

Abstract submitted by Alexandros Schismenos

Title:

Direct democracy, social ecology and public space.

Abstract:

Today, at a time of general crisis, economic crisis, political crisis, ecological and anthropological crisis, human environments' existence is threatened. The privatization of public space, under the false identification of public and state, transforms social geography and the public architecture of life. We also see the end of national politics, under the grid of transnational and transnational networks of power, combined with the revival of nationalistic rhetoric as a means of manipulating populations.

Full implementation of the neoliberal doctrine is hindered by three main factors:

- The exhaustion of natural resources.
- The collective resistance of societies and the psychic resistance of individuals.
- The fundamental contradiction of capitalism itself, which tends to objectify individuals whilst it is based on the exploitation of human ingenuity.

We also see the emergence of new social movements from a local standpoint with a global horizon, which link locality to globality, and combine local communal traditions with the universal project of social ecology and direct democracy.

21st century movements raise the issue of commons as a matter of direct democracy, recreation of free public space and free public time. They raise the issue of self-government in a public space where everyone participates equally and freely, but also, by their activity, they create a primal public time through coexistence, exchange of ideas, new forms of global communication and political struggle.

My contribution will be a concise presentation of the main problems and perspectives that arise through this synthesis of the commons, social ecology and direct democracy.

CV:

I was born in 1978 and earned my Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Ioannina in 2017. I am a member of the editorial team of 'Babylonia' political magazine and an active participant in social movements since 2000.