

Transparency and participation in politics as challenges to the left

Between neoliberal integration and
new possibilities of emancipation

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New strategies are based on real changes in society

- new methods of production and new products
- new contradictions within the elites
- crises of the environmental system
- increasing complexity of social relations
- tendency of social disintegration



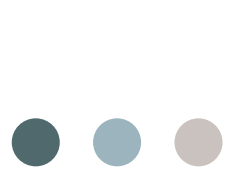
Central question

How to safeguard social stability in realising deep social changes in accordance to a neoliberal strategy?



Other economic interests

- higher effectiveness in using public funds
 - transparency of budget processes
 - reduce costs and taxes
- fight against lobbyism
- fight against corruption
- accountability of local and state administration
- facilitate investment in business environment



New quality of labor – new type of citizen

- abilities needed in modern production
 - to cooperate
 - sense of responsibility
 - creativity
 - self-organization
- high level of education
- experiences of social and citizens' movements



Participation as mechanism of power and control

- ... used as an instrument of incorporation
- ... became a element of competition and competitiveness
- ... produces new contradictions within the political system
- BUT
- ... creates new spaces of influence and self-organization for the public too



Do common problems of citizenship exist?

- imbalance of economic power
- personnel reproduction of the apparatus of state
- International division of labor and dependency on its institutions
- a new form of oligarchic rule



What is active citizenship?

- Two levels of contradictions
 - between the parts of citizenship (not only social classes)
 - between state and citizenship
- active/critical citizenship
 - able to recognize these two levels
 - interested in solving contradictions, using the way of compromises
 - able to accept the clash of political positions in non-violent forms



Challenges to the left

- How to meet the need to participate?
- How to make the step from participation to emancipation?
- How to adapt the own organisations to the new conditions?



New left political culture as condition of the democratisation of society

- democratisation of movement and parties
- Politics without any kind of barriers
 - Gender issues
 - Solidarity between generations
 - Disabled people
 - Migrants
 - to accept citizens as specialists of questions, concerning their living conditions
 - Democratisation of information



Democracy – policy - power

- Look at public space not as a space between state and civil society but as a space where different and contradictory interests interact in different ways
- Combination of representative and direct democracy
- use parliamentary forms actively



Democratisation of public debate

- safeguard public spaces and time against privatisation
 - locations, where people can meet
 - Possibilities of seeing what the interests of the neighbors are, how they live ...
 - Media
 - Access to public transport, library, theatre ...



Create deliberative forms of decision making processes

- transparency in administration and in parliaments
 - the process of decision making must be open to all
- accountability of politicians and administration (independent from elections)
- participatory budgeting
- forms of direct democracy (referendum...)



Participation as an educational process

- „social learning“ – learning by doing
- new role of popular (political) education
 - Help to organize processes of learning within the process of participation
 - Take part as adviser
 - Help to learn, that another world is possible
 - How to come from particular improvements to „large“ problems?
 - Basics in a new world
 - History as living history



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