



Towards post-capitalism

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TOWARDS POST-CAPITALISM
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANS, MARXISTS AND
ECOSOCIALISTS

Rafael Diaz-Salazar

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*To Joan N. García-Nieto
and Francisco Fernández Buey, in
memoriam.*

INTRODUCTION

The new relationship between Christians and Marxists was made possible by the paths opened by the Second Vatican Council on dialogue with atheism and by the new culture and political praxis towards the Christian world created by the PCI and other political formations in the sixties of the twentieth century. The pioneering work of Madeleine Delbr el in meeting and dialoguing with Marxists between 1933 and 1964 should be highlighted.¹ The confluence of Christians and Marxists in the liberation struggles in the countries of the South was and continues to be a decisive factor in the extraordinary turn away from the ecclesial and communist approaches prevailing since the nineteenth century.

Neither Marx's thought nor that of his principal heirs (Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, among others) is dead, nor is the practice of alternative social and political movements detached from the horizon established by them, nor has Christianity of liberation disappeared, nor has the Church abandoned dialogue with the Marxist world.

This publication addresses a new phase of dialogue. Pope Francis, as we will see below, has been promoting it since 2014. This is not the only existing practice.

With the title *Towards post-capitalism*, I wanted to show what is the horizon of a dialogue between cultures of faith and justice that draw from different sources, but wish to learn from each other.

This notebook extends with new forms and contents the practice of dialogue developed in Spain since the mid-twentieth century. I dedicate it to two of its protagonists: Joan N. Garc a-Nieto and Francisco Fern andez Buey. The former was one of the founders of Cristianisme i Just cia. The latter has been, together with Manuel Sacrist n, the main Marxist thinker in 20th century Spain and a communist and ecosocialist militant who wrote that "some of us had to understand the other Christianity to continue being communists"⁽²⁾.

I present a text that tries to give long lights to guide us on the path of *transition to post-capitalism*. The complexity of this and the limits of a notebook make it absolutely necessary to expand the information in the Notes. The purpose is to know more in order to discuss in depth the requirements and ways to promote it.

MEANING AND PREMISES FOR DIALOGUE

The theme of this booklet is part of Pope Francis' proposal for a *culture of encounter* between people of good will whose common goal is the emancipation of the impoverished and ecology. In *Evangelii Gaudium* (257) he wrote the following: "We believers feel close to those who, while not recognizing themselves as part of any religious tradition, sincerely seek truth, goodness and beauty [...]. We see them as precious allies in the defense of human dignity, in the building of a peaceful coexistence among peoples and in the care of creation".

To develop this culture, Francis strongly rejects pro- selitism. He advocates that the action of Christians in the world should be centered on the *witness* of lives dedicated to eco-social justice, to in- tercultural dialogue and to a relationship with the God of Jesus through prayer and the liberation of the oppressed. In them, he is present as the hungry, the prisoner, the migrant (Mt 25:37-40). They are the face and body of Christ in our societies.

The type of dialogue I propose does not seek to convert Christianity into Marxism, nor to Christianize Marxism. There are different levels of dialogue between the two, adopting these approaches: 1) cosmo-visual; 2) philosophical-theological; 3) senses of religion, spirituality, atheism, critique of religion and the Churches, relations between science and religion; 4) ethical; 5) ecological; 6) ecosocial action objectives and practices. In recent times, the dialogue has focused on

to a large extent in the last three. They should not be the only ones, since the previous ones are very necessary and must be undertaken or continued.

Tasks and subjects of the dialogue

I think that now the fundamental thing is to focus on four actions:

1) *Dialogue* between people and organizations with different religious, atheist and agnostic identities who share a diagnosis of the prevailing socio-economic system and wish to change it for another. In this text, I call it *post-capitalism with an ecosocialist orientation*.

This dialogue must take place without hiding or annulling our identities and distinctiveness, without denaturalizing ourselves. Mutual learning between Christian and non-religious cultures is essential.

In order to diagnose and seek alternatives to capitalism, the contributions of Pope Francis, all of them full of radical social environmentalism and pacifism, seem to me to be very relevant. I refer fundamentally those contained in *Evangelii Gaudium, Laudato si', Fratelli Tutti, Contro la guerra. Il coraggio di costruire la pace, Laudate Deum, Speeches at the EMMP (World Meetings of Popular Movements), Messages for the "Economy of Francis" meetings (Assisi)*. Two of his statements in *Evangelii Gaudium* can open the dialogue: "The social and economic system is unjust at its root" (59) and "this economy kills" (53).

Francis and the people's movements have been engaged in a dialogue about the

This issue has been discussed in several EMMPs, in which grassroots organizations from different continents with a clear anti-capitalist orientation participate. These movements have formulated their analyses and actions in various documents.³

2) *To think of* a transition to another economy and way of organizing social life that must be post-capitalist. I will address this issue in the final part.

3) *Working together* in anti-capitalist actions and in building concrete alternatives to capitalism in life and in socio-political engagement.

4) *To spread* a moral culture that places at the center the primacy of the last, the common good over the private good, ecology and Samaritan culture. I conceive of this - from the parable of the Good Samaritan and from an expression of Ignacio Ellacuría - as

The "taking charge, bearing and taking responsibility" for the problems of social victims created by victimizers and environmental destruction. Chapter 25 of the Gospel according to St. Matthew on praxis with the impoverished is fundamental in this regard.

The subjects of the dialogue are the following: (a) Marxists and ecosocialists who are not religious; (b) Christians who also identify themselves as Marxists, communists and ecosocialists; (c) people, movements and organizations that declare themselves Christian, advocate a non-capitalist economy of common goods, and have anti-capitalist life forms and practices without being Marxist; (d) anti-capitalist socialists; (e) anti-capitalist popular social movements that are not Marxist or may be Marxist; (f) feminists; (g) socialists who are not Marxist or may be anti-capitalist; (h) socialists who are anti-capitalist; (i) socialists who are anti-capitalist; (j) socialists who are anti-capitalist; (k) socialists who are anti-capitalist; and (l) socialists who are anti-capitalist.

g) pacifists, trade unionists and anti-capitalist ecologists.

Marxists and ecosocialists before the thoughts of Pope Francis

The positive reactions and the reception of their approaches by relevant people and magazines in the Marxist, ecosocialist, ecofeminist militant areas of popular social movements in the five continents constitute a very adequate basis for developing the dialogue. Among them are Michael Löwy (the leading Marxist and ecosocialist thinker in the world today), Luciana Castellina, Rossana Rossanda, Alexis Tsipras, José Mujica, Evo Morales, Vandana Shiva, Naomi Klein, Serge Latouche, Ignacio Ramonet, Walter Baier, Michael Brie, José Manuel Pureza, Atilio Borón, Joaquim Sempere, the Italian journal *Critica Marxista* and numerous leaders and activists of popular anti-capitalist movements participating in the EMMPs. The following Latin American text expresses what Pope Francis' speech presents for them:

The anti-capitalist struggle acquires, with Francis as its spokesman, a new and unexpected legitimacy, giving us support and encouragement, strength and capacity, hope and resistance. From the tribune that represents the highest Catholic hierarchy, with the tremendous influence it has on the minds of millions of people in the world, the impact on popular consciousness is incomparably greater. It opens up the possibility of revolutionary discourse,

the discourse that questions the ruling system, opens the way, is assumed and a discourse rooted in the popular masses, acquiring an unusual strength and legitimacy⁽⁴⁾.

The Marxist, communist and ecosocialist left is aware of need to equip itself with a new fundamental culture that requires opening up to the Christianity of liberation.⁵

It is significant that in Italy the book with Francis' speeches in the EMMPs was published by *Il Manifesto*, a communist newspaper (nothing to do with the extinct PCI), and that Matteo Zuppi, then Archbishop of Bologna and current president of the Italian Episcopal Conference, presented it in the squatted social centers of that city. He, who maintains close ties with the peace movements, wrote a public letter encouraging participation in the national demonstration in Rome against the war in Ukraine, held on November 5, 2022; this letter was read at the final rally. In 2023, he also participated in the national meeting of *Rifondazione Comunista* dialoguing with its leaders and militants on war and peace in Europe and in the world.⁶

In Spain, the prologue writer of these speeches (*Land, Roof and Work*) is Pablo Bustinduy, a prominent ex-militant of Podemos and current Minister of Social Rights, Consumption and Agenda 2030, and leader of Sumar. At the end of his text he writes the following: "If today we atheists listen to Pope Francis, it is not to glorify him or out of a desire to minimize or conceal the differences (on the contrary, we seek and emphasize them). Today we listen to the pope

because in his speech there are many things that we do not have, *things that we lack*".⁷

The rejection of Pope Francis' eco-social and pacifist thinking by conservative European intellectuals who defend capitalism is very significant. A good synthesis of this has been presented in several articles by Guy Sorman -translated in the *ABC newspaper*- and Juan Manuel de Prada. They are entitled "A red and green Pope", "An anti-capitalist Pope", "The climate Pope" and "Francis, the Pope the left likes".

From where should the dialogue be approached?

Some stages of the dialogue between Christians and Marxists: from yesterday to today.

Decisive for the change in relations between Marxists and Christians was the thinking of Palmiro Togliatti, secretary general of the PCI, who introduced a substantial change with respect to Marx's and Lenin's thinking on religion. In 1963 he published *Il desti- no dell'uomo. Comunisti e cattolici di fronte ai problemi dell'epoca mo- derna* in which he expounded these theses: a) the roots of religion are deeper than what Marxist materialist analysis considers; b) religious consciousness on various occasions leads to the aspiration for socialism and is not always the opium of the people; c) there are common values in the Christian conception and in the Marxist conception of society and man; d) the realization of communism will not entail the suppression of religion and in it religion will be able to develop; e) the realization of communism will not entail the suppression of religion and in it religion will be able to develop; f) the realization of communism will not entail the suppression of religion and in it religion will be able to develop; g) the realization of communism will not entail the suppression of religion and in it religion will be able to develop.

to develop . He called on the leaders and intellectuals of the PCI to rethink this issue.

In Spain, dialogue and debate with Marxism and communism began in 1949 with the publication by Guillermo Roviroso, promoter of HOAC, of *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Worker in the Communist World* (1951). For decades, HOAC held courses on this subject. This dialogue also took place at the end of the 1950s in the Popular Liberation Front (FLP), a party to the left of the PCE created mainly by Christian revolutionaries who linked Marxism and Christianity in a heterodox way. In the post-conciliar period dialogues were established between Marxist and Christian intellectuals. In January 1973, *Christians for Socialism*, a movement formed by Christians who declared themselves Marxists, was created. In the eighties, a great debate took place between the Jesuits José Ignacio González Faus and Enrique Menéndez Ureña on some questions related to the basic theme of this dialogue.⁸

Leaders and intellectuals of Marxist parties promoted the meeting with the Christian world involved in the struggle against Franco's dictatorship and in the creation of the new class-based workers' movement. Francis- co Fernández Buey stated that "the composition of the political spectrum in the Western world usually places on the same side (that is, in the same anti-system movements) people with a deep-rooted religious faith and people with equally strong secular beliefs".⁽⁹⁾

DIALOP: A European platform for dialogue between Christians and Marxists

Pope Francis has prompted a new cycle of this dialogue. The beginning took place in a private audience in the fall of 2014 in which Francis had a meeting with two prominent communist political leaders with strong Marxist backgrounds: Luciana Castellina (PCI, Il Manifesto and Rifondazione Comunista) and Alexis Tsipras (Syriza, prime minister of the Greek government between 2015 and 2019). Also present was Franz Kronreif, from the Catholic Focolare movement. As a result of this meeting and to give substance to the dialogue between Christians and Marxists, DIALOP was created.¹⁰ Christians and leaders of the Party of the European Left - which includes most of the parties to the left of social democracy -, the *Transform Europe* network and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation are participating in it. The presence Michael Löwy, one of the world's leading Marxists and ecosocialists, is noteworthy. *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican's official newspaper, published in its June 28, 2022 edition an article on DIALOP in which it states the following:

It has been a long process carried out mainly by Christians linked to the Focolare movement, but not only, and by groups of Greek, Austrian, German and Italian communists [...]. Its aim is a common social ethic, in which the social doctrine of the Church can be combined with Marxist criticism. It responds to the Pope's appeal against an economy that kills, a theme deeply felt on the left.¹¹

On January 10, 2024, Pope Francis received a delegation from DIALOP on the occasion of its tenth anniversary. In his address he stated:

I welcome , the representatives of DIALOP, who for years have been committed to promoting the common good through dialogue between socialists/Marxists and Christians. A beautiful program! [...] In the face of rigid approaches that separate, let us cultivate debate and listening with an open mind [...]. The measure of a civilization can be seen in how it treats the most vulnerable: the poor, the unemployed, the homeless, immigrants, the exploited and all those whom the culture of waste transforms into refuse [...]. A policy truly at the service of man cannot allow itself to be dictated financial and market mechanisms [...] There is always a great need for dialogue, do not be afraid!¹²

This is one of several dialogue initiatives between Christians and anti-capitalist leftist people and organizations on various continents.

The economy that kills and the transition to post-capitalism

The term *economy that kills* (*Evangeli Gaudium*, 53) sums up very well the Christian rejection of capitalism and the economy based on *property* in the face of common goods and in common. Since there are ethical, religious, social and economic reasons for overcoming capitalism,¹³ we must embark on the road to post-capitalism. Christians, Marxists and ecoso-

cialists we have to look for another economic logic, another way of understanding property, another way of producing and consuming, other social relations that are the antipodes of exploitation, exclusion, accumulation of surplus value and the devastation of the Earth. There are very relevant proposals on the identity of post-capitalism.¹⁴ There are various modalities: crushing capitalism, dismantling capitalism, domesticating capitalism, resisting capitalism, fleeing from capitalism.¹⁵ In various localities there are very interesting experiences of eco-social transition.¹⁶ In the final part of this notebook I will reflect more extensively on post-capitalism in relation to democracy, the ecosocialism and cultural change.

Christian and ecosocialist foundations for moving towards post-capitalism

The initial keys to the search for a post-capitalist economy and culture have biblical foundations and are based on the social teachings of the various Christian Churches throughout history: (a) the prophets' critique of the rich and their defense of the poor; (b) the teachings, practices of Jesus of Nazareth with the impoverished and his critique of the reign of Money; (c) the socio-economic writings of the Fathers of the Church; (d) the movements of the poor who waged social struggles in various centuries since the Middle Ages; (e) the "red" component of the Protestant Reformation well expressed in the works of Thomas Müntzer, Friedrich Engels, *The Peasants' War in Germany*, and Ernst Bloch, *Thomas*

Müntzer, theologian of the revolution; f) liberation theology; g) the documents and social initiatives of the World Council of Churches; h) the encyclicals and speeches of Pope Francis; i) the anti-capitalist practices of thousands of communities and movements of liberation Christianity in the five continents.

Also very important are the practices and thoughts on common goods, commons and the common good that appear in the Acts of the Apostles, in the Fathers, in St. Thomas Aquinas (who thought that, in case of need, everything should be common) and in currents of Christian morality and theology. Today they can be connected to reflections and practices on *the commons* and the *commons*, which are ways of recovering the experiences of shared communal goods at various stages of history. François Houtart argues that they constitute a form of post-capitalism.¹⁷

In decades of the last century and of this one, the "red thread" that runs through the Bible (Ernst Bloch) has influenced various Christian currents that carry out a very strong critique of capitalism and a search for another way of producing and organizing the economy. It is this anti-capitalist perspective that favors dialogue with Marx, Gramsci, Marxism, communism and ecosocialism. One of the foundations of these currents are the texts of Ignacio Ellacuría in which he criticizes capitalist civilization and proposes the alternative of a civilization of poverty.¹⁸

Pope Francis has focused well on the theme of the Christian search for a

alternative economy to the existing one, which is "an economy that kills" and is evidently none other than capitalism. He uses the categories *invisible thread* and *another logic*. At the II EMMP, held in Bolivia, he stated the following:

In your letters and in our meetings, you have told me about the multiple exclusions and injustices that occur in every work activity, in every neighborhood, in every territory. They are as many and as diverse as their ways of confronting them. There is, however, an invisible thread that unites each of these exclusions. They are not isolated, they are united by an invisible thread.

Can we recognize it? Because these are not isolated issues. I wonder if we are capable of recognizing that these destructive realities respond to a system that has global. Do we recognize that this system has imposed the logic of profit at any cost without thinking about social exclusion or the destruction of nature? If this is so, I insist, us say it without fear: we want a change, a real change, a change of structures. This system is no longer bearable, the peasants cannot stand it, the workers cannot stand it, the communities cannot stand it, the peoples cannot stand it. Neither can the Earth, Sister Mother Earth, as St. Francis used to say, stand it.¹⁹

In *Fratelli Tutti*, after planning social rights and the rights of peoples, he believes that for these to become real, we need a radical change of perspective: "[...] It is about another logic. If you don't try to enter into that logic, my pala-

The Brazilian people will sound like a fantasy [...]. It is possible to accept the challenge of dreaming and thinking of another humanity" (127).

His initiative on the *Economy of Francis* (of Assisi) is also valuable for thinking and activating what could be today a Franciscan economy based on the values and of this saint. I find a connection between this project and the proposal of Jorge Riechmann in his book *Ecosocialismo descalzo*.

From the ecosocialist camp, Michael Löwy affirms that there are seven areas of affinity and convergence between Marxism, ecosocialism and Christian liberation: (a) the centrality given to the poor as victims of unjust social relations; (b) the liberation of the oppressed; (c) the universalism of catholicity and internationalism; (d) the critique of individualism and selfish competition in capitalism; (e) the value of communitarian life and the practice of the communion of goods; (f) anti-capitalism; (g) the hope for a future of justice and liberty, of peace and fraternity among human beings.²⁰ In the final part of this booklet, I will deal more extensively with the proposals of ecosocialism.

Why revitalize dialogue and praxis with Marxism?

Marx, Gramsci and some Marxisms and communisms are an important - though not the only - avenue to be taken into account in the Christian search for a transition to post-capitalism. Those who rely on them in a critical and non-dogmatic way constitute one of the few areas that propose a break with

capitalism. To achieve it, we need to be more than social democrats⁽²¹⁾ Marx and several of his heirs are part of a broad current that runs through history: communism/communisms; that is, the struggles and practices to prioritize common goods and the common good, to oppose *proprietorship* and to avoid slavery, exploitation and oppression. They are a link in a communist tradition both before and after them. The historical truth introduced by Marx is twofold: social scientific analysis of capitalism and revolutionary organization of "suffering humanity". His greatness lies in thinking a project (with lights and shadows) to put the outcasts of the Earth at the center.

The longing for an economy and a society based on common goods and, the aspiration for some form of communism will continue in history, even if the time comes for the total disappearance of Marxism.

Marx led the most profound critique of capitalism and many of his contributions remain fundamental, although they must be updated in a new context in order to build an economy that makes *good eco-life* possible as opposed to "the economy that kills". The main ones, in my view, are the following:

1) The exploitation of human beings and nature as a mandatory requirement for the functioning of capitalism.

2) Division, antagonism and class struggle.

3) The accumulation of money and wealth as the central objective and internal logic of capitalism. This is achieved,

Among other ways, through the centuries-long exploitation of countries in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Oceania, the environmental devastation of the Earth and the extraction of surplus value through the unjust appropriation of the value added by workers.

4) The philosophy of alienation.

5) The internationalist perspective.

6) The collectivization of private ownership of the means of production with non-state (workers' councils) and state modalities.

7) A revolutionary theory to end oppression and class domination.

8) The horizon of the triple reconciliation: of human beings with each other with the overcoming of the class struggle, of human beings with nature, of human beings with themselves. This horizon includes the progressive reduction of working time and the power of the State through the non-capitalist logic of a self-regulating society.

The path opened by Marx deserves to be traveled and rethought. In a heterodox and heretical way, as opposed to Marxism as an immovable cosmological whole, I think that we must walk critically with Marx, with Gramsci and other Marxists and communists, and learn from them. I also believe that we must go much further, broadening their horizons, incorporating old and new non-Marxian contributions and raising dissent with some of their theories. Marx's thought and that of other Marxists contains very valuable elements, some of which are debatable and others are rejectable. He himself said that he did not consider himself a Marxist.

I think it is possible to critically assume the thought and the political and economic perspective of Marx and Gramsci without the need to adopt a total and exclusive Marxist identity.

Which Marxism to dialogue with?

There is no such thing as Marxism, but there are Marxisms. There is no such thing as communism, but communisms. Some are complementary and others antagonistic. Socio- logically, there is no such thing as Christianity, but Christianisms. I think that the best proposal for dialogue is to start from a *Marx without isms*;²² that is, a reading of Marx's work in order to know well what he really meant.

It should be borne in mind that Manuel Sacristán and Francisco Fernández Buey stated that for them being Marxists was secondary. They considered themselves above all heterodox communists; that is to say, the main thing was to fight for an economic system and a type of society different from the capitalist one. They did not consider Marxism(s) as a kind of immovable ideology to be followed. They were inspired by Marx and Gramsci, but from a reading subjected to the changing reality. For this reason, they opened up to other liberation traditions such as Christianity, ecology, pacifism and feminism.

I think that there are rejectable Marxisms: Marxism-Leninism codified in the USSR, cosmo- visional Marxism, self-sufficient Marxism as the principle of a new civilization, scientific Marxism, structuralist and anti-humanist Marxism.

I identify with the proposal of Sacristán and Fernández Buey from a

Marxism as rational praxeology and moral passion centered on "suffering humanity" and the situation of "those at the bottom. A secular Marxism and, therefore, open to other emancipatory currents that are not strictly Marxist. A self-critical Marxism, aware of its limits and shortcomings. Fernández Buey wrote the following in *Nuestro Marx*:

It is most likely that the social movements and the most conscious sectors of the working class will orient themselves towards a new conception of the world in which bits and pieces of Marx's revolutionary theory and emancipatory inspiration are combined with the conclusions of contemporary ecology and biology [...]. It is difficult to say whether the emancipatory movement will continue to call itself Marxist in the future [...]. One can already foresee that the development of Marx's statement "I am not Marxist" will lead to a broadening of the critique of ideologies in which the critique of Marxist ideologies will *also* have to have a place.... Marxism will be *one*, but not the only, nor perhaps even the principal, of the traditions that will become part of the emancipatory movement.²³

In his book *Marx a contracorriente*, this statement appears: "The socialist and transforming left of the future will probably be able to emerge from a dialogue between the tradition that Marx inaugurated, the anarchist-libertarian tradition, the Christian (heretical) tradition of emancipation and the self-critical reconsideration of science" (p. 15). Miguel Riera -director of *El Viejo Topo*, a Marxist and communist-inspired magazine

stated the reasons for this author's relationship with this Christian tradition:

Paco (Fernández Buey) was a communist. He always defined himself as such, in spite of the fact that this word, at certain times and from certain mouths, was an insult. His communism was, however, much closer to primitive communism, I could almost say to evangelical communism, than to the communism that the Eastern European countries claimed to practice. Perhaps that is why Paco, who was an atheist, got along so well with the basic Christians. They were united by their love for "those at the bottom."²⁴

Jorge Riechmann puts forward a very interesting vision for the dialogue that concerns us here with his proposal of a *Leopardian Marxism*. Marx and the great poet Leopardi, so given to pessimism, implies introducing a radical turn in Promethean Marxism and, furthermore, opening it up to spirituality:

A Leopardian Marxism is a very important corrective to the dominant culture of the European left, which has been and continues to be optimistic and voluntarist in its worldview. From Leopardian Marxism [...] the starting point is different from that dominates the Western left: it does not start so much from noting injustice as from assuming the Buddhist *dukkha*, the omnipresence of suffering. And what is sought is to generalize compassion rather than universalize justice (without, however, forgetting the latter). And it is known that, on this path, socio-political struggle and what we usually call spirituality must go hand in hand. If

In other words, Leopardian Marxism, in a positive sense, must also be something like Buddhist Marxism.²⁵

Joaquín Arriola, one of the most prominent Marxist economists in Spain, has made a striking proposal in *Nuestra Bandera* - a communist and Marxist magazine:

Perhaps the main question that the communist tradition can ask of the Christian tradition is not on the moral level, but on the mystical level [...]. It is not compassion, but mysticism, the cultural and moral force of Christianity that requires a new interpretation on the part of the emancipatory currents [...]. We are faced with the possibility of a new stage in the *collo- quium interruptus* between Marxism and Christianity in which it is not religion as a sociological phenomenon that is the ground on which communication is established (science-religion), but faith, in a faith-belief dialogue that can be articulated to an experience of human liberation in the 21ST century.²⁶

Currently, the ocean that arose with Marx has paradoxically flowed into a river that flows through channels that may eventually form another socioeconomic ocean: eco-socialism. There is continuity and discontinuity between the two. As far as critical continuity is concerned, the elaboration of "an ecological Marxism and a green communism" has been fundamental.⁽²⁷⁾ In addition to the contributions of the Marxists Sacristán, Fernán dez Buey and Riechmann, those of Michael Löwy and Kohei Saito stand out. This

The latter advocates in *Capital in the Age of the Anthropocene* a "de-growth communism". Communism is Marxian, de-growth is not.

We are facing a new paradigm from a "Red-Green Marx", but more

beyond it: *anti-capitalist ecosocialism*. I propose that the new stage of the dialogue between Marxism and Christianity should focus on it, taking into account the type of ecology present in *Laudato si'*.

The ecosocialist transition to an alternative socioeconomic system to the present one needs pre-political and metapolitical cultures to inspire and orient it.²⁸ Christianity moves in this terrain. So do ecological wisdoms and Marxist moral humanism.

To advance along this path, a set of social issues must be addressed: 1) absolute poverty and international inequalities; 2) environmental destruction; 3) the priority of labor over capital and the creation of decent jobs; 4) armed conflicts and wars; 5) the lack of housing, land and work for millions of people; 6) migration; 7) social exclusion; 8) violence against women; 9) the construction of an alternative economy to the capitalist one.

In order to develop concrete policies in these areas, we need to radicalize democracy, build ecosocialism and promote cultural and anthropological change.

Radicalizing democracy

In various meetings, Francis has presented very interesting reflections on the need to reorient and broaden democracy. In the III EMMP he stated the following:

The gap between the peoples and our current forms of democracy is widening more and more as a consequence of the enormous power of the economic and media groups that seem to dominate them [...]. Thus democracy atrophies, it becomes a nominalism, a formality, it loses representativeness, it becomes disembodied because it leaves out the people in their daily struggle for dignity, in their daily struggle for the dignity of their own people, in their daily struggle for their own dignity, in their daily struggle for their own dignity, in their daily struggle for their own dignity, in their daily struggle for their own dignity.

building their destiny. You, the organizations of the excluded and so many organizations from other sectors of society are called upon to revitalize, to refound democracies that are going through a real crisis.²⁹

Informational capitalism is generating mediated democracies that get the impoverished to vote for capitalist-oriented candidates. Thus, serf citizens are created. For example, in impoverished Ecuador the last two elected presidents (Lasso and Noboa) belong to the reduced oligarchic and multimillionaire class. A valuable analysis of the last elections shows the growth of "anthropologically neoliberal subjects" in the popular majorities and the consolidation of "a neoliberal common sense":

An important part of the electorate does not vote according to its material configuration; that is, according to material determinants in accordance with its place in the class structure of society. They vote guided by subjective ideal interests. The majorities do not vote according to how they live, but according to how they would like to live [...]. Let us dispute the neoliberal common sense!³⁰

In Spain, defending the neoliberal conception of freedom has become a successful electoral demarcation line.

Post-capitalism is based on radical democracy. Capitalism is antagonistic to this type of democracy. It tolerates only liberal political democracy based on civil liberties, division of powers and parliament.

The capitalists oppose the deepening of democracy in the economic, labor and ecological spheres. They prefer a jibarized, low-intensity democracy. Without changing the prevailing type of democracy, we cannot move towards post-capitalism. Radicalizing it is the basic condition for making it possible.

In the first EMMP, Francis noted "the urgent need to revitalize our democracies, so often hijacked by innumerable factors". And he added that "it is impossible to imagine a future for society without the protagonist participation of the great majorities and that this protagonism exceeds the logical procedures of formal democracy".³¹ This theme of *kidnapped democracies* is very powerful and is linked to the experience of the deficit of democracy in societies with universal suffrage, parliaments and pluralism of parties. Many young Spaniards expressed their democratic frustration in 15-M with their cry "they call it democracy and it is not". One factor that triggers the flagging of politics is the experience of broad sectors of society that democracy is good for civil liberties, but is not capable of substantially changing the material living conditions of those who suffer from social and labor precariousness. They perceive that democracy re- forces those who live well. For these reasons, there is greater electoral abstention in the most impoverished neighborhoods.

To move towards post-capitalism, I propose a multidimensional democracy: delegated, conflictual, participatory and internationalist.

Delegated democracy

Delegated democracy is based on basic civic freedoms: expression, association and demonstration, accompanied by the separation of powers. Most people identify it with voting for party candidates during election periods. Once deputies and senators have been elected, the political will is left in them and political activism is renounced, except for occasional criticism or support. In complex societies, delegation to candidates of various parties is inevitable, but this does not mean renouncing the democratic protagonism of citizens between elections.

Conflictual democracy

The prevailing model of delegated democracy has many inadequacies and maintains the power and wealth of the capitalist elites who, by action and omission, become the victimizers of social and ecological victims. For this reason, I also advocate a *conflictual democracy*. According to the *dictionary of the RAE*, by this word we refer to that which is conflictive, that which generates conflicts. I start from the fact that the unfair distribution of wealth, power and prestige are the factors that determine social inequality. Democracy, if it is faithful to its etymology of *demos* ('people') and *kratos* ('government'), must impose power/government on the classes and social groups that have less power, less wealth and less prestige. Democracy must be, above all, a system of maximum distribution of power, wealth and prestige. The more

The more power is distributed, the more democracy there is. The more concentrated the power, the less democracy, even if there is universal suffrage and parliaments. The more concentrated the wealth, the less democracy. The more distributed, the more democracy.

This democratic process of *disempowering* and *disenriching* some to *empower* and *enrich* others generates social conflict and pressure groups to prevent or promote it. The powerful and enriched unlikely to accept it. To overcome resistance, a popular counter-power is needed in civil society and in Parliament. The redistribution of wealth and power is aimed at achieving the maximum degree of justice and making freedom for all a reality, understood as capitalist "non-diminishment" in everyday life. To achieve this, nonviolent social conflicts may have to be encouraged. Gandhi's example should guide us.

An important caveat: is not just a matter of fairly redistributing the goods of a capitalist society so that all people enjoy equally the material well-being that this system creates in many countries. The aspiration of millions of people to be able to live a way similar to that of the capitalist elites and the upper middle classes is nonsense. It is anti-ecological, internationally unjust and, moreover, unviable. Post-capitalism leads us to another ecological way of producing, consuming and living well with less.

Participatory democracy

This modality has five dimensions: institutional, economic, labor,

social and cultural. I will explain them below before coming to the section on internationalist democracy. If it were limited only to institutional politics, it would be an amputated democracy. To develop it requires that most of the people of a country be willing to participate actively in public life in order to build *expansive democracy* of high intensity from civil society. The great problem we have is not the absence of transformation, but the lack of social subjects to support them.

a) Innovating institutional political democracy

Participatory political democracy requires the establishment of sectoral citizens' assemblies as spheres of programmatic political elaboration. Through these assemblies, a process of listening by political parties should be promoted and "contract programs" should be established to ensure that campaign promises are fulfilled.

If we aspire to create a policy based on permanent interaction between state institutions and civil society movements, we need to establish relations between sectoral citizens' assemblies or platforms and parliamentary commissions.

Participatory budgets are one of the means to build this type of democracy.

In order to promote participatory political democracy, we have much to learn from the periodic democratic referendums held in Switzerland. It would also be desirable to

The open lists on the ballot papers of each party and to discuss how to introduce constituency deputies as in the United Kingdom.

b) Economic democracy

Political democracy has to impel economic democracy. If people do not experience the *demos-kratos* (the government/power of the people) in daily life and in the transformation of the material and cultural conditions of existence, political disaffection will continue to grow. In order to build economic democracy, we must promote tax justice and prosecute fraud in this area, creating a powerful National Intelligence Center (CNI) against financial crime, the underground economy and money in tax havens. It is also urgent to establish a state public bank and regional public banks to support investment in employment and prevent abuses by private banks. In addition, it is advisable to bank divestment and direct our assets to ethical and ecological banking.

Nationalizing strategic productive sectors, especially in the energy sector, is another priority. We must also put an end to the obscene wage gap by establishing floor and ceiling salaries.

c) Labor democracy

In this area, a distinction must be made between the unemployed, precarious workers and workers with decent working conditions. Also, between companies

and solidarity-based social economy.

A fair relationship between democracy and work requires the promotion of a basic citizenship income and a new active training for employment. Pope Francis also advocates a guaranteed universal income. To create decent jobs, we need to strengthen the model of solidarity-based social economy with a high degree of self-management. With regard to the precariat, what is essential is a new trade union action in this sector.

The government of the people over the destiny of corporate surplus value is indispensable. We cannot allow the continuation of the neoliberal freedom that turns workers into commodities that can be bought or not bought according to profit expectations. That corporate bonuses should be used to create jobs should be a principle to be incorporated in the updating of the Constitution. Co-determination in companies should also be another requirement if we wish to promote labor democracy.

d) Social democracy

Democracy must guarantee the fulfillment of social rights, especially for the most impoverished individuals, social classes and groups. I am referring to the right to food, housing, decent employment and a fair wage, health, education, pensions, energy supply, a decent and healthy habitat, which is lacking in the poorest *neighborhoods that are ignored*, various forms of social protection (subsidies, social security, etc.), and the right to a decent and healthy life in the most impoverished *neighborhoods*.

unemployment benefits, basic income, care for the most vulnerable children and the elderly, etc.). In Spain, there has been progress since the beginning democracy, but millions of people still lack these rights.

Access to decent housing shows the deterioration of democracy in Spain. The yoke endured by many people, especially young people, in relation to access to housing, delegitimizes democracy. Housing is a basic social good that the public authorities must guarantee by disempowering and disenriching those who have turned housing into a millionaire's business. A cap on rents based on the primacy of the common good over the private good would lead to changes in the behavior of many middle-class families who speculate with second homes for rent.

Adequately addressing policies against exclusion is fundamental for the advancement of social democracy. Solidarity and attention to the socially excluded and the most vulnerable victims of the capitalist system currently characterize Christian individuals, communities and groups. This fact is of great significance, given that the political left and the trade union left, with some exceptions, do not know how to be and do not know how to move in this world. Nevertheless, it is fair to recognize that they have contributed to the implementation of public policies for these groups.

This valuable Christian solidarity is insufficient if it is not linked to the political dimension of the structural causes of poverty and ecocide, if it does not contribute to the creation of movements of solidarity.

The social movements are not the only way to achieve this, but also to promote social and political struggles against the perpetrators (institutional and private) who produce victims. To do this, it is necessary to go beyond NGOs and volunteers - without eliminating both - and to adopt forms of collective action proper to social movements. This is why Pope Francis speaks of "political love" (*Laudato si'*, 228-232; *Fratelli Tutti*, 176-192). In the first EMMP, he addressed the question I am planning and stated the following:

The poor no longer wait and want to be protagonists, they organize themselves, they study, they work, they demand [...]. Solidarity also means fighting against the structural causes of poverty, inequality, lack of work [...]. The scandal of poverty cannot be addressed by promoting strategies that turn the poor into domesticated and harmless beings. How sad to see when behind supposedly altruistic works, the other is reduced to passivity [...]. How beautiful it is, on the other hand, when we see peoples on the move, especially their poorest members and young people.³²

The division of labor in this task is important. The level of human deterioration of the victims is sometimes so great that it is difficult to go beyond reception and accompaniment; however, as the EMMPs show, the poor also have the capacity for socio-political articulation. Pope Francis insists much on "the organized poor" as collective subjects.

of their emancipation and warns against their domestication by means of social services that make them passive. It is very interesting a part of his speech in the third EMMP that has to do with my previous reflection:

Do not be afraid to get involved in the big discussions, in politics with a capital letter [...]. Do not let yourselves be straitjacketed. As long as they remain in the corset of "social policies", as long as they do not question the economic policy or politics with a capital letter, they are tolerated. This idea of social policies conceived as a policy *towards* the poor, but never *with* the poor, never *of the poor* and much less inserted in a project that reunites the people, sometimes seems to me a kind of a made-up dumper to contain the discarding of the system. When you, from your roots in what is close to you, dare to question the "macro-regions", when you scream, when you , when you try to point out to power a more integral approach, then you are not tolerated. They are not tolerated because they are stepping out of the corset, they are entering the terrain of the big decisions that some try to monopolize small castes.³³

e) *Cultural democracy*

To develop this type of democracy, poverty must be eradicated as a decisive factor in the reproduction of inequality. Poverty is something that is inherited, especially when the children of the impoverished suffer school failure. Positive discrimination required for a very strong investment in resources.

and economic resources in order to promote cultural democracy in education.

We have to reinvent the popular universities, multiply social educators and cultural animators who promote an emancipated culture in neighborhoods and villages.

I want to call attention to the often imperceptible evils of audiovisual and digital obesity that is making us sick, even though millions enjoy it. There is an important challenge:

How can we generate a counterculture against digital imperialism? Democracy is lost if *homo digitalis* continues to grow. We had better put an end to the ideology of digital natives, which is an anti-educational stupidity, and raise ecological natives.

Having presented the various forms of participatory democracy, let us address my last proposal, which is the most important of all.

Internationalist democracy

If we do not promote global social and economic democracy from a new internationalism, we will become inhabitants of what I call *de-monazisms*. The Western response to migration helps to understand this term. We live in democracies in countries that are islands of welfare surrounded by oceans of poverty. We only want migrants who can fill the jobs our fellow citizens want. For the rest, we apply repressive police and militaristic policies. We are facing new forms of social extermination promoted by the action and omission of Western democracies. At

Africa, Asia and Latin America live and die billions of people in countries where a kind of new socio-economic concentration camps prevail, which in some way are heirs to the Nazi camps. It is enough to know the figures of millions deaths per month due to international socio-economic causes.

Migrations to rich and exploitative countries are only the tip of the iceberg of the great drama of our time: the abysmal international inequalities and the supreme concentration of wealth. Migration cannot be resolved with repressive policies, but with a substantial change in the distribution of wealth in the world through policies of global justice that go beyond development cooperation. Only in this way will the right not to emigrate and to have a decent life in each country be real. In *Unveiling Inequality*, Roberto Korzeniewicz and Timothy Moran show lacerating levels of inequality that, because they are sporadic, demonstrate the radical injustice and blind selfishness in the world:

If domestic dogs in the United States were to become independent and form a country whose per capita income was the average expenditure of U.S. households on their pets, Doglan (Pe-roland) would be among the middle-income countries, above Egypt or Paraguay, and better off than 40 % of the world's population.³⁴

Internationalist democracy is that which addresses global social problems and promotes an international agency for global justice. We are not lacking in proposals. Some of them

I have presented in my books *Networks of International Solidarity*, *Global Justice* and *International Inequalities, Justice Now!* We know how much global justice policies cost and where we can get the resources. One of the sources of financing would be to intervene in the 12 trillion dollars -about 15% of the world's GDP- that are hidden in tax havens. Spanish multi-millionaires are stashed away in them.

140 billion euros, which is equivalent to 10 % of our GDP. The problems are, on the one hand, financial, business, military and media power in the hands of very few people and, on the other hand, a blind and indolent citizenry.

The type of multidimensional democracy that I have presented cannot be realized without moving towards an ecological post-capitalism.

Building ecosocialism

Real capitalism is "an economy that kills" and an ecocidal system.³⁵ Since the SIXTEENTH century it has been based on the accumulation of surplus value and guided by the pursuit of profit at all costs. Money is its God. This is its purpose. Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* called it "cold interest" which bathes "in the icy waters of selfish calculation".

Capitalism exploits most of the countries of the Earth, workers worldwide, is warmongering and patriarchal. It is the cause of ecological disaster. It has also been and is being generated by industrialist governments in non-capitalist states, such as the former USSR and China. Capitalism pretends to solve the con-

The current contradiction between capital and nature is being dressed up as *green capitalism* as a form of survival and a way of doing new business. To the extent that measures are taken to subject capitalist enterprises and citizens' comfort to strong ecological regulations, it is possible that it will not even expand as *green capitalism*, but as *ecofascism*.³⁶

Ecosocialism³⁷ proposes to overcome the forms of capitalist economy related to property, banking and finance, production and distribution of goods, social relations of production and life in companies and neighborhoods, prices, wages, growth, as well as the organization of production and life times.

Ecosocialism is distinguished from social democracy by its ecological anti-capitalism, and has a relationship of continuity and discontinuity with Marxism.

Capitalist companies and governments against the climate

The deep nexus between greenhouse gas (GHG) generating companies and governments of the right and the majority left reflects the realities of pure and capitalism. According to research by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), public subsidies for fossil fuels in 2022 reached an all-time high of \$7 trillion. In it, the authors state the following fact:

Subsidies for oil, coal and natural gas are costing the equivalent of 7.1% of the world's gross domestic product. This is higher than the

that governments allocate annually to education (4.3% of world income) and about two-thirds of what they spend on health care (10.9%). [The elimination of explicit fossil fuel subsidies would prevent 1.6 million premature deaths per year, increase public revenues by \$4.4 trillion and bring emissions on track to meet targets for limiting global warming. It would also redistribute income, since fuel subsidies benefit rich households more than poor ones.³⁸

From 2016 to 2023, the world's leading banks granted one trillion euros to finance new oil, gas and coal projects of the most polluting companies. These include Banco Santander (173 billion) and BBVA (195 billion).

It should be noted that *100 companies are responsible for 70% of GHG emissions*. In 2022, the world's five largest oil companies doubled their profits. In just one quarter of 2023, the six largest oil companies in Europe, including Repsol, earned more than 25 billion euros.

Does anyone still believe that this situation can be changed with volunteers, NGOs, Agenda 2030 and wage increase policies that maintain the *status quo* of economic power?

Post-capitalism is ecosocialist and requires an anti-capitalist transition

It is not a matter of reducing climate change with slow, short-term measures.

but to change the system that produces it. Therefore, we need a transition to post-capitalism. This can only be achieved by activating concrete anti-capitalist actions and creating experiences of ecologist economy and common life that prefigure what will be the post-capitalist society at the macro level and give hope and joy of life to those who struggle for another world to be possible. The ecosocialist transition begins with grassroots experiences, although it must include other political actions.

Laudato si' and its positive reception by prominent ecosocialists, whose names I mentioned in the first pages, favor dialogue and shared action. A comparative analysis of this encyclical and the main proposals of ecosocialism shows the existence of relevant affinities.

Ecosocialism links ecological problems and social problems. The specific feature of its project is the will to put an end to the capitalist causes of the ecological crisis. We know the sectors that produce the most greenhouse gases: energy, industry, construction, transport, agriculture and waste.³⁹ But we cannot reorient them ecologically without dismantling the polluters: companies, multi-millionaire owners and anti-ecological consumers.

Thinking about what to do

For the transition phase to post-capitalism through ecosocialism, there are numerous proposals.⁴⁰ The creation of new ecological forms of economy, politics and social life in common require substantial changes in the way we live our lives.

The program of *Ecologistas en Acción* is very valuable to learn about concrete proposals in these areas.⁽⁴¹⁾ The program of *Ecologistas en Acción* is very valuable to learn about concrete proposals in these areas, such as: ecological taxation, end of subsidies to polluting companies, changes in transport systems, new forms of food production and distribution, investment in renewable energies, other forms of construction, new waste management, sustainable urban planning and neoruralism, ending the planned obsolescence of many products, public control of banks. The *Ecologistas en Acción* program is very valuable to learn about concrete proposals in these areas.⁴¹

It is also necessary to close down certain industries or, at least, reduce their production. I am thinking, among others, of automobiles, chemicals and petrochemicals, agribusiness, the plastics industry and fashion. The latter is very environmentally damaging: the production of fabrics for clothing causes 20% of the world's drinking water pollution. The overproduction of plastics is devastating for the seas, oceans and fish, for our nutrition and for the ecological balance. Every minute, one million plastic bottles are sold worldwide and each one will take 450 years to decompose.

I am aware that the change in production affects jobs. It is true that the creation of green jobs is increasing and will increase, but if we reduce industries on the basis of "produce less, transport less, work less and consume less", changes in employment policies are essential. The fundamental ones must be "work less to work for everyone", labor and economic democracy, control of the

price system, basic income, nationalization of the energy and banking systems, free and quality education and health care.⁴²

Decrease

Degrowth is a central proposal of ecosocialism.⁴³ From this point of view, I believe that we must *produce less and consume less in order to live well with less on a planetary scale*. For this to be feasible, it is necessary to promote ecosocialist economic policies and cultural changes.

Degrowth is nourished by ecofeminism and its culture of the limits, of the sense of limit and of the capacity for self-restraint. Degrowth is anti-capitalist because it breaks with the logic of growth at all costs, of the accumulation of surplus labor and environmental value, and of the constant stimulus of consumption. It is essential to *live well with less*,⁴⁴ because it entails stopping the acceleration to which capitalist society subjects us, which robs us of our time of life through its productivist logic. His proposal for *de-digitization* is interesting.⁴⁵ Growth is also defended by political organizations and movements in countries of the South that fight to end poverty, but refuse immolate life for the sake of ever-increasing material well-being. They therefore promote the *good life*.

Internationalism

Ecosocialism is internationalist. It denounces the new forms of *green colonialism* in its current phase of mineral extractivism and other forms of re-extractivism.

⁴⁶ These practices are very harmful to the Asian, Latin American and African populations.⁴⁷ The environmental devastation they create, the impoverishment and loss of sovereignty of the native populations, the destruction of their territories and the climate migrations caused engender an immense ecological debt on the part of the neocolonialist and imperialist countries. Well-being and consumption in the rich countries are directly related to extractivism and other forms of injustice practiced by the companies of these countries.

From its internationalism, eco-socialism denounces climate inequality: the richest 10% of the world's population generates 48% of greenhouse gas emissions, 40% of the world's middle-income earners cause 40% and the poorest 50% generate 12%. The latter sector is suffering the most and will bear the brunt of the global increase in emissions. The *Climate Inequality Report* estimates that, in the coming years, environmental destruction will cause a 75 % loss of income for the poorest population, while for the richest 10 % this percentage will be 3 %.

Ecosocialism criticizes the Southern States that produce anti-ecological goods for export and are modeled on the capitalist way of life in the rich countries.

Pacifism

Ecosocialism is pacifist and denounces the warmongering of capitalist countries.

and various dictatorships based on different ideologies. There is a huge military expenditure that is directly linked to geopolitical domination to control goods and raw materials for the central countries of the world-system, including China. Ecosocialism advocates a pacifist strategy based on preventing conflicts and resolving them peacefully when they occur.

Citizen activism

Ecosocialism is nothing without citizen activism in environmental movements and participation in other forms of political action. It values and encourages virtuous practices of individual and communitarian ecological action, but warns of their insufficiency to affect the structural causes of the ecological crisis. Pope Francis affirms the same in *Laudato si'* and in *Fratelli Tutti*. Joan Martínez Alier and Naomi Klein have shown the transformative capacity of the ecological praxis of social movements based on direct action.⁴⁸ This includes the rejection of the products of companies that cause environmental devastation and the criticism of these in the public space through boycott actions and denunciation for exploiting impoverished countries.

Promote a cultural and anthropological change for other lifestyles.

The culture of the citizens is very decisive for the present and the future. It must be borne in mind that capitalism is not only based on power, but also on the

The world of capitalism is not only in the millions people around the world who believe that this is the best possible world. What they really want is to move up the social ladder into capitalist material welfare.

Capitalism is not only a mode of economic production, but a very powerful mode of cultural production that has achieved an overwhelming victory throughout the world in shaping the culture of daily life and the aspirations and goals of life. By *culture* I mean the ways of reality, feeling and behaving that people have. These are constituted through the forging of character, in which the education of the deepest part of the being is decisive: needs, desires, passions and feelings. Capitalism has succeeded in penetrating the deepest part of the human psyche and in shaping it with a culture akin to its mode of domination, but in a persuasive, seductive and gratifying way, even for those who lack the material goods for a dignified life. Such a culture produces blindness and deafness to the cries of the Earth and the cries of the impoverished. In the report *Young People and the Environment* of the SM Foundation (2023), 40% of young Spaniards state that "the ecological crisis is being greatly exaggerated".

Capitalism disciplines the population in productive labor and the It "liberates" in non-working time with its permanent supply of "opium of the people". Here it operates with a great promise: the possibility of attaining higher states of comfort, solace and material well-being. The asceticism of the virtues has been replaced by the asceticism of work in order to enjoy the

The result of this project of alie- nation is the rule of possessive individualism and the "every man for himself" society. The result of this project of alie- nation is the empire of possessive individualism and the society of "every man for himself."⁴⁹

The central anthropological problem of capitalist civilization is the attachment to money as the most desired object by the vast majority of the population. This can be perceived in cultures and political regimes of different ideological orientations. It is a universal life goal. This fact reveals the immense failure of Christianity in its more than 2,000 years of history. As Gramsci wrote, Francis of Assisi was a fleeting comet in the Christian universe.

The anthropology contained in *Fratelli Tutti* is a very relevant contribution to cultural change and *ecological conversion*. For a new ecosocial paradigm, the liberation religions are a source of contributions.⁵¹

Faced with the logic of the growth of economic profit for capitalists and the increase in the consumption of citizens creating more needs, we must vitally respond to the following ecological questions:

What is a good life, how much is enough once basic needs are met, why is living more than just working and consuming? We need to create the material and anthropological conditions to make it desirable and possible to live well with less, to reduce our needs, to choose frugality, and to live a good life with less.

and give primacy to the common good over the private good. This is an anti-capitalist life option very much present Christianity and ecosocialism. The day when this has become a *new mass common sense*, the cultural change will have been achieved. There is an affinity between the "blessed are those who choose to be poor" of the Gospel according to St. Matthew and the proposal of *barefoot ecosocialism* on voluntary poverty and the capacity for self-restraint. Negri and Hardt have stated that "there is an ancient story that can serve to illustrate the future life of communist militancy: that of St. Francis of Assisi".⁽⁵²⁾

In conclusion, the subject of this paper goes beyond Marxism, ecosocialism and Christianity. It is

a question of basic human dignity: to achieve a *good eco-life* for the humiliated and offended - to use Dostoevsky's language - for "those at the bottom," for the victims of "the economy that kills" so that Jesus of Nazareth's wish that the last be first and the reign of Money disappear, may be fulfilled. Without the struggle against it, it is clear to us in Christianity that the kingdom of God cannot grow in this world. From Marx's thought, expressed in the third volume of *Capital*, we know that in order to achieve the *kingdom of freedom* - based on the reconciliation of man with others, with Nature and with himself - we must overcome the *kingdom of necessity* in its aspects of exploitation and alienation.

NOTES

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What reasons does the author list throughout the booklet to vindicate the timeliness of the dialogue between Christians, Marxists and environmentalists?
2. To what extent has the magisterium of Pope Francis helped to recover the need for this dialogue?
3. In the second part of the booklet, the author proposes three necessary conditions for moving towards ecosocialism: radicalizing democracy, building ecosocialism, promoting a cultural and anthropological change for other lifestyles. Which of these conditions seems most necessary and urgent in the current situation? Why?
4. In your personal or community environment, how could the dialogue proposed in this booklet be concretized? Do you know of any successful experience of this dialogue/praxis between Christianity and Marxism, or between Christianity and social movements, ecosocialism...?

* If you wish, you can send us your answers, reflections and opinions to the following e-mail address cuadernos@fespinal.com

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