

Abstract: Freedom as Autonomy

This paper examines the importance of freedom understood in the sense of autonomy. It concludes that this understanding of freedom can be an important value for many people, on the condition that autonomy is defined in a specific way (in particular, autonomy should not be understood as the absolute freedom to choose whatever way of life). In every other case, autonomy might not be such an attractive concept.

The paper also examines the links between this kind of freedom on the one hand and democracy and human rights on the other. It seems that autonomy requires both democracy and human rights and that it is therefore a justification for the acceptance and even universalisation of democracy and human rights. Not only democracy and human rights but also material means are important for autonomy. It is also stressed that while autonomy requires democracy and human rights, democracy also requires autonomy.

Finally the value of autonomy is balanced against other values and the importance of autonomy in economic processes is investigated.

Freedom as Autonomy¹

The definition of freedom is and has always been a very difficult problem. What is freedom and how do democracy and human rights protect freedom? These are the questions I will try to answer in this paper. For the sake of simplicity, I will only discuss one possible definition of freedom. Freedom can, for example, be defined as autonomy. Autonomy is the ability to frame the rules which guide or govern your own life and to organise your life in a way that you decide for yourself, independently and without interference. Being autonomous is being independent, is having self-government, self-determination and control over your own life. An autonomous person can decide on the fundamental matters of his own life and chooses and pursues his own vision of the good life. He is not subject to the laws and desires of other people.

The first question is then: can there be a widespread agreement on the value of freedom in the sense of autonomy? The second question will be: can human rights and democracy promote this kind of freedom? If the answer is "yes" to both questions, then we have a reason to accept human rights and democracy. If the answer to the first question is "no" and the answer to the second question is "yes", then this is no reason not to accept human rights and democracy, unless I can show that autonomy is undesirable. In any case, I will argue that the answer to the second question is definitely "yes". Human rights and democracy even promote many different kinds of freedom, but without imposing any of them. Hence, a rejection of autonomy should not imply a rejection of human rights and democracy.

Let me start with the first question. Autonomy will probably be considered as a value by most people because most people do not like to lose control over their own life, do not like to be unable to decide what to do with their life and do not like to live under the rule of powers or laws which they cannot control. Few people like to be dependent on either political rulers or ideological rulers (so-called "authorities" of the mind). In general, people do not like to be in a situation in which other people decide what they do and think. They like to act and think in a way they decide for themselves. The life of a slave—a physical or a mental slave, a political or an economic slave—or the life of someone who plays an imposed part in a play written by someone else, is undesirable for most people. Ideally, man is free from physical or intellectual domination, subordination, coercion and oppression. There is no reason to believe that one person is allowed to dominate another person's mind or actions.

People want to be free to reject "accepted ways of life" and the opinions or prejudices of a group, a leader or a church. Most people want to organise their lives in their own way and want to determine their thoughts and actions as they please. They do not have to and they do not want to depend on the minds of others, on convention, on the established truth or the established way of life, at least not always. They want to be able to free themselves

from conformism, public opinion, tradition, propaganda and other "tyrannies of thought" because they want to act and think autonomously.

Autonomy is the ability to use your own mind and to determine your thoughts and actions in your own way. It is the ability to be master of your own life and of your own thoughts and actions. It means being able to decide and choose for yourself. You are not the object of other people's decisions and choices and you do not accept opinions, standards of behaviour and established ways of life just because someone tells you to accept them. You accept them only because you have convinced yourself to accept them, because you have your own reasons to do so, and because you know that you can always reject them. You shape your own life.

An autonomous person is not dominated and does not dominate. He does not receive nor give commands, he does not obey forces beyond his control and he does not use his own force to control other people. He only uses his power in order to control his own life. His life and decisions depend on himself and are not the result of some outside force. He is the instrument of his own will and not the instrument of the will of someone else. He is driven by his own reasons, not by external causes. An autonomous person has his own goals and his own ways to attain them.

This is, of course, reminiscent of democracy. Autonomy is a democratic value because democratic self-government is in fact the same thing as autonomy. Both autonomy and democracy are concerned with self-government, self-determination and the ability to shape your own life and to determine the rules and the decisions governing your own life.

The fact that autonomy is incompatible with conformism does not mean that it is incompatible with group identification. Groups and common identities are necessary for the functioning of democracy and are important for human well-being. However, if the identification with a group is to be compatible with autonomy, then it has to be a voluntary identification. You have to arrive at an identification with a group through autonomous reasoning. Your own way of life does not have to be different from the ways of life of the rest of humanity in order to be autonomous. It has to be a conscious and reasoned way of life, however, and not the result of socialisation, blind following, indoctrination or coercion. You have to have reasons for your choices and you have to convince yourself. And, ultimately, you have to be free to reject certain choices.

Having your own goals or being able to decide the purposes of your actions is important because you are being used and dominated if your goals come from someone or something else. You are unfree if your actions are decided outside of you, if your actions are not your own, if you are a consequence rather than a cause, and if you are an instrument used by other people to achieve their goals. Someone else acts through you and this makes you unfree. A person's free action is an action which comes only from himself, which can only be attributed to himself and not to someone or something else (for example a spiritual leader, nature, fate etc.).

If, for example, you are led or governed by your biological needs or by the prejudices of your group, then it is not you who decides on your views, your actions and your goals. You are dominated by causes other than your own will. If you want to be free, then you have to decide your thoughts and actions yourself and you cannot let nature, leaders, groups or whatever decide them for you. Autonomy, therefore, is not the ability to choose whatever way of life. A dependent or conformist way of life or a life dominated by the laws of nature can never be called autonomous.

Self-determination is the right to determine your own life. It is the right to live the way you decide and not the way someone or something else decides for you. This is a right even if someone else thinks you are wrong, stupid or evil and even if your way of life may destroy you. "To adopt autonomy as a value is to hold that people are to be perfectly entitled to damn themselves. It is thought better for people to choose the worst than have the best thrust on to them".²

Autonomy requires that you question yourself. You have to reflect on your opinions and actions, evaluate them and try to find the reasons behind them. Only if you reflect on your opinions and actions can you freely accept them and can they become yours instead of the opinions and actions of someone else. If you do not look for the reasons behind your opinions and actions, then you may be aping someone without knowing it. That is why autonomy requires that you give up habit, passion, conformism and other kinds of unreflected opinions or actions, at least in part. Again, autonomy is not the freedom to choose whatever way of life. It requires a life of thinking.

Autonomy is the freedom to shape your own life and to choose your own vision of the good life, but this choice is not completely free because not all ways of life lead to autonomy. Autonomy implies the freedom to damn yourself, but not the freedom to be thoughtless. Not every choice of the good life is an expression of autonomy. As a consequence, it is wrong to say that men are born free. Men acquire their freedom in and through public life because only public life can give men the ability to know the opinions and actions of others, to reflect on their own opinions and actions, to question themselves and to find out whether their opinions and actions are really theirs instead of those of someone else. Freedom is "a tangible, worldly reality, something created by men rather than a gift or a capacity".³

There is another reason why autonomy requires thinking. We have to think because we have to be sure—or as sure as possible—that we do not regret our choice of the good life later on in life. The absence of regret seems to be a part of every imaginable good life. We can be wrong and we can choose the wrong kind of life.

The choice between different ways of life is meaningful only when all ways of life are not considered as equivalent. Individuals have to make a difference between good and bad ways of life. The state and the fellow citizens, however, should not do so and should not impose one or another way of life (at least within certain limits), otherwise there would be no freedom in the sense of autonomy. Everybody should be able to choose his or her own

preferred way of life and neither the state nor the citizens should influence or impose this choice.

Everybody should choose for himself but not by himself. Only in the public space can you acquire an overview of the different possible ways of life and of the arguments for and against each of these ways of life. You can only choose a way of life in the public space. This choice needs public life and therefore it also needs democracy and human rights as institutions necessary to protect public life. As a consequence, a way of life should not contradict or harm democracy, human rights or the public space (these are the limits I mentioned a few moments ago). You decide on your way of life and nobody else should decide this for you, but you do not decide this by yourself and you do not decide this in any way you want. Every other kind of autonomy would be self-contradictory.

Autonomy needs democracy, but democracy also needs autonomy. If the people—or at least the majority of the people—have opinions which are in fact the opinions of others, then democracy cannot function. Democracy is the realisation of the will of the people and not the will of certain "authorities" or ideological masters (for example a church) who speak through the mouths of the people. Judgment as well as self-judgment are important abilities in a democracy. People should be able to judge for themselves and should not repeat the judgments of others. They should also be able to judge themselves and to decide if their thoughts are really theirs. Autonomy is a prerequisite for democracy and the absence of autonomy makes democracy impossible.

Now suppose that certain persons, who are not the majority of the people, are not (yet) autonomous enough for democracy. Should we exclude them from the democratic procedures in order to save democracy? Of course not, because if we do so, we make it impossible for these people to become autonomous. Democracy is the best, if not the only means to become autonomous because it is the best way to guarantee publicity. And autonomy is more important than democracy. The former is a value and a goal, whereas the latter is only a means to achieve this goal.

Autonomy is important because it allows you to do things, to choose your own way of life and to make and obey your own laws. If autonomy is the ability to decide your own laws, then freedom needs politics (which is quite different from the liberal view on freedom, for example). Self-government is freedom and self-government needs democratic politics. Freedom is not only freedom from the state or from politics and is not only the ability to do as you like, unhampered by the state. It is also freedom in the state and in politics. Of course, there is also freedom in social life, in private life and even in non-political public life. However, the link between freedom and politics does not mean that freedom is always safe in the hands of politics. Politics can indeed harm freedom and that is why politics must be limited. It is obvious though that politics is more than just coercion and violence. It is power as well. In a democracy, it is power over your own life and therefore freedom and self-government.

Another advantage of autonomy is that it gives people the ability to protect their interests. By making your own laws you can protect your interests against attacks by the government or by some kind of elite. Both governments and elites can harm the interests of the people, either by pursuing their self-interest at the expense of the interests of the people, or by determining what are the so-called real interests of the people and by imposing these real interests even if they are contrary to the convictions of the people. If you can make your own laws, then you do not have to count on other people to realise your interests and you do not have to count on altruism or compassion. We should not expect too much from other people. In most cases, we know best what our own interests are and we are therefore the best guardians of our interests. People who are excluded from politics and legislation are and have always been unable to protect their interests. Those who are included systematically fail to protect the interests of those who are excluded, either because they only protect their own interests or because they have a mistaken view of the interests of those excluded. In any case, the ability to take care of yourself is also a value and it is not sufficient for people to have their interests realised, regardless of the person or persons who realise them. Democracy allows people to get what they want and what they think is best for them, and it allows people to get it themselves. The people are not dependent on others to get what they want or to decide what they want and what is best for them.

If we accept certain premises:

- People can only realise their interests effectively when they participate in politics and when they create their own laws;
- People are, in general, the best judges of their interests and of the ways in which to realise them;
- People should, when possible, realise their interests themselves;
- People's interests should be considered as equally important;
- There is no single and certain answer to the question of the good life,

then we also have to accept that autonomy is an important value. And if autonomy is important, then there is no reason to consider some people as less qualified for politics (on the condition that politics is considered as the sum of the decisions regarding everybody's self-interest, which, of course, is only part of the story).

Autonomy is an important and a universal value, but there is also a phenomenon called the fear of freedom. Many people are afraid of the free choices they have to make, of the mistakes they can make and of the consequences of their choices. It can be very difficult to make your own laws and to decide your own way of life without the support of tradition, authorities or convention. Some prefer comfort and follow blindly the existing rules and opinions. The fear of freedom is also the fear of democracy. Democracy imposes a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of many people and responsibility can be frightening. The

possible consequences of acts can convince people to remain passive and to hand over responsibility to other people.

However, this is not an argument against democracy or human rights because neither democracy nor human rights impose autonomy. There is no obligation to participate or to govern yourself. The fear of freedom only makes it more difficult to promote democracy and human rights. Some people will not be convinced by the argument that democracy and human rights protect freedom because they do not consider freedom to be an important value.

The fear of freedom is not the only problem. Autonomy, independence and self-determination can be seen to imply isolation and egoism. Although the choice of a life of altruism can also be an autonomous choice, an autonomous person seems to be self-centred, occupied only with his way of life, with the search for the best possible life for himself and with his struggle against conformism and against the coercive influence of the group. He will tend to see the world and fellow man either as a problem or as instruments for the realisation of his good life. If he wants to go his own way, free from paternalistic objectives of others, then it is important to leave each other alone and to have as little interference as possible. Isolation is then only one step away. If he does not want to listen to other people because he does not wish to be dominated, then he will not hear their call for help either. He will have passed the border between healthy and harmful individualism. And if he does not listen to other people, then he will lose the benefits of public life, and so in the end he will also harm himself. He will, for example, limit his autonomy because autonomy requires public life.

It would indeed be dangerous to deny that human beings are dependent upon each other. We need our fellow human beings (biologically but also psychologically and intellectually) and our fellow human beings influence us. We are not self-sufficient and we do not exist on our own. And this is good. Public life, for example, is a process of mutual influence and at the same time it is something very valuable. Even freedom in the sense of autonomy requires intense relationships, as I have shown before.

Only some types of relationships and some types of dependence or influence are harmful to autonomy. It is not because we struggle against coercive influence that we have to end up as isolated and egoistic beings. Isolation and absolute independence are probably not even possible. There is always influence. We shape our own lives but at the same time we are shaped by our environment, whether we want it or not. Nobody can live without the care, the advice or the minds of others (take for example our language). This is not incompatible with autonomy as long as we choose and accept a particular kind of influence—rather than another—in a conscious way and as a part of our reflected convictions.

It is necessary but not sufficient to be independent, to be free from domination or coercion by other people, to be left alone, to be ourselves and to be able to shape our own lives, unhindered and unharmed by others. If this is all we understand by the word "freedom",

then we will indeed create a distance between people, and we will not be free in the end. We have to deal with people if we want to be free and autonomous. We have to listen to them, see how they live, how they argue in favour of one or another way of life and we have to examine whether our opinions are or are not unconscious copies of other people's opinions. We have to be interested in other people. Extreme independence can be a threat to autonomy. Atomism and narcissism are the end instead of the cause or the consequence of autonomy.

However, we do not only engage in relationships for the sake of our freedom, our autonomy and our good life. We do not focus exclusively on our own life, but also on the lives of others and on the good life of the community as a whole. Freedom, after all, is not the only value and probably not even the most important value. There is no reason why it should be impossible to limit autonomy in order to protect another value.

This is important because autonomy can result in license. If everyone can organise his life in his own way, if every way of life is equivalent and if everyone can decide to respect only his own laws, unhindered by the control of others, then criminals are free as well, and every new Hitler can do as he wants. I have already expressed my conviction that autonomy is not the same thing as complete independence or the absolute freedom to choose whatever way of life. Freedom should not include the freedom to choose a way of life which implies violations of rights or limits on the freedom or the autonomy of others. If, in the opinion of some people, their freedom does include this kind of freedom, then their freedom together with their instruments of freedom—such as their human rights—should be limited in order to protect the freedom, the rights and the other values of other people. Autonomy can only exist within the limits given by human rights and by the autonomy of other people. Rights and autonomy limit autonomy.

Unnecessary coercion, such as intellectual coercion or coercion with the purpose to impose heterosexuality for example, is unacceptable, but the coercion implicit in the rule of law is necessary in order to enforce human rights, because there is no freedom without human rights. Autonomy can result in morally bad acts which have to be suppressed. There is no absolute freedom to choose whatever way of life and there is no absolute freedom from control. Otherwise we will be unable to protect the choices of people who suffer the consequence of the absolute freedom of other people, and we will be unable to protect other values as well as the instruments necessary to protect these other values (human rights for example).

There has to be a legal framework including coercion and obedience in order to avoid harm being done by the independent and free actions of some. Independence, self-determination and self-government are limited because coercion is by definition external determination and external government.

Of course, a lot of evil does not result from the autonomous actions of people. Many evil actions are non-autonomous actions. Some people have no choice or only have a choice between evil and starvation. Other people may be motivated by prejudices or may act as a

result of indoctrination. More autonomy can also result in less evil (just as less autonomy can result in less evil: young people, for example, can be taught to apply morally good principles and can still live according to these principles when they are adults, without consciously reflecting on the justifications of these principles).

More autonomy can result in less evil, but people who do evil for non-autonomous reasons today can do evil for autonomous reasons tomorrow. Non-autonomous evil implies responsibility⁴—contrary to a widely shared conviction—because otherwise there would be no limit on this kind of evil. Of course, the non-autonomous nature of an action is a valid reason for a diminished punishment on the ground of extenuating circumstances.

Autonomy has to be limited in order to safeguard the autonomy of others or in order to safeguard values that are different from autonomy, because some people do evil even if they can choose otherwise, even if they are not poor or indoctrinated. They know that what they do is evil and still they do it, for pleasure or because they believe it is legitimate, or because they simply do not care. These people can be autonomous. People are not good by nature and can act in evil ways for other reasons than necessity or indoctrination. In other words, people are not only evil because they are not autonomous. There are moral obligations inconsistent with the obligation of autonomy.

Autonomy or, better, too much autonomy can cause problems (isolation, egoism, the rejection of externally imposed but legitimate rules in combination with the rejection of conformism and convention, but also moral relativism and a lack of respect for nature as a consequence of the wish to control your own life). However, this is no reason to conclude that:

- Autonomy—limited autonomy—cannot be a value;
- Autonomy cannot be used to justify democracy and human rights; or
- Democracy and human rights have to be rejected because of autonomy.

We do have to be careful with the concept of autonomy, but autonomy is beneficial in many cases and is, for many people, a legitimate reason to accept democracy and human rights.

I have already shown that human rights and democracy promote autonomy. You need the public space in order to question yourself, to make sure that your opinions are in fact your own opinions instead of the opinions of someone else, and to reflect on the advantages and the disadvantages of the different possible ways of life. It has to be possible to show and defend different ways of life in order to avoid regret and to allow people to make a reasoned and reflected choice. Human rights not only make it impossible to discriminate people as a result of their choices. They also give people certain instruments necessary to be able to choose in the first place (and these instruments include also a fair share of material means, for example by way of economic rights).

Democracy promotes autonomy in two ways, qualitatively because it protects public and political life, but also quantitatively. In a democracy, more people decide on what concerns them, establish their own laws, govern themselves and shape or control their lives than in any other form of government. The people in a democracy, or at least the majority of the people, are not subject to laws and powers which they cannot shape or control and are not dependent on others to protect their interests. Equality in the sense of equal political participation promotes freedom because it allows people to shape their own lives. Equality is therefore not by definition incompatible with freedom.⁵ Limiting or pushing back the state—which is the way in which liberalism and anarchism try to promote freedom—can harm freedom instead of promoting it, because it means limiting or giving up the political structures which:

- Allow people to participate in the creation of the rules which regulate their lives, and
- Protect public life.

There is, of course, the problem of the minority in a democracy. The minority does not have control over its own life and does not have self-government. It is governed by the majority and by laws which it has not created and which limit its free and independent actions. The minority does not establish its own laws and is therefore not autonomous. "If we require of government that it respect the autonomy of its citizens, we cannot permit a government that requires of any of its citizens that he act contrary to his own will".⁶ In other words, we cannot permit a majority system and we should favour a system of unanimity. However, there are obvious difficulties with such a system.

Moreover, there can be more or less autonomy. It is not because it is impossible to have all, that we should decide to have nothing. A system in which at least the majority has control and can decide is much more valuable than any other known system, with the exception of unpractical or undesirable alternatives, such as a system based on unanimity, a naturally harmonious society without a state or a complete withdrawal from all social relationships. (Isolation seems to be the best protection of our freedom since both the state and fellow man are liable to infringe upon our independence and to control our lives. Every social system and every state—including a democratic state—produces coercion and rules. The problem with this view is not so much that it is unrealistic, but that relationships can also promote freedom).

On top of that, there are no permanent minorities in an ideal democracy (nobody is permanently part of the minority) and therefore it is likely that everyone is just as much a part of the autonomous majority as everyone else, although not at the same time as everyone else. In any case, the autonomy of the minority also benefits from democracy and human rights. Independence requires a limited government which does not determine all aspects of life and which leaves room for a free and plural society. Independence also

requires legal means—i.e. human rights—to enforce the freedom to choose different ways of life. Freedom needs pluralism and pluralism needs democracy and rights. People who belong to a democratic minority have a large degree of control over their lives. I fail to see how a system which does not respect human rights can provide more or even the same level of control.

The autonomy of the minority also benefits from the existence of a public space guaranteed by human rights and democracy. Independence needs public life, as I have shown. A minority may not have power, but it has rights and it can, to a certain extent, use these rights to choose and protect its way of life and to protect the public space which is necessary for its autonomy. However, it will always have less autonomy than the majority because it has to respect the laws of the majority.

It may seem contradictory, but a democratic state also makes more people autonomous by interfering in society. A government which does not interfere when some of its citizens are starving, diminishes the freedom and independence of these citizens. They have fewer opportunities and choices and they cannot choose and realise their own vision of the good life.⁷ If you spend your life struggling for survival and looking for food, then you may be free in the sense of free from the interference of the government and your fellow citizens. Nobody stands in your way or makes it difficult or impossible for you to pursue your goals. However, the absence of harm done by other people or by the state is obviously not a sufficient condition for autonomy. That is why the state should do more than protect people from this kind of harm. Other kinds of state interference are necessary as well.

Arbitrary and egoistic interference, interference based on domination or interference without the purpose of increasing autonomy is of course harmful. Freedom is precisely the power to oppose this kind of interference by way of an appeal to the state. The powers of the state are needed to provide the conditions for freedom and both the absence of unwanted interference and the presence of sufficient material means are part of these conditions. On the other hand, autonomy is the power to decide for yourself as much as possible, which means that the state should be limited to a minimum. The question is what should be included in this minimum. I believe material assistance should be included.

The state, to some extent even a non-democratic state, can promote freedom in the sense of autonomy. Again we see that pushing back or even eliminating the state often harms freedom instead of promoting it (and of course also harms other values such as justice and public life).

Is freedom in the sense of the ability to shape your own life compatible with capitalism? Capitalism "means leaving the circumstances of people's lives open to be determined by the pressures of private capitalist investment. It means succumbing to the consequences of the economic decisions of a wealthy minority, where those decisions are not taken with any reference to general costs or benefits. It means a reduction of freedom to unfettered

capitalist competition, and the subordination of the mass of the population to forces entirely outside their control".⁸

If control over your own life is important in politics, then it is also important in the economy. However, it seems to be much more difficult to implement democracy and self-government in non-political matters, especially when we wish to preserve other values such as private property, privacy etc.

The economic freedom of one person limits the freedom of another person when the former creates a hierarchical organisation—a company—in which the latter has to function. Not everybody has enough resources to create his or her own economic organisation. "Capitalists" can do so. They have many economic resources and hence have the power to determine and organise the economic activity of other persons. The unequal possession of and control over economic resources not only creates unequal prosperity and unequal political participation, power and influence. It also creates unequal freedom because it forces people to accept rules and ways of life which they have not chosen autonomously. Equal freedom and the capitalist economy seem to be incompatible. Capitalism is by definition a system in which some people have power and control over others.

What can be done about this? Common and equal property of the means of production seems to be a solution. This would extend the democratic principles to the work-floor because it would allow the workers to have an equal say in the workings of the company. As a consequence, it would give workers control over their lives, autonomy and self-government. However, this solution contradicts a number of other important values, such as private property, and must be balanced against these other values. Making all companies the property of the state is not an option because it would give power and control to the state and not to the workers.

Companies can be democratised without the elimination of the capitalists. Companies do not have to be the common property of the workers in order to be organised in a more or less democratic way. Why should only those who own the company be allowed to have a say in the workings of the company? Perfect democracy does not seem possible as long as we wish to maintain the right to private property, because private property implies some sort of privileged control. However, there are other options in between the two extremes of the economic dictatorship exercised by the capitalist and the "communist" attack on private property. There can be an agreement on power sharing between capitalists and workers. We can look for a system in which all parties involved can exercise power, maybe not in a perfectly equal way—this would imply eliminating private property—but at least in a way which is more equal than the power-structure we find in traditional capitalism. In order to achieve this, we have to limit the right to private property, otherwise the capitalist would be able to do as he likes with his property and would be able to refuse power sharing.

Freedom requires:

- Political participation;

- Human rights including the rights which protect our material well-being;
- A separation between the state and society which results in pluralism; and
- Some kind of power sharing in the economy in general and in companies in particular.

Democratic control of the economy is very important for freedom, especially when we consider the importance of work in our daily lives. It is obvious that this control cannot always be left to the people in companies. The nation also has a right to intervene in companies, for example when the autonomy of the workers in a particular company leads to violations of the rights of people outside of the company.

The argument for power sharing at the level of companies is not an argument against the free market. Freedom requires the free market because a free market is the freedom to produce, to buy and to sell and this kind of freedom promotes freedom in general. However, a free market is not incompatible with power sharing in individual companies, and is therefore not incompatible with economic freedom in the sense of economic autonomy.

Endnotes:

¹ This paper was first published as Section Thirty of *Homo Democraticus, On the Universal Desirability and the not so Universal Possibility of Democracy and Human Rights*, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2003.

² Harrison, R. 1996, *Democracy*, London: Routledge, p. 163.

³ Arendt, H. 1990, *On Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, p. 124.

⁴ Kekes, J. 1999, *Against Liberalism*, London: Cornell University Press, passim.

⁵ Castoriadis, C. 1991, *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 139.

⁶ Nelson, W.N. 1980, *On Justifying Democracy*, London: Routledge, p. 63.

⁷ Harrison, R. 1996, *Democracy*, London: Routledge, p. 170.

⁸ Held, D. 1998, *Models of Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 137.