpherson, 1977: ch.4). The imposition of the market itself would facilitate increasing concentrations of wealth and power. As Brian Arthur has shown, markets are characterized by a tendency not towards equilibrium but towards increasing returns, for the economically powerful to become more powerful (Arthur, 1994), whether they be companies, individuals or regions. In the global system, the free market is really a machine of the core zones of the world economy to suck out the natural and social wealth of weaker countries while undermining the power of the working class in the core zones. However, the new notion of freedom goes beyond working within deregulated markets. Democracy is equated with the subordination of public life to the market, liberating people's power to use what money and property they have to buy and sell on the new, free, global market and to use their wealth to dominate the political arena. It is the freedom of those who have the most wealth to dominate politics through financing political campaigns and controlling people's beliefs through public relations and ownership and domination of the mass media, to put in power governments who will privatise the people's assets, reduce taxes on business and the wealthy, manipulate markets and force down wages and salaries and the costs of raw materials, thereby further increasing the power of the wealthy. It is the freedom to use instruments of the State, including the military, to effect regime changes in weaker countries that, in the interests of their own people have resisted the operation of the free market. It is the freedom of the powerful to dominate the weak and control the world's resources.

Deploying the notions of freedom and democracy to characterize what appears to be a drive to create a global police state is not just a cynical manipulation of terms, as in George Orwell's *1984* where the Ministry of War is called the Ministry of Peace. This reformulation of the notions of freedom and democracy has solid intellectual foundations. Ultimately, it is grounded in the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. By construing humans as complex machines in a mechanical world, Hobbes provided the basic concepts on which economic theory, Darwinian evolutionary theory and Social Darwinism were eventually developed (Gare, 1996, ch.6). For Hobbes, freedom is to be moved by internal motions rather than external motions; it is the freedom from constraints to satisfy one's appetites and to avoid that to which one is averse, most importantly, death. Ultimately, it is to have the whole world fear and obey one. Everything that humans produce is construed as nothing but instruments to further these ends. Language is an instrument which has been developed to facilitate control of the world. Society and government are established by contract to further egoistic ends, providing more freedom for individuals to dominate the world than would be possible in a state of nature. Within the social body created by this contract, egoism drives the circulation of money and goods to provide its components with the necessary nutrients. The whole science of economics is little more than an elaboration of chapter twenty-four of the *Leviathan* in which Hobbes put forward this idea, and it continues to construe humans as nothing but complex machines, as Philip Mirowski has recently shown (Mirowski, 2002).

Hobbes himself was an opponent of democracy. From an Aristotlean perspective, he was a defender of an enlightened form of tyranny presiding over a society dominated by the vice of acquisitiveness (*pleonexia)*. However, as the intellectual movement he inspired evolved, political concepts were redefined to present Hobbesian assumptions as aligned with democracy. Locke reformulated Hobbes' ideas to justify rebellion against tyranny, but he was a defender of the rights of property owners to unlimited accumulation of property rather than a defender of democracy (Locke, II, 3; II, 135; Macpherson, 1962: ch.5). Before the nineteenth century those who defended democracy, such as

Rousseau and Jefferson, were not Hobbesians (and in the nineteenth century the Democratic Party inspired by Jefferson became the party of the slave-owning class). Those working within the Hobbesian tradition first defended an attenuated notion of democracy in the early nineteenth century. Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, utilitarian proponents of the free market on the grounds that it would lead to the greatest happiness for the greatest number, defended the extension of the franchise as a means to limit government oppression. A more robust defence of democracy was made by James Mill's son, John Stuart Mill, who, influenced by Ancient Greek and Roman notions of politics and German philosophy moral and political philosophy, defended representative government as a means to promote public participation in shaping the future and thereby the development of people's abilities to be self-determining (Mill, 1912: ch.3 & Macpherson, 1977: ch.3). Mill's writings had the effect of making democracy respectable; so respectable that almost all subsequent political movements (with fascism being the obvious exception) have claimed to be democratic. However, Mill had departed from Hobbesian assumptions and he became increasingly critical of the market. Appreciating the incompatibility this ideal of democracy with the selfishness generated by the market and the reduction of people to mere labourers without job security, Mill called for workers' cooperatives to replace the existing relations of production.

Subsequent to Mill, there was continual tension between support for democracy and the Hobbesian tradition of thought. The cooperatives Mill called for did not flourish and in the twentieth century it became apparent that people were not actively participating in public life and were not developing their abilities to do so. It also became apparent in the 1960s that if the form of democracy promoted by Mill were cultivated, it could lead to conflict with the free operation of the market. The passivity of the public and the effective control by competing power elites was then defended as a more stable and efficient form of government than one in which the people actively participated, first by the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter, and then by Robert Dahl and other leading American political scientists (Macpherson, 1973: essay iv). Milton Friedman, another economist and a disciple of the Austrian economist, Friedrich von Hayek, called for a return to the nineteenth century form of economic liberalism in his influential work *Capitalism and Freedom* (Friedman, 1963), arguing that to maximise freedom, where-ever possible political direction should be determined by the free operation of the market. These ideas were presented not as an attack on democracy but in the name of democracy. Political scientists, embracing the Hobbesian notions elaborated within economic theory, went on to elaborate 'rational choice theory', equating all choice based on rigorous egoism with 'rationality' (Ostrom, 1998). It was argued that this not only does but should underlie all political life (Downs, 1957; Amadae, 2003). The neo-conservatives (or, more accurately, 'liberal fascists[2]), who have further developed these ideas, appear to be influenced also by the émigré German political philosopher (and advisor to Goering), Carl Schmitt, who argued that countries need enemies to define and unite them (Schmitt, 1996)[3] However, as a strategy, this is consistent with Hobbes' political philosophy. Elaborating these ideas, the neo-conservatives have reformulated the concepts of freedom and democracy to accord with Hobbes' original philosophy. Freedom is equated not only with the imposition of market relationships and the freedom of choice this allows people to buy and sell on the market; it is having the entire world fearing and obeying those who have prevailed within the world market. Democracy is then the freedom of the winners in the struggle for wealth to use it to augment their wealth.

The Origins of Democracy and Process Metaphysics

But do we have to accept this characterization of democracy? It is important to emphasise that the notion of democracy had its origins in a different tradition of thought than Hobbes' philosophy and economic liberalism. It was based on a different notion of freedom, that of autonomy, the freedom of a community to prescribe its own laws and to determine its own future. Such a community is democratic when all its members are involved equally in formulating its laws and making decisions affecting the whole community. Democracy means power in the hands of the people. Such a notion is by definition inconsistent with concentrations of power, and since wealth is power, it is inconsistent with concentrations of wealth. This notion is still alive and is central to the growing opposition to the new global power elite. The proponents of the traditional notion of democracy believe that if power were decentralized, if people generally were in control of their own destinies, they would not be destroying their environment. This appears plausible. But what does it mean to invoke democracy in this way? What content can be given to the notion of democracy in a world system in which environmental problems transcend national boundaries? How would it function and how would environmental problems be addressed? More fundamentally, how can the traditional notion of democracy be defended when the notions of free agency it presupposes has been invalidated by

advances in the sciences that, in general, have upheld the Hobbesian notion of humans as complex machines moved by appetites and aversions?

To answer such questions it is necessary to examine again this traditional notion of democracy. One way of approaching this task would be to examine ideas of representative democracy and efforts to refurbish it. This would highlight both the difficulties of upholding such a notion philosophically and the practical problems of realizing it. However, since this modern notion of democracy is a compromise with prevailing philosophies and circumstances, it makes more sense to look at the original notion of democracy and then show how it has been modified and adapted to the modern era. Following Cornelius Castoriadis, I will argue that democracy and philosophy are indissociable, and that democracy as the notion was developed by the Ancient Greeks requires some form of process metaphysics to justify it. Against this background it can be seen how antithetical to democracy is the Hobbesian tradition of thought. I will then identify and show the evolution of ideas that developed in opposition to Hobbesian thought. This, I will argue, is essentially the tradition that led to the development of process philosophy. This tradition, I will argue, provides the basis of clarifying and upholding the notion of democracy, but also shows the need for a post-Hobbesian science of humanity as a reference point for reformulating public policies.

Castoriadis' study of the emergence of democracy in the Ancient Greek polis is framed through a version of process philosophy. Castoriadis was himself a process philosopher, and his work shows how it is only through process philosophy that the achievement of the Ancient Greeks in creating a democratic society can be fully understood. Castoriadis' analysis begins with a set of presuppositions, that nature is temporal and '[t]ime is creation and destruction' (Castoriadis, 1997: 399), and that:

> History is creation: the creation of total forms of human life. Social-historical forms are not 'determined' by natural or historical 'laws.' Society is self-creation. … The self-institution of society is the creation of a human world: of 'things,' 'reality,' language, norms, values, ways of life and death, objects for which we live and objects for which we die – and of course, first and foremost, the creation of the human individual in which the institution of society is massively embedded (Castoriadis, 1991, p.84).

He then goes on to point out that: 'It is precisely because history is creation that the question of judging and choosing emerges as a radical, nontrivial question' (ibid. p.87). However, almost every society in history has avoided this question, ascribing their particular institutions to something other than themselves, to their ancestors, to the gods or God or to the laws of history. In Ancient Greece, by contrast, people came to appreciate that they were the creators of their own institutions.

It was the community of citizens who proclaimed themselves as self-legislating, self-judging and self-governing. Equality of citizens meant their active involvement in public affairs. Citizens not only had the right to speak and to vote, they were under an obligation to speak their minds. A political space was created which upheld the common good. Democracy was above all public deliberation about the common good and collective goals. The only time when people were excluded from voting was when their particular interests were involved. This political space entailed the creation of a public space which maintained the conditions for democracy. People freely discussed politics and everything they cared about in the *agora* (the place of assembly) before deliberating in the *ecclesia* (the assembly). There was free speech, free thinking, free examination and questioning without restraint. Participation in the public space required courage, responsibility and shame. And it required education for people to become citizens to give substantive content to this public space. Education (*paedia*) first and foremost 'involves becoming conscious that the *polis* is also oneself and that its fate also depends upon one's mind, behaviour, and decisions; in other words, it is participation in political life' (ibid.: 113). In turn, this public space created a public time, including writing publicly accessible histories of the people 'leading up to the present and clearly pointing toward new things to be done in the future' (ibid.: 114) and the production and public performance of plays. Democracy was the regime of self-limitation; the failure of self-limitation was hubris (ibid.: 115). Greek tragic drama was a warning against hubris and one-sided reasoning.

Greek politics and philosophy emerged together with democracy. Here we find people explicitly deliberating about the laws and changing those laws. This led to questions such as what is it for a law to be right or wrong, that is, what is justice? Here also we find people for the first time explicitly questioning the instituted collective representation of the world and proposing alternatives. They quickly moved from questions about whether some representations of the world are true to what is truth. The conceptions of the world developed by these early Greek thinkers gave a place to their own creative activity. It was a self-organizing world in which order emerged from chaos. For

Anaximander, the earliest Greek philosopher of whose ideas we have good knowledge and the point of departure for all subsequent Greek philosophy (Kahn, 1994: 6), the primary element of being is the indeterminate or the boundless. Form, the determinate existence of various beings, emerges through injustice, requiring such forms to render justice to one another and pay compensation for their injustice through their decay and disappearance. In this way, cosmos emerges from and decays back into the chaos. There is never complete order; chaos reigns supreme. Human society is a struggle for further order. In the scheme of early Greek cosmology there was an implicit connection between the oppositions: chaos and cosmos, physis and nomos (i.e. nature and custom or law) and hubris and justice. In each, the second functions to limit the first. Politics and philosophy are possible because the world is not completely ordered; cosmos has not completely eliminated chaos. If the world were fully ordered, by the gods, by the nature of society or the laws of history, there would be no place for political, instituting action. And if there were full and certain knowledge of the human domain, then democracy would be absurd. As Castoriadis argued: 'democracy implies that all citizens have the possibility of attaining a correct *doxa and* that nobody possesses an *episteme* of things political' (ibid.: 104).

Castoriadis notes that Plato, and to a lesser extent Aristotle, were opponents of democracy, although their work was only made possible through the traditions of questioning developed within a democratic society. Consequently, they provide a distorted picture of democratic life as it had developed in Athens over three hundred years. However, these philosophers were responding to the failure of democracy during the Peloponnesian War, and both Plato and Aristotle made important contributions to analysing what is involved in political discussion and debate. Plato portrayed a new kind of dispassionate, open-minded pursuit of the truth through dialogue, while Aristotle argued that unless people have a shared set of basic principles, their deliberations and inquiries are unlikely to lead anywhere. In politics the most fundamental question that must addressed is: What is a good life? When we have accepted an answer to this question we can consider what kind of constitution will enable people to live the good life. In considering constitutions, Aristotle identified six basic kinds according to first, whether one, some or the many rule, and secondly, according to whether those who rule do so for the common interest or their own interest (Aristotle: bk III, ch.7). Constitutions dominated by self-interest were portrayed as perverted forms of the true forms, those concerned with the common good and constituted in accordance with strict principles of justice. Within a particular constitution it is then possible to deliberate on specific issues. Working out what is the good life requires ideas about and principles for investigating what is human life and what is life in general, while these are based on more basic notions of what is primary being and how this question should be answered, that is, metaphysics. Aristotle clarified the indissociability of philosophy and politics and the relationship between metaphysics and political issues.

The Failure to Reconstitute Democracy in Modernity

Against this background it should be evident how alien is the modern world to democracy in its original sense. To begin with, there is the problem with the market. An unfettered market concentrates wealth and undermines people's economic security, forcing them into a competitive struggle that leaves no time for participation in public life. Without control of the market and with the selfishness it generates there can be no democracy. Secondly, there are problems of scale. It is for this reason that notions of representation become imperative. It should be noted that for the Greeks who invented elections, the elevation of people to positions of power in this way is not democracy but a form of aristocracy or monarchy. At best, what we have are mixed constitutions combining elements of democracy, aristocracy and monarchy. As we have seen, John Stuart Mill believed that the important elements of Ancient Greek democracy could be carried over into the modern world through representative government. He and those who advanced his ideas promised 'first, political participation, or general involvement mediated by representatives in decisions affecting the whole community; secondly, accountable government; and thirdly, freedom to protest and reform' (Held, 1995, p.13) While there were grounds for hope that these promises might be fulfilled, it is now clear that liberal democracy has failed to deliver on any of these promises. One reason should now be evident: the metaphysics underlying the Hobbesian tradition of thought, the metaphysics still presupposed and supported by the mainstream of science, undermines the basic premises on which democracy was based.

Hobbes followed Aristotle in grounding his system of thought in metaphysics, and then redefined all the received notions of ethics and politics on the assumption of a mechanical view of the world (Herbert, 1989). However, in the deterministic, block universe defended by Hobbes, there is no place

for an autonomous society to participate in the determination of the future. If people are nothing but mechanisms moved by appetites and aversions, there is no point in deliberating about the good life and how to achieve it and then governing for the common good. In fact, Hobbes had characterized language in a way that gave no place for such deliberation. Language, Hobbes argued, consists of names coined to accumulate and convey knowledge on how to control the world and to enable people to co-operate to achieve such control; most importantly, to make contracts and to 'make known to others our wills' (Hobbes, 1985: 102). Other language uses were treated as mere amusements. People's appetites and aversions, which, Hobbes argued, define what is good and evil, are brute givens (Hobbes, 1985: 216). Injustice is nothing more than breaking a covenant, an agreement or contract presupposing a coercive power to enforce it; all else is just. Only those constitutions characterized by Aristotle as perverted were conceivable from Hobbes' perspective. There is no place to question the justice of covenants or the domination of one society by another. According to Hobbes, to claim laws are unjust means nothing more than to say one does not like them. Most importantly, aligning himself with Galileo's methods, Hobbes claimed an absolute knowledge of political issues. There was no requirement for a public sphere to promote questioning of received ideas and institutions. Locke, Bentham and the political economists who developed these ideas into a science of society were all elaborating these ideas, although with less consistency than Hobbes. Economic liberalism, upholding the primacy of the market and the subordination of society to the logic of the market, with every important political decision on domestic issues being made by technically trained economists or 'rational choice' theorists, is the logical outcome of this tradition.

So, is there a basis for reviving the ideal and practice of the traditional notion of democracy? John Stuart Mill began his philosophising within the Hobbesian tradition, but, as noted, became increasingly supportive of efforts to revive participatory democracy. At the same time he became increasingly critical of his Hobbesian (and Benthamite) heritage and increasingly eclectic, drawing upon the ideas of Ancient Greek and German philosophers and the Romantic poets influenced by them. This undermined the coherence of his philosophy. As John Bowring wrote at the time, Mill had 'read Wordsworth, and that muddled him, and he has been in a strange confusion ever since …' (Ryan, 1974: 48). While persuasive, Mill's arguments did not have the force to displace Hobbesian thought. Habermas' more recent neo-Kantian effort to defend the role of the public sphere through discourse ethics without confronting Hobbes' metaphysics has been singularly ineffectual. His discourse ethics provides no basis for considering political issues beyond promoting a place for unfettered discourse and it provides no strategy for dealing with the forces of the globalised market. These ideas do not provide an effective intellectual opposition to the neo-conservatives who, in Aristotelian terminology, are eliminating this democratic component of modern society entirely and replacing a mix of aristocracy and monarchy (power elites concerned with the common good) by a mix of oligarchy and tyranny (power elites governing for their own interests). My contention is that the traditional notion of democracy can be defended both theoretically and practically, but to do so it is necessary to have recourse to the tradition of thought that has challenged the basic assumptions of Hobbes' philosophy.

The Defence of Free Agency and the Origins of Modern Process Metaphysics

The tradition of thought that developed in opposition to Hobbes began with the writings of Vico and Montesquieu rejecting the Hobbesian conception of humans. Of the two, Montesquieu was far more influential. There are two main components to his opposition to Hobbes. The first is his affirmation of human freedom or liberty, which he conceived of not as acting according to impulse and doing what one wishes but as 'being able to do what one ought to will, and in not being constrained to do what one ought not to will' (Richter, 1977: 243; Montesquieu, 1989: 155). The second is his conception of people as essentially social, developing as individuals in the context of particular societies and his appreciation of the diversity of these societies. The notion of human liberty as doing what one ought to do, that is, as accepting limits on one's actions, was taken up and developed first by Rousseau, then following him, by Kant and Fichte. The second component of Montesquieu's ideas was taken up by Herder and developed through his conception of humans as essentially cultural, and his recognition of a diversity of cultures (Berlin, 1980; Barnard, 1988; Beiser, 1992). Schelling and Hegel recombined these ideas.

Kant's whole philosophical system was devoted to justifying the notion of human freedom. However, here I will focus on the work of Fichte and Schelling. Following Kant, Fichte argued that freedom requires a reflexivity or self-consciousness, but argued that Kant failed to adequately account for and characterize this. He argued that the emergence of reflexivity comes about only when it is solicited by another free agent (Fichte, 2000: 29ff.) The 'I' only becomes self-authorizing through upbringing

(education) and through acts of mutual recognition. People must be educated to be persons, but to achieve this status they must also be recognized by others as free agents. Recognition of oneself as a free agent can only be asked of someone who is treated as a free agent. The relation to others should not be seen as a causal relation but a normative relation. When two agents mutually recognize each other, each agent becomes for the other the normative 'Not-I' that serves to limit and constrain the normative commitments the other undertakes. This conception of agency yields a basic principle of 'right' or primordial right to limit your freedom so that others around you can also be free (Fichte, 2000: 85). Fichte argued from this that it is necessary to go beyond ethics and to elaborate a political philosophy. The State, he argued, should be construed as the institution that embodies the common will and which has the power to judge its citizens and sanction them accordingly. It should be the objective viewpoint with the power to observe the various branches of government and society to ensure they comply with the basic principles of 'right'. Above all else, the State should recognize people as free agents, and thereby facilitate their development as such. To achieve this, the State should educate people and guarantee their economic security. The crucial points being made by Fichte are that not only freedom but the very existence of a person derives from limits associated with mutual recognition, and this underlies both his ethics and his political philosophy.

Fichte's philosophy was the point of departure for Schelling, originally Fichte's disciple. Following Hölderlin, Schelling concluded that Fichte still had not shown how self-consciousness was possible; to do this it was necessary for people to presuppose a whole of which subjects and objects are parts (Bowie, 1993: 46; Bowie, 2003: 103, 113). He attempted to formulate a conception of nature from which both subjects and objects could emerge, thereby fulfilling this function, making intelligible the possibility of free human agency as Fichte had conceived it by beings which had evolved within nature. In doing so he developed a cosmology surprisingly similar to that of Anaximander and Heraclitus, although developed in much greater detail. Schelling's procedure was to subtract from self-consciousness to arrive at the lowest conceivable potential, and then construct the path upward, through a succession of limits, to show how the conscious self could emerge from this as its highest potential (Schelling, 1994: 114ff.). The lowest potential arrived at was the 'pure subject-object', which Schelling equated with nature, and, he claimed, the 'unconscious' stages through which consciousness emerges can only become conscious to an 'I' which has developed out of them and realizes its dependence upon them. Nature was conceived as essentially self-limiting activity, simultaneously 'productivity' (or process) and 'products'. Insofar as nature is productivity, it is subject; insofar as it is product, it is object. From opposed activities, that is, activities limiting each other, emerge force and matter, space and time, chemicals and non-living and living organisms. Whatever product or form exists is in perpetual process of forming itself by limiting itself. The process of self-constitution or self-organization, rather than being a marginal phenomenon, must be the primal ground of all reality (Heuser-Kessler, 1986). Dead matter, in which product prevails over productivity, is a result of the stable balance of forces where products have achieved a state of indifference. Living organisms differ from non-living organisms in that their complexity makes it even more difficult to maintain a state of indifference; they are characterized by irritability. They must respond to changes in their environments creatively to form and reform themselves as products. The senses become an essential component of such creative response. Sentient life is the condition for the emergence of spirit, with its social forms and history. With spirit, we have intersubjectivity, the experience of world as objective, and the emergence of freedom to choose evil or good. Evil is the domination of the blind self-seeking urge. It is creative power out of control; but without such power there would be no existence and no good. The potential for good comes with the self-consciousness that emerges with social relationships that limit, and facilitate the self-limitation, of this creative power. Thus, by outlining a cosmology in which the very existence of anything is self-organization through the limiting of activity, Schelling provided a naturalistic justification for Fichte's notion of freedom as self-limiting, and thereby Fichte's political philosophy.

Schelling upheld the value of historical narrative; it is only through such a narrative, Schelling held, that it is possible to grasp the unconscious history through which the conscious 'I' moves towards awareness of its freedom (Bowie, 1993: 47, 51). The development of institutions is a part of this narrative, extending from the first forms of human community to a projected future in which there will be a federation of all States so that 'the mutual quarrels between people can be referred to an international tribunal, composed of members of all civilized nations, and having at its command against each rebellious state-individual the power of the rest' (Schelling, 1978: 198). How can this brought about? As noted, for Schelling as for Fichte, free action is conceived as self-limiting activity in which the freedom of others is being recognized. This brings into focus the process within which people are limiting their activities in appreciation of the freedom of others. Schelling gave some indication of what this might entail in his philosophy of history. As he put it:

> [T]here can only be a history of such beings as have an ideal before them, which can never be carried by the individual, but only by the species. And for this it is needful that every succeeding individual should start in at the very point where the preceding one left off, and thus that continuity should be possible between succeeding individuals, and, if that which is to be realized in the progress of history is something attainable only through reason and freedom, that there should also be the possibility of tradition and transmission (Schelling, 1978: 200).

The focus here is on an action transcending generations as an historical development. History, Schelling argued, is only possible where there is freedom, that is, where there is neither mechanical determinism nor random chaos, where agents who are free nevertheless coordinate their activities to realize ideals. History is a story, a story of what has been done in the past and what is aspired to in the future. This story unfolds and is passed on and taken up by each new generation. It is a story involving the free action of a multiplicity of individuals, yet that still moves towards the realization of goals. In this way a multiplicity of free individuals can participate in projecting and realizing a global system of justice transcending and limiting each particular State. Schelling showed how science, philosophy and art also have a place within this narrative, being not only as means to understand the world, but activities within the world through which the world (the absolute) is becoming self-conscious.

Schelling's work inspired Hegel who elaborated a theory of history and a political philosophy based on the struggle for recognition in far greater detail than Fichte or Schelling, reformulating and, following Schelling, absorbing Herder's ideas on cultural diversity of nations and showing how different institutions provided people with recognition and how these had developed through history (Williams, 1992, 1997). Hegel appreciated more clearly than Fichte or Schelling that the quest for recognition provides the motivation for people to uphold and develop the institutions that accord recognition, and to act ethically. He appreciated the diversity of forms of recognition, upholding the family as the realm of love, civil society as the realm in which property and rights are recognised, and the corporation and the State as realms in which solidarity between people is achieved (Honneth, 1996: ch.5). In this way Hegel gave a place to the market based on egoistic relations, but required that it be constrained within strict limits and ultimately subordinated to the State which, following Fichte, Hegel held to be responsible for recognising the significance of each individual as a free agent and for embodying their common will. In developing these ideas, Hegel abandoned Schelling's naturalistic standpoint, treating nature as something posited by Spirit. However, Schelling had already provided a philosophy of nature through which Hegel's ideas on humanity could be understood naturalistically. Through Schelling, we can both construe humans, their cultures and institutions as emergent phenomena, and appreciate that all such emergence involves limiting or constraining activity.

Following Schlegel's precept that '[i]t is equally deadly for the spirit to have a system and not to have a system. It must simply resolve to combine both', Schelling overcame Kant's strictures on metaphysics and developed a coherent metaphysical system (Schelling, 2000: xxiv). Schelling claimed that his own philosophy was 'neither materialism nor spiritualism, neither realism nor idealism' but contained within itself 'the opposition of all earlier systems' (1994, p.120). It was in fact, a form of process philosophy (Orel, 2001; Gare, 2001; Gare, 2002a). In place of Hobbes' dogmatic metaphysics construing the world as mechanical matter in motion, Schelling's metaphysical system was open to revision and development, and provided a research progamme for reconstruing both nature and humanity as creative processes. Schelling's philosophy influenced either directly or indirectly the whole tradition of anti-mechanistic natural science (Esposito, 1977) and a range of traditions in the human sciences and humanities, including hermeneutics, humanistic Marxism (White, 1996), existentialism, the Bakhtin circle (Orel, 2001) and critical theory (Bowie, 1997). It also influenced either directly or indirectly the philosophies of the process metaphysicians Peirce, Bergson, Mead and Whitehead, the thinkers whose ideas enable anti-mechanistic natural science and anti-reductionist ideas in the human sciences and humanities to be integrated (with modifications) into a coherent cosmology (Gare, 2002a). That is, Schelling and those who have followed him have provided a philosophy that is successfully challenging in virtually every intellectual domain Hobbes' core ideas, the ideas which had rendered the notion of democracy in its original sense unintelligible.

Process Metaphysics and the Quest for Democracy

Once the fruitfulness of this counter tradition of thought is appreciated, not just in parts but as a whole, there do seem to be grounds for hope that democracy can be successfully revived and that people will then be able to address the problems of environmental destruction. To begin with,

conceiving nature to account for the emergence of humans as self-conscious, free agents involves a radical elevation in the status of the rest of nature. Schelling reacted against the idea that nature as merely there to serve human purposes (Bowie, 2003: 103). By conceiving it as self-organising with its own dynamics, he also revealed the dangers of treating nature as though it could be totally dominated by humans, and by conceiving human self-creation as self-limiting on the basis of recognition of others, he upheld the basis for an ethics that could easily be extended to constraining people's actions towards the natural world. Proper recognition of others is essentially justice. This can easily be extended to encompass the proper recognition of and thereby doing justice to the significance and dynamics of non-human life forms (Gare, 1996: ch.16). The self-limitation required for this is not counter to self-interest but is the condition of being a self, and limitation is no longer conceived as 'unnatural' as it is in social Darwinism, but as a further development of the creative advance of nature. This ethics is inseparable from political philosophy. It upholds the quest to create and maintain institutions through which the freedom and significance of people are recognized as an essential part of the struggle for recognition, and again this quest can easily be extended to properly recognizing the rest of nature. That is, what is required is the development of institutions that properly recognize both human and non-human beings and processes in their practices and projects, and the means to ensure that they continue to do so. What is being suggested here is that such requirements are most likely to be met when institutions are genuinely democratic, that is, where power to determine the future is in the hands of the people educated, provided with the requisite economic and political security and organized for this. While neither Fichte, Schelling nor Hegel were defenders of democracy, their commitment to upholding the reality of human freedom lends itself to defending the devolution of power into the hands of the people, a view that had been defended by Herder and was defended by the majority of Hegel's followers, ranging from liberal and left-Hegelians (including humanist Marxists) to American pragmatists (Toews, 1980; Barber, 1984). With such self-determination being conceived as self-limitation, this political philosophy also lends itself to addressing how societies should and can constrain their (and their members) activities to preserve and enrich the environmental conditions for their continued existence.

However, relating such ideas to practice is more difficult. While process metaphysics could provide the philosophical foundation for the traditional form of democracy as practiced in Ancient Greece, this form only included the males of the ruling class of single cities living very similar lives. Relations beyond these cities were seen entirely in terms of power to subjugate or be subjugated. As we have seen, efforts by those influenced by John Stuart Mill to resurrect the virtues associated with direct democracy into the modern world based on representative government have largely failed (although some countries, for instance Sweden, have been more successful than others). This has not only been due to the weakness of Mill's philosophical arguments; at least partly it has been due to the intensifying dynamics of the market and increasing complexity of society in a world-system with increasing interaction between countries and regions at all levels. Mill himself later came to appreciate that the ravages of the free market, including the concentration of wealth, the cultivation of selfishness and the impoverishment of education, undermined the conditions for democracy; he became increasingly sceptical about democracy and increasingly sympathetic to socialism (Mill, 1971: 138). To increase democratic control over society it is necessary to organize social life to not only control the market but also to reduce this complexity. This could be achieved by organizing the world into a hierarchically ordered federal structure decentralizing power as much as possible and reducing economic interactions within this structure. That is, localities, countries and regions should aim for economic self-sufficiency where possible in order to subordinate the market to democratic control, to undermine the positive feed-back loops identified by Bunker and Arthur which are at present massively concentrating world-power, and thereby enable people to decide what kind of future they want (Cavanagh, 2002: 107; Shiva, 2000: ch.7). Achieving such decentralization should involve at least some direct democracy to cultivate the virtues required for any form of democracy to work (Barber 1984). However, even if this were achieved, it would be necessary to have representative democracy at some levels and to develop administrative structures of some kind (Bobbio, 1987). In fact, in the modern world I believe democracy is only possible with the development of an open, professional civil service such as has existed in Sweden committed to researching, articulating and educating the public about policy options; that is, democracy should be conjoined with a form of 'aristocracy' to form what Polybius characterized as a 'mixed constitution' (Polybius, 1979: Bk 4 – 10, 310). And it is necessary for people to appreciate issues relevant to their lives at a multitude of spatial and temporal scales, extending to the entire globe over decades, centuries and even millennia. While achieving this will require innovative thinking about institutions, here I want to focus more broadly on the cultural aspects of democracy that are required for democratic institutions.

Democracy and Culture

As noted, the reaction against Hobbesian thought was associated not only with the affirmation of the possibility of freedom but acknowledgement of the diversity of societies. This acknowledgement was brought into focus and further developed through the elaboration of the notion of culture. Hegel synthesised these two components of anti-Hobbesian thought, conceiving the self-formation of spirit as developing through the dialectic of recognition, the dialectic of representation and the dialectic of labour which, while being dependent upon each other, are irreducible to each other (Habermas, 1973). The development of this notion of culture is associated with the appreciation that people create themselves through culture, that they become human through being socialised into a particular culture, but in doing so become free agents, developing the capacity to question and transform their culture, either as individuals or collectively. The notion of culture corresponds to the Greek notion of *nomos*, but incorporates much more into it. In the ancient Greek world, democracy was associated with people taking responsibility for the creation and transformation of their own *nomos* (that is, being *autonomous*); in the modern world democracy requires that people take responsibility for the preservation, questioning, transformation and creative advance of their culture. While Hobbesians deny the notion of culture, treating their conception of humans as egoists as the natural and unalterable state of affairs, as the true view of humans justified by the natural sciences, their opponents are concerned to show that this conception of humans and way of being is the product of only one culture among others, and that people could fundamentally transform themselves by transforming their culture, thereby creating a radically different form of society. For this reason they should take responsibility for the form of society they live in whether they choose to preserve or change it. Castoriadis' argument is a development of this view, although he does not deploy the term 'culture' for this purpose.

Democracy requires, first and foremost, an education system that appreciates that humans only become free agents able to take responsibility for their community and society and participate properly in its institutions through being educated, that is, 'encultured'. An education system should simultaneously enable people to master their cultural heritage, appreciate that they are culturally formed and culture creating beings and should develop people's capacity to actively participate in maintaining, questioning, developing and transforming their culture, including their institutions. Inevitably, participation in the development and transformation of a culture, particularly where this is associated with the development or transformation of institutions, will involve power relations. To understand the relationship between culture and power, especially as this relationship operates over long durations, it is necessary to consider the nature of agency and of action and the relationship between these and narratives.

As we saw, Schelling suggested a close relationship between narratives, the process of coming to self-consciousness, and agency over generations. Such ideas have been defended and developed much further by recent philosophers. It has been shown how people act according to how they define reality, or, what amounts to the same thing, which characterization of reality they take to be legitimate, and how it is through stories that definitions of reality are elaborated, promulgated, evaluated, chosen and acted upon (Gare, 2002b)[4] David Carr in particular has shown how all but minor actions require of people that they tell a story of what they are doing in order to continue the action after interruptions, to coordinate the actions of different people and to integrate particular actions with broader actions and projects (Carr, 1991). Actions are lived stories. The more complex the action, the longer its duration and the more people involved, the more obviously this is the case. Actions such as building a community or developing our understanding of the cosmos can transcend generations, and Carr showed the central importance of narratives to such actions. Institutions are largely made up of patterns of symbolically organized actions crystallized and sustained as part of such long-term complex actions. However, in crystallizing patterns of actions, institutions take on a life of their own and become objects to be maintained, questioned, reformed, transformed or redefined in relation to other institutions and to society's current and longer term projects. To continue long term actions, each new generation must be educated to appreciate the stories (histories) characterizing the purpose and development of these institutions, their roles within these multi-generational actions and the arguments which have taken place over their purposes and roles in order to be able to properly take on roles within them. Just as individual actions consist of a hierarchy of smaller, component actions while being components of broader actions, stories are made up of smaller, component stories while being parts of broader stories. People are born into social worlds already constituted by stories, including stories of institutions, and must take a place within these; but in taking up a place, they are put in a position where they can question and transform these stories,

including the ultimate goals they project. That is, through stories people are recognized as subjects and are thereby 'subjected' by the logic of these stories, but at the same time they can be empowered to entertain or imagine alternative narrative emplotments with alternative visions of the future and alternative ways of living, to configure the stories of their own lives and to participate in refiguring, thereby become the co-authors of, these broader stories (Wood, 1991). The stories of particular people are lived out in a world of unfolding stories of different durations, ultimately extending to the stories of nations, civilization and of humanity over centuries.

Democracy and Polyphonic Stories

By recognizing the storied nature of human action and of societies it becomes possible to consider the kinds of stories required for democracy. To begin with, recognizing actions as stories focuses attention on the way in which other beings enter into a story. In the Hobbesian model of action, beings other than the actor, including other people, enter into the story of an action (or complex of actions) only as the subordinates, instruments or obstacles for realizing particular ends. They are objectified. The story of such an action, if it is explicitly articulated, is monologic, recounted from one, unquestioned perspective. But stories can also involve appreciating others as co-becoming processes with their own ends and stories might be questioned and reformulated to accord justice to all beings affected by such stories. Such reformulation requires a place within these stories for actors to question their own beliefs, to challenge each other's beliefs and to reflect on and reformulate the stories they are living out. Such reflection can involve considerations of different possible paths to particular ends, questioning the ends themselves and envisaging alternative ends, or questioning of the interpretations of situations on which such judgements are based. Reflection on interpretations can range from questioning what is taken to be the case, or questioning the interpretative schemes through which situations are interpreted. The participants in the action might be accorded different degrees of recognition as potential or actual participants in questioning and choosing between different versions of the stories in which they are participants. Where a high degree of recognition is acknowledged, we have polyphonic stories, stories which take into account a diversity of perspectives in dialogue and debate with each other, generating at the same time greater reflexivity and much more active engagement in interpretation, questioning, conjecturing, storytelling and choosing between different versions of stories by the participants in the story (Morson & Emerson, 1990: 231-268).

Democracy presupposes and requires polyphonic narratives. For a social order to be democratic there must be appreciation of diverse perspectives, dialogue, questioning, telling and retelling of stories, the generation of new conjectures about the nature of the world and new emplotments to interpret or reformulate the stories we are living out individually and collectively, and philosophies to more systematically question, develop and reformulate and adjudicate between conjectures about and interpretations of the world. In a democratic world order there would be a polyphonic grand narrative giving a place to diverse people in diverse institutions, countries and regions with diverse interests contemplating what kind of future they want. It would consist of people constrained to participate in this narrative but would provide them with the means to question and reformulate the narratives of the institutions within which they are participating, their communities, their societies and their civilizations, and this grand narrative, and the means to promulgate their versions of these stories, to debate with opposing versions and to participate in choosing between rival versions. The destruction of democracy involves the imposition of a monologic narrative on society with very little place for questioning the stories or interpretative schemes that people are socialized into and which they are living out, and the disappearance or trivialization of philosophical questioning and speculation.

From Economics to Human Ecology

With this in mind we can now assess the relationship between neo-liberalism and democracy, and consider what would be required to refurbish the traditional notion of democracy. Economic liberalism is the effort to emancipate the market from societies throughout the world and to subordinate societies to the laws of the market. The first attempt led to the Great Depression, to the rise of Nazism and to the Second World War (Polanyi, 1957). Neo-liberals have revived this project, and their success could have even more disastrous consequences. Neo-liberalism privileges economics as the core discourse on fundamental issues of domestic public policy, a discourse that excludes the general population as lacking expertise, and with an intolerance of cultural differences that resist the market and support for the quest for new markets and new sources of cheap raw materials to stave off economic stagnation, it promotes an aggressive, militarist foreign policy. The ultimate end of

civilization is economic growth through the technological domination of nature and of people and the imposition of the market on every facet of life throughout the entire world. This is upheld not as one possibility among others from which we should choose, but as the natural order of things. It involves the transformation of education into a business selling a service promising to augment the marketability of people's labour power and it reduces research to the development of technology to generate profits. The cultural life essential for democracy, insofar as it is not reduced to an instrument of production, is devalued and trivialized as entertainment. Neo-liberalism imposes a monologic grand narrative that excludes questioning. Freedom is reduced to what are for most people the extremely limited choices available through participation in the market, generally without the knowledge required to make even these choices. The inevitable concentration of wealth generated by the market empowers a small, super-wealthy elite to manipulate how the market and political and legal systems operate and, to a considerable extent, how and what most people think. In the mass media, history is almost always interpreted from the perspective of the power elites. All questions about the ultimate goals of society and civilization are taken off the agenda, even when the dynamic of the market threatens to destroy the ecological conditions for humanity's survival.

Process metaphysics is important because it provides the basis not only for challenging the Hobbesian tradition of thought on which neo-liberalism is based and upholding the possibility of democracy, but also for upholding the significance of cultural life, particularly the importance of stories, required for its functioning. It provides a perspective from which the past history of humanity and its intellectual development can be questioned and reformulated, the present re-evaluated and a new vision of the future projected. As metaphysics, it also provides the basis for organizing debates on political issues. As Aristotle argued, debates on political issues are only likely to get anywhere when people can arrive at agreement about what is the good life, what does it mean to be human, what is life, and ultimately, what is being. Metaphysics makes all such assumptions explicit and thereby open to questioning in a systematic way, and process metaphysics, unlike Hobbesian metaphysics, provides a place for and upholds the importance of such reflexivity. However, process metaphysics also provides the foundation for new forms of human science.

At present, politics is dominated by economic theory either directly or through its influence on other disciplines, notably political science. Efforts have been made to reformulate economics on different assumptions about the nature of humans. However, to deal with the mammoth task of grappling with the global ecological crisis, a more radical solution is called for. Economics, with its Hobbesian assumptions, needs to be knocked off its pedestal and subordinated to a different kind of science able to construe humans as autonomous participants in the dynamics of nature capable of redefining themselves, their place in the world, and their goals. At the beginning of this paper I referred to the work of Stephen Bunker. Bunker is a sociologist, but the framework he used to analyse the environmentally destructive imperatives of the global system is human ecology. I have argued elsewhere that while economics has its roots in the metaphysics of mechanistic materialism, human ecology has its roots in the anti-mechanistic tradition of thought associated with Schelling (Gare, 2000a), that is, in the tradition of process metaphysics. It is implicitly anti-reductionist, holding not only that nature has dynamics of its own that we must recognize, but that humans are themselves culturally produced and culturally transforming agents, by their actions creating the future whether they acknowledge this or not. Human ecology overcomes the division between the natural sciences, the human sciences and the humanities. Recent developments in ecology incorporating into it thermodynamics, hierarchy theory and complexity theory have not only reinforced its anti-mechanistic heritage, but also advanced its capacity to analyse the relationship between the dynamics of nature and the dynamics of human societies (Allen et. al., 2003). Hierarchy theory in particular, characterizing the development of new levels of organization as involving new levels of facilitative constraints is both in accordance with Schelling's concept of evolution through the limiting of activity and justifies the conception of humans as potentially creative participants within nature by virtue of their capacity to develop their own constraints (Gare, 2000b). Incorporating such theories, human ecology has the means to bring into focus, analyse and comprehend the complex power relations within and between societies. While economics implicitly upholds growth in the production of commodities as the ultimate end, human ecology should explicitly uphold the quest for autonomy and the proper recognition of people and nature as its ends (thereby leaving these open to further questioning), and the most basic end, the condition of everything else, the development of an environmentally sustainable civilization. As a coordinating framework to rethink our future, to recast our grand narratives of civilization, human ecology could provide the framework for democratic societies, federated at multiple levels, to comprehend the world and to deliberate on the creation the future. It could also provide the framework for thinking about what kind of institutions we should be striving to create, institutions embodying and facilitating a commitment to autonomy, democracy and

justice; that is, democratic institutions which will enable people collectively to choose an environmentally sustainable future.

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Notes

[1] This paper is based on the Douglas Lecture delivered at St Andrews University on July, 27, 2003 as part of the 'Applied Process Thought' Conference organized by Dr Mark Dibben.

[2] 'Liberal fascism', a term originally proposed by H.G. Wells, is the best description of these 'neo-conservatives' who are simultaneously promoting the market while addressing the fragmentation of society it engenders by promoting xenophobia to achieve national unity.

[3] It is not necessary here to enter into the debate on how much the neo-conservatives were influenced by Schmitt's Hobbesian protégé Leo Strauss at Chicago University. If Strauss was influential, it was because his ideas accorded with the metaphysical assumptions prevailing in Anglophone countries.

[4] Process philosophy as it has developed since Schelling provides an underpinning for understanding this central role of

stories in human self-creation. Stories involve multiple levels of durational becoming (Bergson), semiosis (Peirce), the dialectic of recognition (Mead), creative imagination (Castoriadis) and concrescence (Whitehead).

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