Institutionalizing Radical Democracy: Socialist Republicanism and Democratizing the Economy

Abstract:

This article proposes a reorientation of the radical democracy research program towards a greater attentiveness to the institutional realisation of its principles. It does so by bringing the radical democratic tradition into conversation with socialist republicanism. I argue that the struggle against domination requires engaging with political and economic institutions to extend democratic principles from the governmental sphere to broader sectors of society. By combining insights from both traditions the article suggests shifting attention from an emphasis on disruption and insurgent uprisings to the goals of equalizing power between citizens and instituting democratic ownership and control over the economy. This framework enables radical democracy to respond to long-standing criticisms concerning the need for a more robust articulation of the injustices caused by capitalist relations of production.

Keywords: radical democracy, socialist republicanism, economic democracy, Karl Kautsky, Jacques Rancière, Sheldon Wolin, Claude Lefort

Introduction

Radical democracy describes a broad school of theorists who question the theoretical foundations and challenge the political closures and exclusions of current liberal representative democratic regimes. The core of the radical democratic literature has typically included Chantal Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Rancière, Miguel Abensour, and Sheldon Wolin, although many other thinkers remain crucial in this constellation.[1] These writers have offered different diagnoses of the problems facing existing democratic regimes and have theorized a variety of accounts of political change.[2] A major criticism of theorists of radical democracy has been the undertheorization of the institutional dimension of their work, leaving a chasm between their theories of radical difference and the realisation of more free and egalitarian modes of being in political practice.[3] One aspect of this criticism is that radical democratic theorizing is undertaken at such an abstract level of political analysis it ultimately produces very little in the way of practical consequences for political movements seeking to enact new forms of egalitarian politics.[4] This line of criticism is often levelled at the focus on the

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[1] For three important collections see Lars Tønder and Lasse Thomassen (eds)., *Radical Democracy: Politics Between Abundance and Lack* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Alexandros Kioupkiolis and Giorgos Katsambekis (eds.), *Radical Democracy and Collective Movements Today: The Biopolitics of the Multitude versus the Hegemony of the People* (London: Routledge, 2014); Martin Breaugh, Christopher Holman, Rachel Magnusson, Paul Mazzocchi, and Devin Penner (eds.), *Thinking Radical Democracy: The Return to Politics in Post-war France* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

[2] For a useful sketch of the major differences see Paulina Tambakaki, "Agonism Reloaded: Potentia, Renewal and Radical Democracy." *Political Studies Review* 15:4 (2017), pp. 577–588.

[3] Lasse Thomassen, "Radical Democracy" in Mark Bevir (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Political Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2010), pp. 1141–1145, 1142.

[4] Mark E. Warren, "What Should we Expect from More Democracy?: Radically Democratic Responses to Politics." *Political Theory* 24:2 (1996), pp. 241–270, 243.

ontological dimensions of the political, which tends to obscure the concrete character of domination.[5] A second aspect of this critique focuses on the aversion to institutional forms of politics in the writings of radical democrats and the limitations of purely insurgent and transient forms of political practice as an overall strategy for emancipation.[6]

This article proposes that such criticisms can be answered by reconceptualizing the radical democratic program through a greater attentiveness to the institutional realisation of its principles and learning from insights from the socialist republican tradition. Radical democratic theorizing has tended to take place in isolation from other neighbouring bodies of scholarship. This article will focus on one important strand of literature: the "labor," "workplace" and socialist republicanism that has followed the revival of republican political theory.[7] Socialist republicans argue that parliamentary institutions, the rule of law and constitutionalism are essential as political institutions for a social republic. In addition, they demand a thoroughgoing transformation of the state from a bureaucratic structure to an institution that is subject to the democratic control of elected representatives and is patrolled by an active and mobilized citizenry. They also insist on the democratic organization of the economic sphere. Tom O'Shea contends, "the core idea driving socialist republicanism is that public ownership of the means of production would offer an institutional foundation for widespread freedom without domination."[8] While socialist republican values could be institutionalized in a number of different frameworks, the one I focus on in this article is Karl Kautsky's proposal for a socialist republic based on a combination of parliamentary institutions with universal suffrage, worker-managed workplaces and new economic institutions at a local and national level that could co-ordinate economic planning by balancing the interests of different sections of the community.

The article begins from the idea that certain radical democrats' deep pessimism about political and economic institutions as meaningful sites of emancipatory struggle is unjustified. While there is a daunting array of anti-democratic forces assembled against emancipatory political movements, certain struggles within state institutions have historically produced meaningful reforms that have shifted the balance of power between classes and improved the lives of ordinary citizens.[9] By incorporating insights from the socialist republican tradition radical democrats can shift their emphasis from a privilege of insurgent uprisings and disruption to the principles of equalizing power between citizens and instituting democratic ownership and control over the economy. This reorientation also provides resources for radical democrats to counter another major criticism of their work: that they have little to say about the economic sphere and fail to confront the major injustices caused by capitalist relations

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[5] Lois McNay, *The Misguided Search for the Political: Social Weightlessness in Radical Democratic Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014).

[6] James Muldoon, "Council Democracy: Towards a Democratic Socialist Politics" in Muldoon (ed.), *Council Democracy* (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 1–30.

[7] Alex Gourevitch, "Labor republicanism and the transformation of work." *Political Theory* 41:4 (2013), pp. 591–617; Keith Breen, "Freedom, republicanism, and workplace democracy." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 18:4 (2015), pp. 470–485; James Muldoon, "A Socialist Republican Theory of Freedom and Government." *European Journal of Political Theory* (forthcoming); Tom O'Shea, "Socialist Republicanism," (forthcoming).

[8] O'Shea, "Socialist Republicanism".

[9] Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics* (London: Verso, 2013), p. 303.

of production. [10] Socialist republicans advocate for the institution of democratic ownership and control of economic assets and the creation of a post-capitalist society.

The socialist republican institutional framework conceptualized in this article is also informed by insights from the radical democratic tradition. In attempting to extend democratic principles to other spheres of social life, socialist republicans should be attentive to the contested and open-ended nature of politics. Socialist republican projects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were marked by an underlying presumption that the overcoming of class divisions would lead to a more harmonious social order, untroubled by the deep political conflict of capitalist society. Radical democrats remain more sensitive to the need for the protection of pluralism and the institutionalisation of political conflict as a healthy and productive aspect of political life. To incorporate this radical democratic insight into an institutional framework of a socialist republic, this article turns to the writings of Claude Lefort on the Hungarian uprisings of 1956 in which he argues for a socialist democracy with a permanent institutionalized conflict between a parliament, workers' councils and trade union movement as a means of promoting freedom.[11]

In this article, I focus attention on an anti-institutional strand of radical democracy that celebrates democratic moments of rupture and insurgent forms of democratic action. These theorists share the belief that democracy is defined by contestation and struggle and that the democratic experience is best conceptualized as a momentary and illusive form of political action. This is in contrast to other theorists within the tradition of radical democracy such as Chantal Mouffe, whose latest approach relies on a politics of hegemony understood as an "engagement with" institutions.[12] While this scholarship offers significant insights into the nature of democracy, I focus here on an anti-institutional strand that has been particularly influential over elements of contemporary social movements.[13]

These debates matter for the real world of politics because they concern the appropriate strategies of transformation to further democratise the state and society. The proposition of this article is that the movement-based, ruptural, and insurgent approaches that have predominated in certain parts of the radical Left over the past two decades have proven insufficient. It calls for a recentering of processes of institution building, developing power within political parties, trade unions and workplaces and envisioning how the central institutions of society could be meaningfully engaged with and transformed. The socialist republican program outlined here provides the theoretical underpinning of new forms of socialist politics that pursue a democratic path to socialism which acknowledges the importance of work within socialist parties and parliamentary politics.[14] It questions the efficacy of an insurrectionary path to power and the utility of continually working form the margins of political life. In its place, the article suggests a strategy of transformation that involves building support within unions, developing social power through mass

[10] Muldoon, "Council Democracy: Towards a Democratic Socialist Politics," p. 19.

[11] Claude Lefort, "The Age of Novelty," *Telos* 29 (1976), pp. 23–38.

[12] Mouffe, *Agonistics*, p. 284.

[13] See Kioupkiolis and Katsambekis (eds.), *Radical Democracy and Collective Movements Today*.

[14] Bhaskar Sunkara, *The Socialist Manifesto: The Case for Radical Politics in an Era of Extreme Inequality* (London: Verso, 2019).

mobilizations and strikes and working within socialist political parties to win legislative majorities and transform the state.

The article proceeds as follows. First it analyses the problematic tendency within an anti-institutional strand of radical democratic scholarship to neglect institutional dimensions of political struggle. While this attitude to democratic institutions can be found in a variety of radical democratic writers, the article focuses on Jacques Rancière and Sheldon Wolin as indicative of a broader orientation of the literature.[15] I offer a critique of the limitations of this perspective and then outline how a change in priorities – from an emphasis on insurgent democratic uprisings to more sustained and institutionalized forms of politics – offers a new approach for radical democracy to institutionalize its principles. The article then draws on the political writings of Karl Kautsky during the German Revolution of 1918/19 to outline a socialist republican institutional framework that calls for a transformation of state institutions and democratic controls to be placed over the economy. In the next section, it reveals how insights drawn form Claude Lefort could provide a corrective to an anti-political tendency within the socialist republican literature to downplay the extent of political disagreement and conflict in a post-capitalist social republic. Finally, the article concludes with a reflection on contemporary movements and institutional developments that embody certain aspects of the socialist republican program and how this theory has received concrete form. I turn to the resurgence of socialist politics in the Corby, Sanders, SYRIZA and Podemos campaigns in addition to more local strategies of democratising the economy through participatory budgeting, community wealth building and workers' co-operatives.

Radical Democracy's Institutional Aversion

Attention in this section will be directed towards what I consider to be an anti-institutional strand of radical democracy – exemplified by Jacques Rancière and Sheldon Wolin – which sees institutions as the *sine qua non* of domination and oligarchic rule. On this view, institutions construct exclusionary visions of democratic identity and become the purview of bureaucratic and technocratic elites that exclude disenfranchised segments of the population. Because of these limitation and the direct connection between institutions and domination, these theorists see democracy as emerging through a rupture and break with the regime of domination. This occurs in moments of radical action that exist outside of and against the limitations of liberal democratic institutions.

Both Rancière and Wolin seek out more genuine democratic experiences beneath and outside of the realm of institutional politics. Democracy, for Rancière, is neither a political regime nor a form of social life – it designates the singular rupture of a social

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[15] My argument here is that there are key moments in the writings of Rancière and Wolin that exemplify an anti-institutional tendency that is present more broadly within radical democratic theory and political movements that draw from this tradition. I believe this tendency is more discernible in the work of Rancière than in Wolin, although an anti-institutionalist reading is open in both thinkers' writings. For an alternative perspective on Sheldon Wolin see David W. McIvor, "The conscience of a fugitive: Sheldon Wolin and the prospects for radical democracy," *New Political Science* (2016) 36 (3) 411–427. For an alternative perspective on Rancière see Aletta J. Norval, "'Writing a Name in the Sky': Rancière, Cavell, and the Possibility of Egalitarian Inscription," *American Political Science Review,* (2012) 106(4), 810–826.

order by the staging of a political disagreement over the distribution of parts and roles within society.[16] This interruption is the assertion of an axiom of equality by a new political subject, a "part of those without part," who struggles against its exclusion. This excluded subject undermines the logic of the regime of the visible and throws the established principles of rulership and political division back into contingency. Wolin articulates a vision of democracy not as a form of government but as the eruption of a political experience that is intermittent, rare and destined to only temporary existence.[17] Wolin seeks to uncover subterranean political experiences existing outside of the centralized state management in which citizen actors engage in shared projects and directly act to address their grievances. Radical democratic experiences remain "rooted in the ordinary" and thrive in "small politics, small projects, small business" outside of institutional politics.[18]

There are four aspects of the theoretical framework and political orientation of this strand of radical democratic theory that I will address below: its temporality, spatiality, political dualisms and totalizing critique of the democratic state. First, this form of radical democracy is structured by what Martin Breaugh has called "a temporality of the gap": a political imagination that views the experience of freedom and democracy as of a strictly limited duration.[19] Politics happens "very little," as Rancière explained; it is destined to only momentary occurrences, after which new political subjects are incorporated into institutions and lose their potency. The issue with this temporality is that it fails to capture the incremental nature of political struggle and important organizational aspects of politics such as the long-term labor of activists that allows these purportedly spontaneous moments of rupture to occur. Considering politics as a fleeting moment of activity directs our attention away from the less visible level of political organization and action needed to create lasting political change. A political vision that sees only the short bursts of activity also has little to say about how moments of rupture could be consolidated, defended and expanded. The problem with this tragic vision of politics is that it necessarily excludes the possibility of more enduring and sustainable forms of egalitarian politics.[20]

Second, the valorisation of transgressive acts and the focus on practices of resistance at the margins of politics directs attention away from the struggle over the central political and economic institutions of society. Through its focus on insurgent mobilisations, new political movements and protests that disrupt the dominant order, radical democracy neglects the theorisation of how to challenge and transform state institutions.[21] Such a framework leaves little room for an analysis of building

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[16] Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p. 99.
[17] Sheldon Wolin, "Fugitive Democracy," in *Fugitive Democracy and other Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 100–114.
[18] Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 601–606.
[19] Martin Breaugh, *The Plebeian Experience: A Discontinuous History of Political Freedom* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 31.
[20] Jodi Dean, "Politics without Politics," *Parallax* 15:3 (2009), pp. 20–36, 30.
[21] Peter Hallward, "Staging Equality: Rancière's Theatrocracy and the Limits of Anarchic Equality," in Rockhill and Watts (eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics* (Durham NC : Duke University Press, 2009), pp. 140–157, 155–157; Jackie Clarke "Rancière, Politics and the Social Question," in Davis (ed.), *Rancière Now: Current Perspectives on Jacques Rancière* (Cambridge, UK:

powerful coalitions which could struggle for emancipatory logics to be embedded within the state. At worst, radical democracy actively discourages such an approach by dismissing it as simply another oppressive politics of the state. In Rancière's work, this problem is particularly acute because once an emergent form of political subjectivity is recognized as a legitimate actor within a regime it becomes incorporated into the police order, creating a difficulty in theorizing how the actions of mainstream progressive movements could be seen as important political processes.

Third, a common theme in this strand of radical democracy is the introduction of political dualisms (constituent power/constitutional form, democracy/the State, politics/the police, fugitive democracy/constitutionalism, the multitude/empire), which celebrate resistance struggles and temporary transgressions of the existing order. This Manichean schema flattens out complex political phenomena into binary ontological categories that unjustifiably glorify one side of political activity as a politics "of the people," or "from below" and vilify another class of politics "of the masters" or "from above". Placing an ontological schema as a lens through which all political issues are filtered creates an overly simplified understanding of politics. It leads to an unnecessary rejection of progressive movements that are located within formal political processes and an unwarranted celebration of moments of resistance, which may be ineffectual or misguided. In the place of such a binary schema radical democracy requires a concrete analysis of local struggles in order to determine the particular political movements, actors and policies to support in any given political context. This would move beyond the stale framework of political life neatly divided into two groups, one seeking to master and control, the other seeking nothing more than its own freedom from domination. This seductive image, drawn from Machiavelli's account of the political desires of the *grandi* and the *popolo*, overlooks the ways in which liberation groups can become new masters and the possibilities for important reforms within representative institutions. Radical democracy's ontological abstractionism and tendency towards immaterial analytical schemas cuts it off from an examination of actual historical instances of political struggle.

Fourth, there is a tendency in this work to view any form of institutionalization as oppressive, hierarchical and part of a dominating logic.[22] Rancière famously claimed that "democracy cannot consist in a set of institutions," and that the "power of the people … can never be institutionalized."[23] From "national states" as well as "inter-state power," to "governments, of the left as well as right," institutions are most commonly depicted in Rancière's work as mechanisms of hierarchy and domination, applying everywhere "the same programme of systematic destruction of public services."[24] Parliaments, representative bodies or indeed any form of democratic government is "organized by the play of oligarchies."[25] Similarly, political parties and

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Polity, 2013). Cf. David W. McIvor, "The conscience of a fugitive: Sheldon Wolin and the prospects for radical democracy." *New Political Science* 38:3 (2016), pp. 411–427.

[22] Ella Myers, "Presupposing Equality: the Trouble with Rancière's Axiomatic Approach." *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 42:1 (2016), pp. 45–69; Todd May, *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière: Creating Equality* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp. 176–185.

[23] Jacques Rancière, "Does Democracy Mean Something?" in *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics* (London: Continuum, 2010), p. 54; Todd May et al., "Democracy, Anarchism and Radical Politics Today: An Interview with Jacques Rancière." *Anarchist Studies* 16:2 (2008), pp. 173–185, 173.

[24] Jacques Rancière, "Democracy is not a Form of State," Available online at: https://hiredknaves.wordpress.com/2012/01/21/jacques-ranciere-interview-democracy-is-not-t/

[25] Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy* (London: Verso, 2009), p. 52.

financial interests are part of a collusion "between a small oligarchy of financiers and politicians." [26] In sum, institutions are associated with the police activity of partitioning the sensible into functions and roles. As a result, Rancière generally displays a disinterest in institutions as sites of political struggle. In his words, "democracy is always beneath and beyond these forms."[27] Politics is either seen as a praxis of political collectives, or, in more abstract terms, as the transformation of symbolic orders, redistribution of boundaries and the creation of new fields of visibility.[28] Wolin also insists that democracy was "born in transgressive acts" and that "[i]nstitutionalization marks the attenuation of democracy: leaders begin to appear; hierarchies develop; experts of one kind or another cluster around the centers of decision; order, procedure, and precedent displace a more spontaneous politics."[29] For Wolin, democracy is repressed when "the political has become specialized, regularized, and administrative in character and quality."[30] Both theorists' work is pervaded with a scepticism towards institutions as structures that in some way constrain, repress or tame insurgent movements and collective praxis.

These theories are representative of broader anti-institutional tendencies within contemporary social movements practicing a politics of "horizontalism": anti-representational collective resistance against the state, political parties and existing political and economic institutions. This form of protest politics pits itself against the institutions of a corrupt political and economic system, all of which are assembled to crush dissent and uphold the status quo. Tracing its origins back to the Zapatistas, the Argentinian *horizontalidad* movement, the anti-globalisation movements of the early 2000s and moving through the Spanish 15M movement, Occupy, the *indignados* and other square and assembly-based protests, a prominent strategy within contemporary social movements is to challenge neoliberal politics through exodus, withdrawal and autonomous forms of politics. [31] The negation of the principles of hierarchy, representation and vertical order leads to forms of social self-activity and self-management as models for a future emancipated society. The battleground of this politics is the direct democracy of autonomous collectives against capital, the state and representative institutions.

What is significant about this tendency is its near total rejection of representative democracy, parliamentary struggle and engagement with mainstream politics. For many radical activists today, to play the game is already to lose. Yet, despite the proliferation of protest activity during the post-2011 era, these social movements have failed to make significant inroads into neoliberal capitalism. Without challenging power head on, these movements have grabbed headlines and altered political discourse, but have not built long-term organizational power or significantly altered policy and law-making. Without broad-based alliances, sustained organization, durable social structures, engagement with mainstream institutions, and a cogent

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[26] Rancière, "Democracy is not a Form of State".
[27] Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, 71.
[28] Rancière, "The Thinking of Dissensus," in Bowman and Stamp (eds.), *Reading Rancière: Critical Dissensus* (London: Continuum, 2011), p. 6.
[29] Wolin, "Fugitive Democracy," p. 108.
[30] Ibid.
[31] John Holloway, *Change the World Without Taking Power* (London: Pluto Press, 2010); Simon Tormey "From Utopian Worlds to Utopian Spaces: Reflections on the Contemporary Radical Imaginary and the Social Forum Process." *Ephemera* 5:2 (2005), pp. 394-408; Kioupkiolis and Katsambekis, *Radical Democracy and Collective Movements Today*.

program of reform, such movements seem destined to impotence. While there is much to admire in recent horizontal organizing, the belief that an extra-parliamentary struggle of social movements alone can bring about lasting institutional change is misguided. Challenging the concentrated power amassed in capital and the state requires efforts to shift the underlying balance of power between classes through engagement with democratic institutions.

Radicalizing Democracy through Socialist Republicanism

Radical democracy emerged out of a problematization of the Marxist theory of emancipation. It involved a rejection of the perceived deterministic and anti-political elements of Marxism and a revised account of politics and democracy that focussed on notions of contestation and indeterminacy. As Lasse Thomassen has commented, "the question became how to think emancipation without tying it to class."[32] One reason for the lack of debate between radical democracy and socialist republicanism has been the frequent radical democratic rejection of Marxism as a theoretical framework for conceptualizing the further democratization of liberal democratic regimes. In the 1980s, many radical democrats turned away from the perceived out-dated perspective of Marxism and towards post-structuralist authors as a means through which ontological questions of the political could be reconceived. Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, for example, was explicitly post-Marxist in orientation. [33] Theoretical attention was turned from economic considerations to questions of "the social" and potential alliances between new social movements. Institutional models and blueprints were also considered suspect due to their potential for transforming into oppressive constraints on political action. For radical democrats, the struggle against domination required attentiveness to the tendency of any institutional framework to ossify into a closed and hierarchical order.

To further the emancipatory potential of radical democratic theory today requires a shift in focus from the current emphasis on rupture and contestation to think in a more sustained manner about the need for the construction and preservation of empowering democratic institutions. Any political project for a radical democracy contains two implicit dimensions: a negative critique of the existing order and a positive articulation of alternative political possibilities. Radical democratic theorists have criticized liberal democracy's usurpation of the political agency of ordinary citizens, the oligarchic nature of political parties and the democratic state's tendency towards bureaucratic and technocratic forms of rule. They have also sought to theorize emerging egalitarian political practices and subterranean forms of democratic renewal that experiment with alternative modes of citizenship and community. The dimension that now requires greater attention is a project of inventing new practices and institutions of self-governance that would shift the balance of power between social classes and provide permanent institutional mechanism for the empowerment of ordinary citizens.

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[32] Thomassen, "Radical Democracy," p. 1142.

[33] Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985), 8–19.

In this article, I suggest that a theory of socialist republicanism can provide resources for such a transition. Socialist republicanism is an extension of key republican values of liberty as non-domination, political participation and self-government into the sphere of the workplace and industry.[34] Some of the first British socialists of the nineteenth century saw their political ideology as an extension of radical republicanism.[35] The Democratic Federation (later Social Democratic Federation) was formed in 1881 by activists with roots in the republican movements of the 1870s.[36] In France, radical republicans in the 1848 Revolution argued that the liberal state needed to become the democratic and social republic. Rather than confining democracy to the sphere of politics, Alexandre Ledru-Rollin argued for the extension of democratic forms of government into workplaces across the country that would create a new social order with workers' ownership and control over their workplaces.[37] This tradition was continued in the Paris Commune, which issued a decree on 16 April 1871 authorizing the use of abandoned workshops to be turned into workers' co-operatives as part of broader reforms to the economy.[38] Marx referred to the Commune as the first step in the creation of a "social republic," one that would eliminate private property and end the exploitation of workers by the ruling class.[39] In Germany, this radical republican tradition inherent in Marxism was taken up and adapted within the German Social Democratic Party.[40] While some Marxists within the party disavowed their radical republican heritage, leading Marxist theoretician Karl Kautsky saw the German Revolution as an opportunity to institute a "socialist republic." This tradition has recently been taken up by a diverse range of writers in the form of various proposals for "radical," "labor," "workplace" and socialist republicanism.[41]

There are significant shared points of overlap between contemporary radical democracy and socialist republicanism. Both traditions see an overly centralized administrative apparatus as a potential source of domination and a threat to the liberty of the people. As a result, they are sceptical of a bureaucratic and militaristic state and seek ways to democratize it and minimize its power over society. Central to each project is an attempt to reduce the state to a mere aspect of political life rather

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[34] Mark Bevir, "Republicanism, Democracy and Socialism in Britain: The Origins of the Radical Left." *Journal of Social History* 34 (200), pp. 353–360.

[35] Eugenio Biagini and Alastair Reid (eds.), *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organized Labor and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 1.

[36] Bevir, "Republicanism, Democracy and Socialism in Britain: The Origins of the Radical Left," p. 354.

[37] Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, "Discourse on the debate over the labor law in the Assembly in 1848," in Garnier (ed.) *Le droit au travail à l'Assemblée, recueil de tous les discours prononcés dans cette mémorable discussion* (Paris : Guillaumin, 1848), p. 123.

[38] "Décret de convocation des chambres syndicales ouvrières," *Journal officiel de la Commune de Paris du 20 mars au 24 mai 1871*, 17 April 1871.

[39] Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France" *Marx and Engels Collected Works, vol. 22* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1975-2005), p. 497.

[40] On Marx's republicanism see Bruno Leipold, "Citizen Marx: The Relationship between Karl Marx and Republicanism," PhD dissertation, University of Oxford, 2017.

[41] Alex Gourevitch, *From Slavery To the Cooperative Commonwealth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Michael Thompson, "Two Faces of Domination in Republican Political Theory." *European Journal of Political Theory* 17:1 (2018), pp. 44–64; Breen, "Freedom, republicanism, and workplace democracy"; Muldoon, "A Socialist Republican theory of Freedom and Government"; O'Shea, "Socialist Republicanism".

imposing the form of state sovereignty over every part of society.[42] Second, they seek to promote more decentralized and municipal forms of political action at a local level. Criticisms of overly-centralized administration are aimed at enabling a flourishing of political activity throughout society.[43] Third, both put forward new conceptions of democratic citizenship focussed on the joys and benefits of actively participating in public life.[44] The reason for these many points of overlap is that the two traditions are not entirely separate ideologies. Radical democracy draws on post-structuralist philosophy and post-Marxist conceptions of the political, but much of its underlying political orientation concerning democratic life borrows from the long tradition of democratic republican political theory. Radical democracy also consciously draws inspiration from socialist republican movements and events such as the Paris Commune and the councils movements of 1918-19.[45] So it should not strike the reader as odd that these two traditions could come into conversation.

To properly understand the contribution of socialist republicanism it is useful to distinguish between "modes" of democratic action and "sectors" of social life.[46] Much of democratic theory throughout the 1980s and 90s has analysed different forms of political action and how these should be conceptualized, without addressing the various sectors of social life that could effectively be democratized.[47] Socialist republicans advocate an expansion of our understanding of which social spheres should be subject to democratic values and relationships from an exclusive focus on national and regional governments to other areas of social life. They have been concerned with how political structures interact with other functional systems within a democratic society, in particular, with questions of political economy. Democratic movements arose during the nineteenth century to challenge established power hierarchies and political and economic elites that used their economic power to control politics. But contemporary radical democrats have failed to adequately theorize how democratic activity might transform and democratize different sectors of social life. An institutional turn in radical democracy should focus on examining how democratic principles could be applied to broader spheres of social life. The core program of socialist republicanism has been concerned with deepening democracy where it exists and introducing it to social relations where it has historically been excluded, like workplaces, municipal associations and economic regulatory institutions. This introduces a greater attentiveness to how democratic modes of social relations can be introduced to places which have been traditionally administered by what Elizabeth Anderson recently described as "private governments."[48]

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[42] Miguel Abensour, *Democracy Against the State: Marx and the Machiavellian Movement* (London: Polity, 2011), p. 64; Muldoon, "A Socialist Republican Theory of Freedom and Government".

[43] Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision*. 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 587; Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin, 2006), p. 159.

[44] Arendt, *On Revolution*, p. 210.

[45] Abensour, *Democracy Against the State*, p. 87; Arendt, *On Revolution*, p. 264.

[46] See Jeffrey D. Hilmer, "The State of Participatory Democratic Theory," *New Political Science* 32:1 (2010), pp. 43–63, 46.

[47] John Medearis, "After the Councils: Opposing Domination and Developing Democratic Agency," in Muldoon (ed.), *Council Democracy: Towards a Democratic Socialist Politics* (London: Routledge, 2018), p. 192.

[48] Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It)* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

This article proposes that the radical democratic aim of social emancipation is best articulated through three primary goals: equalizing power between citizens, democratizing broader spheres of social life and safeguarding the institutionalisation of political conflict in a post-capitalist society. First, due to unequal power relations in social formations, political and economic elites have been traditionally able to leverage their social power to further entrench inequalities by inscribing them in political institutions. Elites at the apex of social hierarchies have tended to subvert political institutions to their own ends and to undermine attempts at challenging their power.[49] Radical democrats should seek to counter this predisposition of elites by addressing the fundamental power imbalance between classes as a central question to ensuring the strength and vitality of a democratic polity. The key insight is that a precondition of lasting social change is a shift in the distribution of power between social classes. In other words, a transformative program of reform can only be enacted by a political collective through building its own power and challenging the entrenched power structures of elites. For radical democrats, this should involve expanding the opportunities for ordinary citizens to participate in political and economic institutions that would enable them to exercise power.

Second, radical democrats should pursue a strategy of democratizing social life, beginning with a democratisation of the economy. This involves a decentralisation and reduction of the state and a proliferation of sites of political decision-making including workplaces and other economic institutions. Emancipation requires not only the negative protections of civil liberties and voting rights, but the active participation in a self-determining society including areas typically excluded from democratic forms of control. The central point of this move is to expand our understanding of democracy and to rethink its proper scope and sphere. An effective resistance to the economic domination of the ruling class is only possible through the creation of new institutions that would allow for the democratic management and control of productive assets in the economy.

Third, within this context, I suggest the contribution radical democratic theory can make to socialist republicanism is a greater attentiveness to the challenges of "democratizing democracy" and the ineliminable nature of political conflict in a post-capitalist society. It's important to bear in mind that democratisation can never be considered as a task completely settled by the right institutional arrangement.[50] Historically, socialist republicans have tended to conceive of the economy as a function system that could be managed through harmonious co-operation between workers and consumers in a manner which downplayed the need for contestation and disruption.[51] Radical democrats show that the spread of democracy would likely be met by unprecedented opposition from economic elites and that these emancipatory

[49] C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956); Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976); John P. McCormick, *Machiavellian Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[50] Jason Vick, "Participatory Versus Radical Democracy in the 21st Century: Carole Pateman, Jacques Rancière, and Sheldon Wolin" *New Political Science* 37:2 (2015), pp. 204–223, 205.

[51] See the designs of early "utopian" socialists and the optimism of evolutionary accounts of social development in nineteenth century socialist thought. Friedrich Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific," in *Marx/Engels Selected Works*, *Vol 3* (Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969–1970), pp. 95–151.

movements could themselves be captured by a logic of hierarchy and domination.[52] In distinction from the optimism and the, at times, all-too-easy blueprints of socialist republicans of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, radical democrats are more attentive to the deeply embedded structures of control within the modern state and the need for spaces of ongoing contestation, opposition and insurgent politics. In the following section, I offer one possible institutional framework that could provide a robust defence of these goals to further the radical democratic project of social emancipation.

The Institutions of a Social Republic

This section draws on the principles and strategies proposed by Karl Kautsky and the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) during the German Revolution. In November 1918, workers' and soldier's councils arose across the old Empire and overthrew the Kaiser leading to weeks of debates over the future form of the German Republic.[53] While Luxemburg and the Spartacus League advocated a full council republic with workers taking over exclusive control of political and economic institutions, party officials such as Friedrich Ebert of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) argued for the structure of a liberal parliament and the implementation of basic social welfare measures. Between these two opposing sides, Karl Kautsky, Rudolf Hilferding and the centrist faction of the USPD put forward a transformative program based on the initial starting point of parliamentary institutions and a democratic republic combined with a broader system of workers' and consumers' councils, which would socialize the economy and introduce democratic controls into workplaces.[54] While their proposals were not eventually followed by the dominant faction within the SPD, the institutional outline remains one important contribution to thinking through the institutional structure of a modern social republic. This article thus contributes to recent socialist republican literature by providing a more expanded outline of the institutional schema for the realisation of socialist republican principles.

The institutions outlined here are socialist republican rather than communist in their character because they begin from the position of the basic political framework of a democratic republic: parliament, universal suffrage and the rule of law.[55] For most social democrats of the nineteenth century it was accepted that democratic reforms would be the starting point for the struggle for a social republic. For Kaustky:

> The democratic republic is the indispensable political basis of the new commonwealth we wish to construct. We must hold steadfastly to the democratic republic; we must consistently develop it in all directions.[56]

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[52] Abensour, *Democracy against the State,* xxxii; Jacques Ranciere, *Dissensus. On Politics and Aesthetics* (London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), p. 29.

[53] James Muldoon (ed.), *The German Revolution and Political Theory* (London: Palgrave, 2019), p. 2.

[54] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme," Available online at: https://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1919/01/guidelines.html; William Smaldone, "Rudolf Hilferding and the Theoretical Foundations of German Social Democracy, 1902–33," *Central European History* 21:3 (1988), pp. 267–299.

[55] Muldoon, "A Socialist Republican Theory of Freedom and Government".

[56] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme".

This required subordinating the central bureaucracy to the elected representative of a national assembly and decentralizing the state to allow for more powers to be exercized locally by municipal governments in the districts and provinces. Socialist republicans do not follow Lenin's insistence that state institutions are entirely corrupted and must be replaced by new institutions "of a fundamentally different type" based on workers' councils.[57] Against Lenin's anti-statist position, Kautsky insisted that when this was tried in Russia the result in practice was an even more totalizing bureaucracy controlled by officials in the Communist Party who were unconstrained by other accountability mechanisms such as multi-party elections and the rule of law in a democratic republic.[58] The experience of Russia proved for Kautsky "the inability of Lenin and his disciples to carry out their own programme," which led to dictatorship and a reduction of democracy. Kautsky replied:

> If instead of groping amid the fog of Lenin's "real democracy," we ask ourselves what the constitution of the socialist community will be, it is obvious that no other constitution is conceivable than that of the democratic Republic.[59]

However, a democratic republic that maintained private ownership over the means of production would allow for domination of capitalists over workers in the economic sphere. Kautsky therefore argued that the socialisation of the economy would be a necessary step in any future social republic:

> The German republic should become a democratic republic. Yet it should be even more than that. It should become a socialist republic – a commonwealth in which there is no longer any place for the exploitation of man by man.[60]

The question, then, was how to adequately institute democratic controls over the economy in a manner that promoted freedom and would not devolve into a new form of bureaucracy and state control. Here, Kautsky proposed a novel solution that sought to evade two equally undesirable outcomes: the economic inequalities of syndicalism and the bureaucracy and centralisation of state socialism. For socialist republicans, the workers' councils of syndicalism could not be the exclusive centre of political life because it would create a new aristocracy of workers who would exclusively own and mange profitable industries without providing the community as a whole – including consumers and those not involved in full-time, paid employment – any control over the production of goods and services. The fear was that certain workers would operate their workplaces to the detriment of the community through exploiting their monopolies and engaging in rent-seeking behaviour.[61] In workers' co-operatives, the community obtains no greater control over production than with capitalist owners.

A second undesirable outcome was socialism understood exclusively as nationalisation. While nationalisation was the cornerstone of older programs of collectivism, experience had shown that it also contained the risk of bureaucratisation

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[57] Vladimir I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution," in *Collected Works, Vol 25* (London: Progress Publishers, 1974), pp. 381–492, 405.

[58] Kautsky, *The Labor Revolution*, Available online at https://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1924/labor/index.htm.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme".

[61] Kautsky, *The Labor Revolution*, 204.

and an overly-centralized administrative apparatus in which officials were vested with large amounts of discretionary power. For Kautsky:

> Nationalisation of the branches of production is the most important means of socialisation, but it is not the only one. Socialism means the democratic organization of economic life.[62]

Kautsky understood freedom to be the key principle of socialism. For freedom to be properly institutionalized it required not only collective management of the economy to avoid the tyranny of capitalists, but also for individuals to exercise decision-making power over the basic structures that determined their lives. There was a need to avoid the pitfalls of syndicalism and state socialism in achieving this goal. Kautsky summarized the problem as follows:

> our duty will be to replace bureaucratic autocracy by a type of management which would accord a wide measure of self-government to the workers without losing sight of the consumers' interest or creating a Labor aristocracy of the municipal workers.[63]

Kautsky's analysis was based on a different understanding of how society should be organized, which radically decreased the role of the state without doing away with the need for centralized and universalist institutions entirely. In the highly centralized administrative states of the early 20th century, state power artificially united many different social spheres under its exclusive jurisdiction. But individuals participated in different organizations and fulfilled different functions in networks of production, consumption, municipal associations and intellectual communities. Each individual could belong to a variety of groups and play different roles in social systems. As a result, there were trade unions, community organizations, cultural groups and other associations. In a socialist republic, power would be devolved to different associations to exercise more control over various aspects of social life so that state power would become attenuated and would no longer be the exclusive arbiter of all questions of social organization. Kautsky saw a wide range of roles for new municipal institutions that could take on different functions currently undertaken by private enterprise and a national state:

> If the municipality seizes the city's monopolies; if it builds sound and cheap flats and produces cheap bread; if it builds enough schools which not only provide the children with education, but with food; if it finally provides the mass of the people with places of assembly, recreation and further education, then it can play an active part in the process of socialisation.[64]

According to this plan many organizational issues could be undertaken at a local level. But this did not entail that there would be no higher co-ordinating institutions. Kautsky argued that industries would also need to be regulated and managed sector by sector. To assist with this he proposed the creation of new economic institutions:

> each of these branches of industry could be managed by a council, in which only a third of its members are made up of representatives of the state administration. The second third should consist of the workers' representatives of this branch of production, the final third of representatives of its organized consumers.[65]

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[62] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme".
[63] Karl Kautsky, *The Labor Revolution*, 183.
[64] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme".
[65] Ibid.

This would allow for an appropriate balancing of interests between different sectors of the community that would prevent one narrow interest group dominating. The overarching objective was for the development of democratic controls over economic life with questions of whether this was best undertaken at a municipal or national level largely seen as a technical question that could be best determined through practical experience. In cases where "branches of production or of communications serve narrow local ends" then "[m]unicipal ownership and management is the proper solution of the problem."[66]

Many of the late nineteenth century socialist republican visions of politics were based on organicist and evolutionist accounts of society that were prominent at the time. As a result, they tended to downplay the role of political conflict in a post-capitalist society and imagined different sections of society spontaneously co-operating in an overlapping institutional matrix. It has now become more clear that radical differences and political conflict are an ineliminable and productive aspect of modern politics. An important corrective and supplement to socialist republican political thought from a radical democratic perspective can be found in Claude Lefort's writings on a future post-revolutionary society inspired by the Hungarian councils' movements of 1956.[67]

When the Hungarian councils first arose, Lefort theorized them as demanding workers' self-management, which was in line with the mainstream view within council theory from Pannekoek to Castoriadis.[68] However, when Lefort revisited the councils in 1976 in his essay "The Age of Novelty," he conceptualized the program of the council movements in a remarkably different manner. Rather than striving for the institution of a worker-controlled council system, Lefort argued the Hungarian revolutionaries struggled for a socialist democracy in which conflict between workers' councils, unions and a parliament was institutionalized to protect any single centre from holding sovereign power. In his new interpretation, the key to a successful post-capitalist society was the recognition of "the danger that was posed by a power... that concentrated all the decisions affecting the fate of society."[69] Drawing from his notion of democracy as maintaining an empty place of power and a Machiavellian insight into the productive nature of class conflict to political freedom, Lefort emphasized the open-ended and divided nature of a free society.[70] A socialist democracy, for Lefort, should be structured by an internal division between workers' councils, parliament and a trade union movement that would protect pluralism, defend individuals' rights and maintain an antagonistic relationship between different centres of power. This reflected Lefort's insights into the divided nature of the social body and "the renunciation of the utopia of revolution in the sense of the dream of a single, imposed model of the good society that breaks completely with the present, that is

[66] Ibid.

[67] This aspect of Lefort's thought has been analysed in Benjamin Ask Popp-Madsen, "The Self-Limiting Revolution and the Mixed Constitution of Socialist Democracy: Claude Lefort's Vision of Council Democracy," in Muldoon (ed.), *Council Democracy: Towards a Social Democratic Politics*, pp. 168–188.

[68] Claude Lefort, "The Hungarian Insurrection." In *A Socialisme ou Barbarie Anthology: Autonomy, Critique, and Revolution in the Age of Bureaucratic Capitalism*, pp. 201–223. Accessed online at http://notbored.org/SouBA.pdf.

[69] Lefort, "The Age of Novelty," p. 34.

[70] Claude Lefort, *Le travail de l'oeuvre Machiavelli*, p. 475.

beyond conflict and division."[71]

With Kautsky, Lefort agreed that workers could not form a political regime that monopolized power in class-specific institutions through which other classes would be permanently disenfranchised. He thought that the only way democracy could be deepened in other spheres of society was by maintaining a degree of pluralism and internal conflict. But Lefort was more attentive to the dangers of a workers' government that could monopolize power and oppress dissenters. Benjamin Ask Popp-Madsen identifies three main institutional prescriptions that Lefort analysed in the program of the Budapest Council:

> First, workers' councils should direct the economy, decide on national investment, salaries, production norms and general conditions of working life. As an important site of domination, the economy would be fully democratized. Second, a multi-party system with free, general and secret elections to parliament would complement the councils' direction of the economy. Third, new trade unions would ensure the right of the individual worker to strike.[72]

Lefort's theorisation draws attention to the need for an institutional separation of powers to deal with the persistence of political difference and conflict in a socialist republic. It is based on the assumption of the continuation of antagonism and the ineradicability of power relations. This allows for the theorization of a post-capitalist society without the ideal of perfect harmony and the end of political disagreements. Lefort's argument in favour of independent unions which guarantee individual workers the right to strike contrasts with Kautsky's view on the right to strike in a socialist state:

> In a state where authority is in the hands of the capitalist class, striking is an indispensable tool of the workers to defend themselves against capitalist oppression and to eke out better living conditions. But this tool is a destructive one - like weapons in war. A state where political power lies in the hands of the workers must strive to introduce other methods to protect workers' rights in all those branches of production where it cannot yet get rid of capital economically. These methods should not inhibit and disrupt the process of production as much as strikes do.[73]

Lefort's separation of these two spheres and insistence on the irresolvable nature of political conflict changes the way socialist republicans should conceptualize institutions and points to the need for greater checks and balances, a separation of powers and the need to institutionalize spaces of conflict over the governance of political and economic institutions.

But does this turn to Lefort's writings synthesise the two traditions or simply tack on a radical democratic afterthought to a predominantly socialist republican theoretical project? How would radical democrats respond? The core of the argument proposed here is that in order to achieve their underlying goals of resisting domination and achieving a more egalitarian democratic politics, radical democrats should refocus their theoretical attention to questions of democratising the economy and reforming state institutions.

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[71] Andrew Arato, "Thinking the Present: Revolution in Eastern Europe. Revolution, Civil Society and Democracy." *Praxis International* 10:1/2 (1990), pp. 25–38, 26.

[72] Popp-Madsen, "The Self-Limiting Revolution and the Mixed Constitution of Socialist Democracy," p. 175.

[73] Kautsky, "Guidelines for a Socialist Action Programme".

For some contemporary radical democrats, this move will be welcomed as it aligns with a broader resurgence of democratic socialism through Podemos, Corbyn and Sanders. It also follows an acknowledgement of the limitations of certain "politics of the square" movements in the wake of Occupy Wall Street.[74] Furthermore, there are interesting parallels between this project and other strands of radical democratic theory such as Chantal Mouffe's theorization of how institutions could be utilized as a means to "challenge the existing structure of power relations."[75] If, at its basis, radical democracy is about further democratizing regimes which are already nominally democratic, then the argument for the expansion of democracy to other social and economic institutions should be seen as advancing this goal.

But for others, an element of skepticism and incommensurability will remain. One concern is that a return to notions of class could lead to the marginalization of struggles against oppression based on race, gender, sexuality and other important social movements. Looking back on the historical record of various socialist movements, critics have good reason to hold these reservations, but I contend that a dogmatic class reductionism need not accompany every form of socialist (or socialist republican) politics. It is possible to focus on the injustice produced by capitalist relations of production without sidelining other social justice movements. Another criticism is that public ownership over productive assets in the economy could quickly degenerate into the very tyranny that radical democrats oppose. For post-Marxist radical democrats, the idea of expanding the principles of freedom and equality was based on some form of market economy. It's here that the real challenge of socialist republicanism lies. Socialist republicans point to the limitations of liberal pluralism in combatting dominating relationships – including those that arise in workplaces and a market economy. The fundamental difference between the two traditions is whether the starting point of liberal democratic regimes provides sufficient institutional grounds for a truly emancipatory political project.

Conclusion

In this article, I argue that the radical democratic struggle against domination and the pursuit of social emancipation should take inspiration from socialist republicanism to democratize broader spheres of social life. This involves a shift in terms of language and political strategy away from a focus on disruption and momentary uprisings towards a struggle for power and a contest over society's central political and economic institutions. I conclude with a reflection on contemporary political movements that suggest a growing connection between contemporary radical democracy and socialist republicanism over the past two decades. A number of recent developments show that these debates have been progressing within left-wing political movements and are already achieving concrete form in political practice. The most promising of these has been the resurgence of new socialist movements across Europe and North America that have created fresh impulses towards transforming capitalism. These have appeared not only in countries such as Greece and Spain but

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[74] See for example Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Assembly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[75] Chantal Mouffe, *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (London: Verso, 2013), pp. 162-174.

also in centre left parties in the UK and US. The current generation of socialists build on previous decades of attempts to further democratise the state across the globe.

A now well-known example is the growth of participatory budgeting (PB), a process of deliberation and decision-making by citizens over local budgets, which had a limited degree of success in Porto Alegre in improving public services, reducing clientelism and empowering citizens.[76] Participatory democrats have advocated PB as a concrete mechanism for achieving greater citizen control over public spending and increasing citizens' interest in political participation more generally. However, the aims of PB are limited in terms of democratizing the economy as it is primarily aimed at achieving increased levels of citizen control over limited municipal budgets and has little to say about questions of democracy in the workplace or the socialisation of public services.[77] There are also questions over how it has spread across the globe. While PB has achieved some concrete change in Brazil, there have been criticisms that the emancipatory dimensions of the project have been lost in its translation from Latin America as it travelled internationally in the 2000s.[78] Studies have indicated that many experiments in North America and Europe have failed to reproduce the mobilisation and empowerment of civil society that was evident in the initial Porto Alegre example.[79] Recent studies of participatory budgeting in New York City, for example, have found that although it created new relationships between citizens and local politicians, enhanced knowledge of local government and increased social inclusion, the more important goals of improving equity and participation form marginalised communities remained illusive.[80] While PB began as a radical and wide-reaching program of administrative reform and redistributive social justice, it has since been domesticated into one of many techniques within the toolkit of "New Public Management" for good governance.[81]

Another more recent example is the return to strategies of municipal socialism as a means of community wealth building and economic system change.[82] In the late nineteenth century, municipal socialism described a political strategy associated with different political ideologies with a shared aspiration of using local government to institute progressive social reforms.[83] This included enacting social welfare policies such as aid to the poor, housing services, childcare and unemployment benefits. It also involved bringing utilities and services under public control including gas, water, electricity, and transportation. In recent years municipal socialism has experienced a

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[76] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "Participatory Budgeting in Porto Alegre: Toward a Redistributive Democracy." *Politics & Society* 26:4 (1998), pp. 461–510.

[77] Carole Pateman, "Participatory Democracy Revisited." *Perspectives on Politics* 10:1 (2012), pp. 7–19, 14.

[78] Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Ernesto Ganuza, "Participatory Budgeting as if Emancipation Mattered." *Politics & Society* 42:1 (2012), pp. 29–50; Gianpaolo Baiocchi and Ernesto Ganuza, "The Power of Ambiguity: How Participatory Budgeting Travels the Globe." *Journal of Public Deliberation* 8:2 (2012).

[79] Yves Sintomer, Carsten Herzberg, Giovanni Allegretti and Anja Röcke, *Participatory Budgeting in Asia and Europe: Key Challenges of Participation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013); Yves Sintomer, Carsten Herzberg, Giovanni Allegretti and Anja Röcke, *Learning from the South: Participatory Budgeting Worldwide—An Invitation to Global Cooperation* (Bonn: InWEnt GmbH, 2010).

[80] See the special issue on participatory budgeting in *New Political Science*, Volume 39, 2017, Issue 1.

[81] Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert, *Public Management Reform: a Comparative Analysis.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[82] Martin O'Neil and Joe Guinan, *The Case for Community Wealth Building* (London: Polity, 2019).

[83] Sidney Webb, *Socialism in England* (Baltimore: American Economic Association, 1889).

revival, with the "Preston model" standing out as one prominent example. In the past years the Labour-led Preston local council has implemented an economic development strategy aimed at promoting a sustainable and democratically-controlled economy through local procuring and support for worker co-operatives, land trusts and local finance institutions. [84] Drawing from similar experiments of "wealth building" in the US, the Preston council has invested heavily in "anchor" institutions – institutions such as hospitals, universities, and other locally based businesses that would retain wealth in the community as a means of preventing the flight of capital and the expropriation of wealth by privately run services.[85] Between 2013 and 2017, Preston was able to increase the level of spending in local services by 73 million pounds and reversed decades of deprivation and social decline.[86] There have been impressive short-term successes, but one prominent criticism of municipal socialist strategies is that they are necessarily limited by funding to local governments decided at a national level. After a long history of cuts to funding, many municipal councils in the UK have limited budgets to institute such reforms. More evidence will be needed to reveal the long-term possibilities of this political strategy.

Limitations of strategies directed at a local level of reform could be overcome by a dual strategy of local and national reform. Left-wing movements in the US and UK have recently put forward new policies for public ownership over services and worker-control and -ownership over enterprises. The dramatic rise in support for the movements behind Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn has led to a proliferation of new economic strategies. In 2016 Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell of the UK Labour Party, launched a series of workshops and conference on what has been described as "new economics" and "Corbynomics." This involves greater public ownership over services and the institution of new forms of democracy in the workplace. Under one proposed scheme, workers of every company with more than 250 employees would receive dividends from new "inclusive ownership funds" which would give workers' ownership of up to 10% of the company.[87] Similar plans to mandate employee ownership of big companies have also been proposed by the Bernie Sanders campaign.[88] It remains a task for current political movements to experiment further with these different strategies. Socialist republicanism, it has been argued, can provide an important theoretical framework and historical reference point for achieving a more radically democratic society.

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[84] Thomas M. Hanna and Joe Guinan, "The 'Preston Model' and the modern politics of municipal socialism," *Open Democracy*, 12 June 2018, Available online at
https://neweconomics.opendemocracy.net/preston-model-modern-politics-municipal-socialism/.
[85] The Democracy Collaborative, "The Cleveland Model—How the Evergreen Cooperatives are Building Community Wealth." Available online at https://community-wealth.org/content/cleveland-model-how-evergreen-cooperatives-are-building-community-wealth.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Rajeev Syal, "Employees to be hand stake in firms under Labor plan," *The Guardian* 24 September 2018. Available online at https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/sep/23/labor-private-sector-employee-ownership-plan-john-mcdonnell.
[88] Dylan Matthes, "Bernie Sanders' Most Socialist Idea yet, explained." *Vox* 29 May 2019. Availale online at https://www.vox.com/2019/5/29/18643032/bernie-sanders-communist-manifesto-employee-ownership-jobs.