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# Constructing the future, before or after the collapse

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## Introduction

### Where are we?

One of the greatest philosophers of our age, Woody Allen tells us that there are three fundamental questions – Where are we from? Where are we going? And what are we having for dinner tonight? The first two are obviously fundamental questions – but undoubtedly so is “what are we having for dinner tonight” since it refers us to “where are we right now?” Woody Allen answers the third question, which is both the starting point and point of arrival of the two previous questions with what seems to me to be the appropriate answer: “More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction.” And he adds, “Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly.” (Allen, Woody. *My Speech to the Graduates*. In *Complete Prose*. Picador: London. 1997.)

We have to take this joke very seriously. The first path was that of a growth society with growth, the post-war economic miracle referred to in France as the *Trente Glorieuses*, which we know was a dead-end street because of its deleterious influence on the climate, the extinction of species, the exhaustion of fossil fuels, etc. Since August, 2007, we have *wisely* and *fortunately* taken leave of this first path and embarked on the second, that of despair: the path of a growth society without growth in crisis or recession. Is it better to be desperate than extinct? This offers us food for thought and would be a good question for a philosophy exam. And this is where we are today.

It is important to explore both paths to realise that there may be a third – a path of hope, of another possible world, the path of ungrowth. To understand the reasons that might lead us to choose that path, let us start by trying to understand why we seem stuck in a deadlock between the growth society with growth from which we come and if unchecked will lead to the extinction of the species and the desperate and terrifying world of a growth society without growth which we are moving towards at a tremendous lick.

### I Where do we come from?

We have spent roughly the last three centuries in growth societies. A growth society can be defined as a society dominated by a growth economy which tends to allow itself to be absorbed by the growth economy. Growth for growth's sake has thus become the primordial if not sole objective of the economy and life. The aim is not to grow in order to satisfy recognised needs, which would be a good thing, but to grow simply in order to grow. It can fairly be said that “globalisation”, which marks the passage from a world market economy to a borderless market and economy society constitutes the absolute triumph of the religion of growth. Obviously, growth society is also a capitalist system, but for several centuries – and it suffices to think of Florence of the

quattrocento – capitalism did not bring forth a growth society in the true sense of the term. What does all this imply?

Everything started with the beginning of industrial capitalism and political economy, which we shall symbolically place in 1776, the year of the appearance of Adam Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*<sup>1</sup>, the founding moment of political economy. Typical of the Scottish Enlightenment, Adam Smith's liberal utopia is the enrichment of all by the release of passions, including greed, egotism and the quest for the most sordid interest. The Scottish philosopher claimed that through the marvelous mechanism of the “invisible hand”, the prosperity of nations would be guaranteed. Thus, the slogan of modernity would be achieved: “the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number”, a slogan that economists transformed into a theoretical model in the English-speaking world, surpassing one another as poets through the numerous metaphors they employed, such as *trickle-down effect*.

It took two centuries for Adam Smith's utopia truly to become reality, and only for a period of thirty years (1945-1975). The absolute arm of thermo-capitalism is the ignition engine and its fuel is oil. Through these new inventions, every individual disposed of energy equivalent to that of 50 to 150 slaves, (which only the richest of the Romans were able to afford. It should be pointed out that thirty litres of petrol in our motor are the equivalent of the work of a worker for the period of roughly three years (for a few dozen euros)! This is absolutely fabulous; it allowed for a new mutation of capitalism that might be referred to as social-democratic or Keynesian-Fordist, with a substantial and regular rise in salaries and regulation of well-being through the Welfare State. The only drawback is that this fairy tale can only last a certain time; we have reached the Hubbert peak, i.e. the end of cheap oil.<sup>2</sup>

The party has been over since 1975, however, the genius of Alan Greenspan, head of the Federal Reserve Bank from 1987 to 2006 made it possible to extend the illusion of growth for another thirty years in the virtual realm.

The post-war boom was that of the advance of consumer society, the opulent or affluent society, which was the normal and supreme stage of a growth society. It is based upon a three-fold belief in limitless growth – in production and thus the obtaining of both renewable and non-renewable resources, in needs and thus superfluous products, and finally in refuse and thus waste products and the pollution of

<sup>1</sup> Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, [1776] London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., ed. Edwin Cannan, 1904, fifth edition.

<sup>2</sup> The Hubbert peak, which was calculated by the geophysicist, Marion King Hubbert in the 1940s, designates the moment at which the level of oil resources leads to an ineluctable drop in (bell curve).

the air, the earth and water.

In turn, this absence of limits has been made possible through an infernal trio: advertisement, credit and planned obsolescence. Thus, consumer society, far from being one of well-being and happiness, is one of frustration: advertising disenchant us of what we have so as to inspire a desire for what we do not have and to consume as a consequence. Credit gives us the means to do so, sometimes beyond measure, for instance in the case of the NINJNA loans (*No income, No job, No asset*) extended to people in the United States.

Such a society is neither sustainable nor desirable. It is not sustainable because it exceeds the loading capacity of the planet, thus running up against the finite limits of the biosphere. Nevertheless, even if it could last indefinitely, our life style would be no less unbearable and it would be judicious to change it.

In fact, we are altogether aware of the situation. Since the publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in 1962, too many authoritative voices have been raised for us to be able to claim we are not aware. The famous “limits to growth” report of the Club of Rome (1972) warned us that the indefinite pursuit of growth was incompatible with the planet’s “fundamentals”.<sup>3</sup> Economic excess growth, which runs up against those finite limits of the biosphere, already by far exceeds the loading capacity of our earth. Infinite growth is incompatible with a finite planet. The extraordinary process of the spontaneous regeneration of the biosphere, even with human assistance, cannot go at a frantic rate. At any rate, it will not make it possible to reproduce all products which have been degraded through industrial activity in their identical form. Energy transformation processes cannot be reversed (second law of thermo-dynamics), and in practical terms, the same applies to matter. Even the simple lasting reproduction of our predatory system is no longer possible. If all the citizens of the world were to consume like average Americans, or even average Europeans, the physical limits of the planet would already have been depleted to a vast extent.

If we accept that an indicator of the environmental weight of our life style is its ecological footprint on the surface of the earth or the necessary bio-productive space, we can see unsustainable results with a view both to equity in the drawing rights on nature and the biosphere’s capacity for regeneration. Space available on the planet earth is limited. It amounts to 51 billion hectares. Nevertheless, the “bio-productive” space, i.e. the space which is useful for our own reproduction, is only a fraction of this sum, or roughly 12 billion hectares.<sup>4</sup> If it were evenly divided among the world’s present-day population, this would mean roughly 1.8 hectares per person. If we take into account needs for materials and energy, i.e. what is required to absorb waste and by-products of production and consumption (every time we burn a litre of petrol, we need five square meters of forest to absorb the CO<sub>2</sub>!) and by adding the impact of our habitat and necessary infrastructures, researchers working for the California-based institute, “Redefining Progress” and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have calculated that the bio-productive space consumed per human capita was

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<sup>3</sup> The Club of Rome subsequently published Donella H. Meadows: *Beyond the limits. Confronting Global Collapse, Envisioning a Sustainable Future*, Chelsea Green Publishing 1992, as well as *Limits to Growth: the 30 year Update*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Mathis Wackernagel, *Il nostro pianeta si sta esaurendo. In Economia e Ambiente. La sfida del terzo millennio*. EMI, Bologna 2005.

roughly 2.7 hectares in 2007. Thus, humans have already strayed from the path of a sustainable form of civilisation, which required that each of us limit ourselves to 1.8 hectares, supposing that the present-day population remains stable. What is more, this average footprint conceals enormous disparities.

Nevertheless, growth society is not desirable either; and there are at least three reasons for this – it gives rise to greater inequalities and injustice, it creates a sense of well-being which is to a vast extent illusory, and it does not lead to a society which is a pleasure for the very wealthy to live in, but to the contrary an “anti-society” whose wealth has made it ill.

Over the past few years, the British NGO, the *New Economics Foundation*, has crossed the results of surveys on subjective well-being, life expectancy and the ecological footprint so as to arrive at what it refers to as the *Happy planet index*, which is utterly opposed both to the conventional order of per capita GDP and to the Human Development Index. In 2006, the first in the list were Vanuatu, Colombia and Costa Rica while France only came in 131<sup>th</sup> place and the United States in 150<sup>th</sup> place. In 2009, Costa Rica headed the list, followed by the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Guatemala; the United States only came in at 114<sup>th</sup> place.<sup>5</sup> The explanation for this apparent paradox is that so-called developed society is based upon the mass production of degradation, i.e. a loss of value or disutility, on the one hand through the generalised degradation of merchandise that the acceleration of the throw-away culture is transforming into latent discards, and on the other human beings who have either been marginalised or dismissed after being used, from has-been CEOs and throw-away managers to the unemployed, the homeless, beggars and other human waste. Under such circumstances, if we want to avoid catastrophes, it is urgent to reconceive society as an “ungrowth” society, and if possible one that is serene and conducive to pleasant social intercourse.

## II Where are we going? Eco-socialism or barbarism: choosing or submitting to ungrowth.

Crisis is on the agenda. The print and audio-visual media talk incessantly or almost incessantly about it. But which crisis are we talking about? The sovereign debt crisis? The euro crisis? The crisis of Europe? The employment crisis? We having been going through a cultural and ethical crisis since May, 1968, an ecological crisis since 1972 and the first report by the Club of Rome, a social crisis since the neo-liberal counter-revolution of the 1980s and the 1990s, a financial crisis since the subprime crisis of August 2007, and finally an economic crisis since September 15, 2008 and the fall of the Lehman Brothers bank. Finally all of these crises come together and cumulate, making up a crisis of civilisation.

We did not have the fortune to be spectators to the collapse of the civilisations of Easter Island, the Viking culture in Greenland, or the Roman Empire, which have all been perfectly described in *Collapse*<sup>6</sup>, the thoroughly documented cult book by the American author, Jared Diamond. On the other hand, we now have the extraordinary privilege to be the direct witnesses of the fall of the Western-American Empire, which is very similar to that of the Roman Empire.

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<sup>5</sup> [www.happyplanetindex.org](http://www.happyplanetindex.org). Cf. Alessandra Retico, « Felicità. I nuovi paradisi non conoscono il PIL, La repubblica du 8 juillet 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, 2005.

The only difference is that the decline of the latter took place over the course of several centuries while “our” apocalypse has been predicted to take place between 2030 and 2070.

According to Richard C. Duncan’s Olduvai theory, in the course of this century, humanity is rushing towards economic, social, energy, food, health and ecological collapse. He even goes so far as to predict that this collapse will start with increasingly frequent gigantic electricity blackouts.<sup>7</sup> It would have been simpler to start with the collapse of a currency, or inflation similar to that in Germany in 1923, but on a world scale. And all the rest would follow.

This said, the fundamentals of impending doom are already with us. We are going through what specialists refer to as the sixth extinction of the species.<sup>8</sup> The fifth, which took place sixty-five million years ago during the Cretaceous period, saw the extinction of the dinosaurs and other great creatures, probably following a collision with an asteroid. However, when compared the last, our present extinction presents three considerable differences. First of all, vegetable and animal species which are estimated somewhere between three and thirty million are disappearing at a speed of fifty to two hundred a day<sup>9</sup>, or a pace which is one to thirty thousand times higher than that of the hecatombs of past geological ages.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, human beings are directly responsible for the present-day “depletion” of life forms. Finally, they may turn out to be one of their victims. The Astronomer Royal, Sir Martin Rees, author of *Our Final Century*, reckons that the likelihood of humanity’s surviving the twenty-first century is one out of two.<sup>11</sup> The great ecologist scholar, Sir James Lovelock, who at the age of 86 was even more pessimistic, published *The Revenge of Gaia*, leaving our civilisation practically no chance and only a tiny hope for 500 million individuals to survive under miserable circumstances at the poles.<sup>12</sup>

One might obviously remain sceptical with regard to publications on futurology, but those of the Club of Rome do have the merit of being infinitely more serious and solid than the usual projections upon which our governments and international bodies base their reflection. The Team at MIT which drafted the studies constructed a model (the world 3 model) tested on data spanning more than a century, representing the entire world.<sup>13</sup> Two aspects of this method corroborate its credibility: the interdependence of the

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<sup>7</sup> Jean Cornil and Bernard Legros, *La pertinence de l’escargot. En route vers la décroissance. Sang de la terre*, 2013, p. 108 et 110.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Leakey and Roger Levin, *The Sixth Extinction: Patterns of Life and the Future of Mankind*, Anchor, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Edward O. Wilson reckons that every year we are responsible for the extinction of between 27,000 and 63,000 species. *The Diversity of Life*, Belknap Press, Harvard, 1992 (*La diversité de la vie*, Odile Jacob Paris, 1993). If we look at mammals alone, 100 verified extinctions have taken place over 100 years as opposed to a single extinction during “normal” times, but if we take account of extinctions of which we are unaware, the figure must be ten times higher.

<sup>10</sup> François Ramade, *Le grand massacre. L’avenir des espèces vivantes*. Hachette, Paris, 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Sir Martin Rees, *Our Final Century: Will the Human Race Survive the Twenty-first Century?* Heinemann, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia. Earth’s Climate Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, Allen Lane, London 2006. Trad. Française : *La Revanche de Gaïa. Pourquoi la terre riposte-t-elle ?* Flammarion, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> For the model is based upon Jay Forrester’s systems theory.

variables and the existence of feedback loops. Thus, rises in the price of oil have an immediate knock-on effect on the price of agricultural products, since because of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, the use of tractors, etc., high-production oriented agriculture depends primarily on oil. According to the most recent report<sup>14</sup>, every scenario which does not question the fundamentals of growth society leads to collapse. The first assumes it will take place in around 2030 due to the crisis in non-renewable resources, the second in around 2040 due to the pollution crisis and the third in around 2070 due to the food crisis. Other scenarios are variations on the same theme, with the exception of one, which is both credible and sustainable, that of sobriety, which corresponds to the recommendations of the path of ungrowth.

Thus getting our sick planet back on its feet again using the same data processing program as that of growth society, i.e. the capitalist system, will only be possible through new mutations towards forms of eco-totalitarianism or eco-fascism, which science fiction has sometimes anticipated with glaring realism, for instance in *Soylent green*.<sup>15</sup> But we have one escape – *ungrowth* society, which we do not confuse with negative growth which would be absurd or a masochistic aberration if it were generalised. At the beginning the term “ungrowth” was a provocative propaganda slogan to counter the propaganda of this other consensual slogan of sustainable development and to denounce the impostor. The aim is not to ungrow anything and everything, and the project, to the contrary, is to raise the level of human happiness<sup>16</sup> alongside the quality of water, air, animal and vegetable life – in fact everything that growth has eliminated.

For the ungrowth proposition consists in leaving the consumer society to build a truly sustainable society. Redefining happiness as “frugal bounty in a society of solidarity” which corresponds to the break created through the ungrowth project supposes leaving the infernal cycle of the limitless creation of needs and products and the growing frustration that engenders. Self-limitation is the pre-condition for arriving at prosperity without growth and thus avoiding the collapse of human civilisation. It is a concrete utopia. In other words, it is a coherent vision for an alternative which is, if idealistic, possible and feasible at least in the long term.

As regards its conception, the project can take on the form of a “virtuous cycle” of sobriety with 8 Rs: re-evaluate, re-conceptualise, re-structure, re-distribute, re-localise, reduce, re-use and recycle. These eight interdependent objectives are a break which might trigger off dynamics towards an autonomous society of serene, affable and sustainable sobriety.<sup>17</sup> In this sense, ungrowth is a revolutionary project. The growth society is based upon economic warfare of every man against all other men, the sacrosanct status of egotism, a quest for maximising profits and the limitless destruction of nature. Since we have to live in nature whether we like it or

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<sup>14</sup> See Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows, Jorden Randers, *Limits to Growth The 30-year Update*, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004 and Christian Araud, *Modéliser le monde, prévoir le futur*, Entropia, Revue théorique et politique de la décroissance n°4, Parangon, Lyon 2008.

<sup>15</sup> *Soylent Green* is a film made by Richard Fleischer (United States, 1973), based upon the novel of the same title by Harry Harrison.

<sup>16</sup> An allusion to the journal, *La Décroissance* the subtitle of which is *Le journal de la joie de vivre*.

<sup>17</sup> We could continue with this list of Rs with radicalise, reconvert, redefine, re-dimension, remodel, rethink, etc. but all these Rs are more or less included in the first 8.

not, we should act like gardeners rather than like predators, and reintroduce gentleness into the world of brutes by developing cooperation, altruism, a sense of humanity and respect for nature. The basis of this change of society is thus the revolution of values and the decolonising of the imaginary.

Through this shift in values, we shall be led to change the concepts with which reality is grasped – to reconsider wealth, as Patrick Viveret has suggested<sup>18</sup>, but equally to reconsider poverty which for a long time was deemed a virtue under the concept of “frugality” has lost all of its dignity and been transferred by the economy into material and moral misery. We also have to develop other conceptions of wealth than limitless accumulation, other types of wealth than merely economic wealth, and call into question the diabolical duo of scarcity and abundance, which lies at the foundation of the economy which invented them by privatising access to common goods.

Thus, Monsanto or Novartis are seeking to “expropriate” the peasants and appropriate the extraordinary fecundity of species so as to transform it into profit by then selling on non-reproducible seed.

Challenging old concepts and switching values means changing the *software* of our society. This will also necessarily mean a change in *hardware*, i.e. relationships of production. We have to produce something else differently, which implies an immense reconversion of the system and raises the issue of how to get out of capitalism. Growth and capitalism are in fact synonymous. “Accumulate, accumulate, that is Moses and the profits!” Marx wrote. The accumulation of capital is the very essence of capitalism, and it is precisely growth in the terms of Marxists. And it is because the Soviet Union never decided to dispense with accumulating capital that it never really left capitalism.

There is no miracle recipe and the idea is not to abolish private property of the tools of production but to abolish the logic of limitless accumulation. What is important is to leave the spirit of capitalism behind us and to carry out a cultural revolution. We should move in this general direction and keep to this course. Such re-structuring will make it possible to redistribute wealth, the ecological footprint, land and labour between the north and the south and between generations.

One of the possible forms of this “revolution” which will take account of most of these changes is re-localisation, which in tangible terms means anti-globalisation. Globalisation has been an extraordinary move at the scale of the planet. Thousands of lorries are constantly crossing one another under the Mont-Blanc tunnel, some transporting San Pellegrino sparkling water to France, and others Évian bottled water to Italy in the other direction. What is worse: the doubling of traffic by 2020 has been predicted, meaning new motorways, fast train lines and with them the destruction of the countryside. It is sheer madness and will lead to the destruction of the planet. To counter this massacre at the level of the planet, we need to re-localise. The solution lies in redefining the territorial boundaries of the economy, which may be rendered easier by introducing local currencies, but equally politics and culture. It is true that combatting the accelerated breaking-down of territorial boundaries we are witnessing today is an enormous project. The challenge is to reduce the ecological footprint, refuse, transport, over-consumption, wastefulness, energy consumption and advertising and above all to reduce working hours. Reducing working hours is fundamental for

getting time back.

The second level, that of implementation, presupposes complete immersion into the context. This is the thrust of the following political election platform that was proposed for France in 2007:

- 1) Finding a sustainable ecological footprint.
- 2) Reducing transport by internalising costs through appropriate eco-taxes.
- 3) Re-localising trade and industry.
- 4) Restoring peasant agriculture.
- 5) Re-affecting gains made in productivity by reducing working hours and job creation.
- 6) Re-launching the “production” of relational goods.
- 7) Reducing energy waste by a factor of 4.
- 8) Vastly reducing space devoted to advertising.
- 9) Re-orienting technical and scientific research.
- 10) Re-appropriating money.

*Transition* programmes that can be put forward with a view to the revolutionary break of the 8 Rs, will necessarily be reform-oriented, without however being reformist. Ungrowth offers a general framework, giving meaning to a vast number of sector by sector or local struggles which are favourable to strategic compromises and the sort of tactical alliances which are indispensable in politics.

Although it was elaborated prior to the crisis, the platform is relatively well suited to helping us get out of the crisis. For “growth objectors”, a massive plan for re-conversion will be necessary, since getting out of the crisis by doping consumption and growth have in principle been ruled out. Leaving the economic imaginary involves altogether concrete breakaways. The aim is to set the rules which will set the framework for and limit the greed of actors (the quest for more and more profit): ecological and social protectionism, working legislation, limits imposed on the sizes of businesses, etc. And first and foremost the de-merchandising of the three *fictitious* merchandises – labour, land and money. Withdrawing them from the globalised market would be the point of departure for the re-incorporating or re-embedding of the economic dimension into the social dimension alongside the struggle against the spirit of capitalism. In a growth society without growth – which is the present-day situation in which even fictitious growth has practically disappeared – the State is condemned to imposing the hells of austerity upon citizens with the additional bonus of destroying the public service and privatising what can still be sold off as family jewels. By doing so, we run the risk of creating deflationary pressure and entering the vicious cycle of a depressive spiral. It is precisely to avoid this that we have to try to leave the growth society and construct an ungrowth society.

But in the present-day context, the most urgent priority is to leave the depressive spiral. Is it possible through a policy of austerity? That would be stupid. It would lead to a deflationist cycle which will simply precipitate the crisis that a purely speculative re-launching of the economy will not prevent, and this time, nation-states which will have been bled white will no longer be able to save banks through thousands of billions of dollar bail-outs. This immoral policy is also absurd and will lead to the bankruptcy of the euro, if not of Europe, to a social and obviously environmental catastrophe.

The first objective of transition should be the quest for full employment as a remedy for poverty for part of the population. In the spirit of the ungrowth project, one might aim at the systematic re-localising of useful activities, the gradual re-conversion of those activities which act like parasites like advertisement or are harmful such as nuclear energy and armaments, and a programmed and significant reduction in working hours. All this has to be done without

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<sup>18</sup> Patrick VIVERET, Reconsidérer la *richesse*, La Tour-d’Aigues, L’Aube, 2004.

entering into the logic of limitless growth while however abandoning the religion of growth.

This first supposes lifting two taboos which are at the very base of European construction or for that matter of neo-liberal globalisation: protectionism and inflation. The project of ungrowth implies rehabilitating these two phenomena which have in the past been the object of systematic policies. The tariff policies necessary for constructing and reconstructing the production apparatus, the defence of national activities and social protection and those of the financing of the budget deficit by reasoned recourse to currency issues will lead to the “gentle rise of price level “ (or moderate inflation) that Keynes recommended, were moreover the policies which accompanied the exceptional growth of western economies after the Second World War referred to in France as the *trente glorieuses* – which were the only period in modern history in which the working classes enjoyed relative well-being. These two instruments were prohibited by the neo-liberal counter-revolution and the policies that promoted with them are now an anathema even if all governments that can get away with it seek recourse to them in a more or less surreptitious or insidious fashion.

And since money is often a good servant but always a poor master, we have to re-appropriate it so as to put it in its place: serve rather than demand servitude.

Today, this platform appears very utopian, but when we have hit the bottom of the slump and the real crisis looming ahead, it appears desirable and realistic.

## Conclusion

By way of conclusion, we shall return to the metaphor of the crossroads, but this time by referring to a real philosopher, Cornelius Castoriadis: “We are at a crossroads of history: one path already seems to have been clearly traced. It is the path of the loss of meaning, the repetition of empty forms, conformity, apathy, irresponsibility and cynicism. (...) The other path should be opened by a social and political awakening, a rebirth of the project of individual and collective autonomy, i.e. the will to freedom.”<sup>19</sup> The only way for Europe and the World to escape the barbarism created by the dictatorship of the markets is thus the path of ungrowth.

As Paul Watzlawick has said, “humanity has a broad range of choices regarding the path which will allow it to ‘succeed in failing’”.<sup>20</sup> Will the construction of this future take place prior to or following the collapse? This question is rather rhetorical because on the one hand the total collapse of everything will never take place and at the same time it is already underway. In other words, “the fall of the Roman Empire will not happen, but Charlemagne’s Europe is going to explode.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Imaginaire et imagination au carrefour, quoted here by Sophie Klimis, Créer un *eidōs* du social-historique selon Castoriadis. Revue belge. p. 39.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Watzlawick, comment réussir à échouer. Trouver l’ultra solution, Seuil 1988, p. 89.

<sup>21</sup> In « Où va le monde ? 2012-2022 : une décennie au devant des catastrophes » Mille et une nuits, 2012.