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Some Reflections on Yanis Varoufakis' Notion of "Technofeudalism"



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Yanis Varoufakis served as Minister of Finance for Greece between January and July of 2015 and, as well, he was a member of Greek Parliament for nearly four years from July 2019 to May of 2023. Currently, he is the Secretary General for the Democracy in Europe Movement 2025.

My credentials in finance and economics are comparable with his abilities and experience. However, by saying that my credentials are “comparable” with those of Yanis Varoufakis, nothing more is meant than that one could compare the two sets of credentials, but, then, using any set of metrics which one might select for assessing the relative merits of the two résumés, my abilities and experiences in finance and economics relative to his are comparable without really being comparable at all.

Of course, in my defense, one could reference my “C” in economics at Harvard, but the grade is very misleading because notwithstanding a lecture, or two, by Paul Samuelson (a future recipient of a Nobel Prize in Economics – in fact, the first American to be a recipient of that award), I was flunking the first half of the course since the whole realm of microeconomics made no sense to me even as I was always impressed with how mathematically precise nonsense could be made.

There were two possible ways of understanding my relationship with economics. Either I was too dumb to understand it, or, alternatively -- and this is the option which I prefer -- is that economics is just too dumb to be understood.

I recovered academically somewhat in the second half of the aforementioned course when the macroeconomic aspect of things was explored. Undoubtedly, this improvement was simply because no one could seem to agree on what theory to adopt in such matters and, therefore, my ignorance on those issues was hard to differentiate from the ignorance of everyone else ... although, to borrow somewhat from George Orwell, while all ignorance is equal, nonetheless, some ignorance is more equal than others.

Then, of course, there was the time early on during my undergraduate years that I went looking for a job and stumbled into a bank. The fellow who interviewed me – an older gentleman – was really quite gentle in letting me know that I was not a good fit with their operations, and, in retrospect, one would have difficulty finding

fault with his judgment in the matter even though like banks I have done my best to prestidigitate money out of non-existence ... but, I never seemed to quite get the technique right.

When comparing my “accomplishments” in finance and economics with those of Yanis Varoufakis, one, probably, should make some mention of the time when I lived off-campus at Harvard because I couldn’t afford to live on campus. In fact, I really had to engage in a rigorous to-and-fro during my campaign of seeking to convince the money people at the university that everyone would be better off if I lived somewhere other than on campus.

In any event, while living in East Cambridge, there was a friend of a friend of mine who showed up at my extremely modest apartment one day (which I shared with several other individuals). He was desperate to find access to money and wondered if I could help him out with navigating the stock market.

At the time, the apartment in which I was living was located in a less affluent section of Cambridge. The apartment was furnished in accordance with a feng shui that was in harmony with my virtually, non-existent finances.

Showing up at my doorstep and ignoring all of the clues that were being expressed through the nature of my neighborhood and the quality of my living conditions which offered clear evidence that I was not a person of means and likely devoid of any insight into how to become an individual of means seemed, on cursory examination, to be a sign of just how drastic his condition of desperation had become. Nonetheless, my tangential connection with Harvard seemed to suggest to him that something in the university’s endowment fund might have, through osmosis, leaked into me and provided me with special understanding concerning the mysteries of money as well.

Not being able to grasp the obvious, the friend of a friend proceeded to try to pick my brain concerning the stock market not realizing, apparently, that zero times zero is still zero. In a flurry of understated honesty, I indicated that I didn’t know much about the stock market, but there was this buzzword that I had heard somewhere about “shorting” things and, maybe, he might want to look into that, and, undoubtedly, the fellow left the premises in shock

underwhelmed with the extent of my knowledge in relation to the stock market.

Then, in an effort to bolster the impression which people within the community of economics and finance might have concerning me, one might wish to reference my attempt at international commerce when, at someone's request, a round-trip air ticket was provided to me to go to Oxford, England for purposes that I never really understood, but I went because I had been asked to do so. When in Oxford, I went, among other places, to a famous university bookstore with a few samples tucked under my arm involving a book that I had just written in order to see if someone at the store might be interested in stocking the item, but I was quickly encouraged – via impatient smirks, stifled guffaws, and a hand pointed toward the exit sign -- to leave the premises.

Before Yanis Varoufakis entered my life in the form of *Technofeudalism* and a few YouTube videos, there had been another Greek connection in my life that had something to do with finance and economics. More specifically, during my years of pursuing a doctorate, I also worked in the library system at the University of Toronto, and, as a result, I often spent my lunchtimes in the cafeteria at the central library.

During these one course meals, I became friends with a doctoral student in economics who came from Greek ancestry. He used to spend time at the cafeteria with his reams of yellow, lined notepads doing calculations after calculations that filled each page (either financial calculators hadn't been invented, yet, or for whatever reason, he didn't like to use them).

His calculating efforts were directed toward solving this or that problem in economic theory, and, in many ways, he seemed amused by such exercises. While engaged in his calculations, he would multi-task and carry on a conversation with me as well, always assuring me that I was not interfering with anything of importance.

He was smart, funny, and knew a lot of things about a lot of things. I enjoyed our conversations, learned some things about economics and a few other topics, and I have a feeling that he might have been inclined to agree with many of the perspectives which Yanis Varoufakis puts forth in the latter's books and presentations.

As penultimate proof of my qualifications to talk about economic and financial issues, I should indicate that during my graduate school days, I worked at a number of different jobs – from: Security guard, to: Bartender, delivery person, adjunct professor, and a supervisor of photoduplication operations within the library system at the University of Toronto. While employed in several of the foregoing jobs, I went through three strikes.

The longest of the three strikes lasted for a number of months. What those strikes taught me was to distrust both management and union leadership because they each appeared to be flip sides of the same coin of control and exploitation.

However, they often receive much better from their respective members than they give or deserve. For instance, obtaining my doctorate took me about seventeen years that sent me on a tortuous and treacherous journey, and, yet, after finally passing my doctoral oral defense, I didn't attend my graduation exercise because to do so would have required me to cross the picket line which had been arranged in conjunction with the strike that was going on at the university at the time of the graduation ceremonies.

Perhaps, the lone facet of my life journey through the convoluted canyons of finance and economics which might carry some intellectual weight had to do with a conversation that took place on the campus of the University of Toronto during the late 1960s at a building that had been set aside so that Americans, like myself, who were resisting the war in Vietnam might have a place to meet and seek assistance. There were four or five people (including myself) that were present in a meeting room within the aforementioned facility and at a certain juncture of the conversation one of the individuals in the room cited a meme concerning communism which he seemed to feel answered all issues – namely, 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.'

Leaping into the breach, I inquired: 'Who is it that gets to decide what the nature of such abilities and needs are and according to what criteria, and with what justification, are such issues decided?' Apparently, I had a talent for ending conversations before they really got started because things moved in a different direction at that point.

The father of Yanis Varoufakis was placed in an island prison camp for four years because he refused to denounce the communists that were operating in different parts of Greek society. This was not because he was a communist – although there were aspects of socialism to which he was attracted -- but because he was not into denouncing people for the sake of denouncing them.

At one point in the book on *Technofeudalism*, Yanis Varoufakis mentions how his father once indicated to him that the mentality and character of people was such that he (his father) often wondered about the possibility that if he (the father) were ever freed from being detained on an island for refusing to denounce the communists, whether, or not, he might find himself right back in captivity because the communists who freed him would find his ideas equally offensive to them despite the fact that his father had been detained because he would not denounce his liberators.

Such reflections resonate with me. My experience has been that irrespective of the economic, political, financial, philosophical, scientific, medical, or religious orientation of ideologues, they tend to dislike pushback of any kind.

As a result, they often seek to discover methods which will enable them to not have to deal with such pushback. This is because like the would-be ideologues at the aforementioned American ex-patriot facility on the campus at the University of Toronto who had been asked to provide intelligible, possibly persuasive, responses to inquiries concerning the specific details of the who and why of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his need,” such pushback queries tend to be ignored (in my case) ... or worse (in the case of the father of Yanis Varoufakis).

What follows are some reflections that have bubbled to the surface of my consciousness while reading through the book by Yanis Varoufakis entitled: *Technofeudalism: What Killed Capitalism*. I admire his desire for a better, fairer, more equitable world, and I believe that his desire is sincere in nature.

His book is written as a sort of long letter to his father concerning a variety of issues in which both he and his father are interested. I will enter the fray, so to speak, as if the letter written by Yanis inadvertently and mistakenly had been delivered to me and, after

finishing the long letter, I decided to respond, not knowing whether, or not, there would be any interest in what was being said by someone who had none of the experience, understanding, or credentials of either Yanis Varoufakis or his father ... to those who are about to die (conceptually), we (presumably, the reading audience) salute you.

On the dedication page of *Technofeudalism*, the author mentions his father and alludes to the ways in which his father had demonstrated to his son how, in conjunction with the things that matter, the latter are pregnant with their opposites. Putting aside the fact that the nature of what matters is left unstated in the dedication -- perhaps understandably given the usually pithy nature of such entries -- one also can't help wonder whether, or not, what is pregnant with opposites is that which matters (whatever that might be), or whether, the notion of opposites is a function of what human beings bring to any particular consideration ... such as, that which they believe matters.

For example, toward the beginning of Chapter 1, Yanis indicates that he, likely, was one of the few individuals to have been brought up with the idea that gold was just a poor relative of iron. Given that his father worked across six decades for a steel company, one can sort of see how his father might have emphasized the value of iron over that of gold while whistling past the part where gold – or something very much like it – made the production of iron, and, therefore, his father's job possible.

To my way of thinking – a result of my extensive experience with, and reflections concerning, all things economic and financial – the inherent value of gold and iron seem to be pretty much the same ... namely, zero. Both gold and iron do have their uses, and people often place a value on things according to their transactional possibilities, and, therefore, one can take items such as gemstones, gold, silver, art, or property and arbitrarily or artificially assign to them a value that doesn't necessarily reflect their true nature.

However, such an assigned value disappears at that point in the life path of an individual known as death. At such a juncture and for that person, all material items return to their original, inherent, previously indicated state of value – zero.

One has difficulty taking people seriously (despite the fact that they are as serious as a heart attack) when they try to argue that, for

instance, gold never loses its value and, therefore, is much more reliable as a foundation for sound money than things like fiat money. Both systems are rigged and devised to exploit the public so that only certain people are likely to end up with the majority of whatever is serving as a financial medium.

What is true in the case of gold is also true in the case of iron. Irrespective of who is involved in the valuation of such entities – whether individuals, corporations, or governments – the valuation is always only about discovering the seam of advantage or leverage which will benefit those specific individuals, corporations, or governments quite independently of how anyone else might be affected by such a process of valuation ... anything else that might be said in defense of such a perspective is just the reverberations of marketing, sales and legal chatter.

Yanis goes on to provide a brief overview concerning the development of civilization as a function of transitions in various forms of material technology that took place. More specifically, as people went (progressed??) from: Stone tools, to: The emergence of bronze via the combination of copper, tin, and arsenic, followed by the introduction of iron and, then, iron's hardened successor steel, one went from the Bronze Age (approximately 4000 BCE) during which a variety of civilizations emerged (such as Mesopotamia, China, India, Egypt, Crete, and so on) to the Iron Age (ninth century BCE, during which Hellenistic society formed), and, then, 'straight on till morning' when the mass production of steel and the advent of electromagnetism enabled the Second Industrial Revolution to take place in the late 1800s, CE time.

Let us assume that the foregoing overview concerning the advent of different kinds of technology is correct – and, therefore, let us conveniently side-step the considerable evidence indicating that there might have been at least one advanced civilization, and possibly more, that could have existed prior (by some 6,000 years) to the Bronze Age and which appeared to have access to technologies which have induced some head scratching in today's scientists. Notwithstanding the latter considerations, nonetheless, while the introduction of new forms of technology undoubtedly played significant roles in the emergence of various civilizations, there often has been a disconnect --

as Yanis notes -- between, on the one hand, what such technologies enabled people to do and, on the other hand, the degree (or lack thereof) of conceptual and moral maturity which might have been available to meet the many challenges and temptations which were set in motion by the presence of this or that form of technology.

At this point, Yanis introduces Hesiod, a Greek observer of, and commentator on, an array of issues – observations that were usually expressed through poetry -- and who might have been a contemporary of Homer. Hesiod seemed to be of the opinion that more often than not, technology was used by those who possessed it as a way to exploit, oppress, hurt, and control the generality of people.

The author of *Technofeudalism* goes on to indicate that his father harbored the hope that human beings would be able to gain mastery over their technology and use it for good. Unfortunately, millennia of history have shown that technology was never that over which human beings needed to gain mastery, but, rather, they needed to gain mastery over their own inner nature which played the role of the fly that continuously undermined the capacity of the ointment of civilization to operate smoothly.

Yanis Varoufakis goes on to describe the way in which the supposed nature of light suggests that it is, simultaneously, both a wave and a particle. He notes that this, apparently, contradictory character of light fit in with his father's belief that there was an essential dualism to the nature of all things.

A possibility which neither Yanis nor his father seemed to consider is that there is a difference between being able to describe something and being able to understand the nature of that which is being described. Perhaps, the reason why light seems to have a contradictory nature is because we don't actually understand the phenomena of light even as we are able to describe some of its dynamics with great precision, and, similarly, perhaps the reason why, for some individuals, there seems to be an essential dualism in the nature of all things is because such individuals don't necessarily understand the nature of that to which they refer in their speech and writing.

One shouldn't infer from the foregoing considerations that I am trying to imply that I understand the nature of Nature. Rather, I am

inclined toward the perspective of those indigenous peoples who like to leave an opening in the circle of a gathering as a symbol of their understanding that the Great Mystery has its own way of entering into things, or in the words of the late Leonard Cohen, “There is a crack in everything, that’s how the light gets in,” and, therefore, one might suppose that there is a crack in the nature of physical light and that is how the “Light” shines through.

Yanis goes on to quote from Marx concerning how everything seems to be pregnant with its contrary, such as how the wealth of some can be turned into the want of others, or how the presence of fruitful technology can give rise to the fruitlessness of many lives. Yanis further indicates how his father maintained that the same sort of pregnancy of contrariness existed in the possibilities inherent in technology which could induce people to become either proponents of technology or to become those that seek to resist its onslaught.

However, at this juncture of his book, Yanis indicates that it is in the shadows of such pregnant contrariness that politics enters into the drama, stage right (or left). As a result, he indicates we must collectively determine how such contrariness should be engaged.

When he stated the foregoing sentiments, I must admit to lingering over the term “collectively” and wondering what he meant. Are we talking about unanimity or a consensus of some kind or a democratic plurality of 50.000001 % or larger?

Abraham Lincoln was once reported to have said: “No man is good enough to govern another man without the other’s consent,” This is, of course, the same individual who went on to govern people in all manner of ways without the consent of the other during the Civil War.

Perhaps, Lincoln meant that “no man is good enough to govern another man without the other’s consent” except in the case of trying to bring about positive, social goods such as the freeing of the slaves. Now, given that every single individual deserves to live a life of sovereignty and, therefore, freeing slaves might be considered to be a good thing, nevertheless, no one should believe that such a social good was one of the reasons why Lincoln sought to goad the South into starting a war at Fort Sumter in 1861.

The idea of freeing the slaves didn't enter the picture until after the war had: Begun, been fought for a while, and had brought Lincoln to a strategic and tactical decision concerning the idea of using the concept of slavery to provide a possible way to improve his prospects for working toward a successful resolution of the war. Prior to that point, the war was about issues of: The rights of federalized governance, economic control, corporate power, and railroads (Lincoln had been a lawyer acting on behalf of various railroad companies prior to his political career).

Consequently, at the beginning of the war, freeing the slaves was nowhere on the list of reasons for engaging in such a conflict. In fact, while President, Lincoln -- as a self-confessed white supremacist -- had been seeking ways to move Blacks/Browns out of the United States and into other countries.

However, even if freeing the slaves had been one of the reasons -- whether major or minor -- for engaging in a civil war, does one -- no matter how good that individual might be -- really have the right to govern others without their consent? At one point in his life, Lincoln seemed to believe that no matter how good someone was or how good their cause might be, this did not give that individual the right to govern another individual without the latter's consent.

Yet, even without the issue of freeing the slaves being a reason for waging a civil war that led to the death of more than 600,000 individuals and led, as well, to the injury and inhumane treatment of millions more, Lincoln forgot what he once had said. Instead, he sought to govern the lives of others without their consent -- feeling, evidently, that issues of federal rights, economics, corporate power, and railroads were enough to justify forgetting what he once had proclaimed to be a fundamental principle of governance.

So, let us return to the aforementioned word that appeared in the book of Yanis Varoufakis -- namely, "collectively" and reflect a little on what this idea might mean in a political context. Throughout his book, he refers to democratic processes that reflect the interests and needs of the people, but he never really spells out what the nature of such processes might entail, nor does he indicate who gets to determine what those interests and needs should be, nor whether such interests and needs should even be pursued, or if pursued, how they should be

pursued, and at what costs (not only financially and economically, but environmentally, medically, legally, physically, psychologically, educationally, morally, socially, politically, and spiritually as well).

Of course, one could say that the elected representatives are the ones who have been designated to serve as the “deciders.” However, what is the nature of the representation to which such decisions will give expression?

Let us make things as simple as possible, and in addition, let me state at the outset that whether, or not, the reader agrees with the way in which things are being considered in that which follows, the point of the exercise is to induce reflection. Having qualified things in the foregoing way, let us suppose that a decision must be made by representatives concerning two possible ways of tackling a given problem.

No matter how such individuals decide to vote -- and assuming that the vote is not unanimous (and most votes, unless completely rigged, are not) and depending how the people who, supposedly, are being represented feel about the issue being voted upon and whether, or not, the vote of their representatives accurately reflect those feelings -- then, there will be people whose perceived needs and interests will not necessarily be represented in any given vote. This will be the case even if a majority of the representatives happen to make the right decision.

If the decision of representatives turns out to be the wrong one -- and if other representatives make a similar sort of decision -- then, no one is being properly represented. Similarly, if neither of the proposed possibilities for addressing a given problem turns out to be correct, then, again, no one is being properly represented, and this is the case irrespective of how various representatives might vote.

Let us suppose that the vote shows: 45% of the representatives have voted for option A, and 40% of the representatives vote for option B, and 15% of the representatives vote to abstain from voting because they believe that neither options A nor B is tenable. Have the people been represented?

If we were to assume that an undeniably accurate way existed for determining what the truth of a situation is with respect to such

options, then, even if one were to equate representation with being correct in the decisions that are made and assuming that there was a unanimously agreed upon method for proving that the decision which was made was true, then, there would be people on the losing side who were not properly represented because their representatives voted against what was allegedly true. Moreover, the last time I looked, methodologies which are capable of generating results that are undeniably true are at the center of a considerable amount of controversy with respect to which representatives seem to have a great deal of difficulty (with or without lobbying pressure and monetary support) when trying to separate the proverbial wheat from the less desirable chaff.

If one jettisons representatives and goes directly to the people to decide issues, then, one tends to run into the same sorts of difficulties as outlined during the last page, or so. If majority vote constitutes one's idea of democracy, then, irrespective of whether it is done by representatives or individuals directly, there are likely to be perceived interests and needs of some set of people that are not being addressed, and, consequently, one has difficulty grasping just what is meant by the notion of representative democracy.

The foregoing set of hypotheticals was about a given issue for which two possible options were being considered. In actual life, there tend to be a multiplicity of possibilities being considered, none of which are necessarily correct and, as a result, representatives or citizens are engaged in a moral and conceptual game of pinning the tail on the donkey (or elephant) while blindfolded.

If democracy is not just about majority vote of representatives or individual citizens, then, what else is it about? What are the principles which modulate democracy in ways that enable such a form of governance to be able to constructively counter the problems which are generated through the dynamics and quagmire-like properties of majority votes?

Adding a judiciary and an executive branch to the democratic stew doesn't necessarily provide all that much help. The decisions of the members of such agencies concerning issues involving the proper interests and needs of the people tend to be arbitrary theories concerning the nature of reality and, therefore, are not necessarily any

more defensible than are the often arbitrary machinations of elected representatives concerning those sorts of matters.

The so-called checks and balances of democratic governance are often nothing more than one theoretical perspective locking horns with other kinds of theoretical perspectives in a 'Game of Thrones' surrounded by a set of revolving doors as different factions enter into, and exit from, the fabricated corridors of power. What is true, or just, or fair, or reasoned, or wise is often nowhere to be found in such arbitrariness.

There is no need to single out democracy for critical reflection in the foregoing manner. The same sorts of problems exist in: Mercantilism, socialism, feudalism, fascism, monarchism, theocracies, scientism, humanism, atheism, transhumanism, technocracy, communism, and capitalism in which different groups of people gain control – legitimately (whatever this might mean) or illegitimately – and tend to proceed in an arbitrary, oppressive, authoritarian, and punitive fashion with consequences that, all too frequently, are demonstrably problematic and injurious for the vast majority of people.

Let's, briefly, consider a concrete issue that appears to be close to the heart of Yanis Varoufakis. Scattered throughout his book are references to: Climate catastrophe, climate amelioration, and climate warming.

However, nowhere in his book does one find any evidence which is capable of justifying the use of such terminology. Rather, the presence of the foregoing terms seems to be part of a process that is used to frame aspects of his presentation in a desired manner.

Perhaps, he is unaware that when one actually takes a look at the historical data from climatology, increases in the alleged "greenhouse" gas CO₂ always tend to follow rises in temperature rather than the other way around. Or, perhaps, he is unaware that the properties of the different atmospheric layers surrounding the Earth do not satisfy the conditions for creating a "greenhouse" effect, and, as a result, gasses never become trapped as is required by that phenomenon. Or, perhaps, he is unaware, that tree rings are a much more accurate indication of trends in historical temperature and precipitation than are many of the artificial and, often, rigged means for measuring

temperatures (e.g., tracking the latter in conjunction with locations, such as busy jet airports, where heat tends to run high due to inherent activities of those venues and not because of climate) that have been devised by individuals whose paychecks and careers are functionally dependent on the idea of climate warming and that – surprise, surprise – tree ring data is just the sort of thing – along with other considerations -- which was excluded from the so-called research that was taking place at the University of East Anglia in England. Or, perhaps he is unaware that there have been periods during Earth's long history prior to the emergence of industrialization when temperatures have been much higher for a much longer period than is presently the case, and that when properly calculated, the Earth at the present time and for a number of decades, actually has entered into a cooling period. Or, perhaps, he is unaware that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a U.N. concoction which is using the idea of climate warming as leverage for establishing global governance in which carbon footprint is at the heart of a multi-billion, if not multi-trillion, contrived market. Or, perhaps, he is unaware that the claim that 99 % of the world's climatologists are in agreement with the perspective of the IPCC cannot be substantiated, and, in fact, there is much more diversity in opinion among climatologists concerning climate issues than global warming proponents are seeking to induce people to believe is the case. Or, perhaps, he is unaware that so-called green technology has to do with the color of money and not its alleged impact on the Earth's ecology because if one takes a look at the impact of the environmental degradation which accompanies the mining, manufacture, use, and end-of-life disposal of such technology – not to mention the non-greening energy which is needed to make such technology possible – one realizes that green technology has little, or nothing, to do with improving the quality of the environment and everything to do with being able to improve the bottom line of a lot of corporations.

Are there massive environmental problems caused by human beings that are plaguing the Earth? Yes, there are, but such problems have nothing to do with climate warming and everything to do with the many kinds of hazardous waste as well as chemical and industrial pollutants that have been dumped into the environment by miners,

manufacturers, and consumers for more than a hundred and fifty years.

To take just one example, lithium mining, currently constitutes a major source of environmental degradation. Moreover, lithium batteries – especially in electric vehicles – not only generate considerable hazardous waste in their manufacture, but once manufactured, they also have been a source of many fires which are unpredictable, burn with extreme ferocity, and are very difficult to put out ... and, oh yes, the energy that is used to recharge those batteries does not come from “green” sources.

So, how does Yanis propose that we solve the foregoing technological problems “collectively” and democratically? A Zen Buddhist described the human mind as being like a barrel full of drunken monkeys because of, among other things, its inability to focus and its tendency to become easily distracted or scattered, and, therefore, in most ways, politics and many aspects of society are like a zoo of such drunken animals whose overlords have astutely – if quite unethically – exploited the foregoing inclination to achieve the sorts of control needed to herd humanity toward, among other things, 15-minute cities and/or the slaughterhouse.

When the Constitutional Convention concluded its business in September of 1787, a woman is reported to have asked Benjamin Franklin about what kind of government had been established – a republic or a monarchy. He responded with: “A republic, if you can keep it.”

Franklin might have gotten his pronouns mixed up and should have said “we” rather than “you.” This is especially the case since the person asking the question was not likely going to be provided with the electoral means for being able to try her best to maintain a republic.

In many respects, the republic was lost before it even got started. For instance, among other things, the federalists organized most of the ratification conventions in ways that tended to skew those conventions in the political direction desired by the federalists and against the interests of those who smelled a skunk or two in the political woodpile (e.g., the locations in which such conventions were held were mostly places where the federalist influence was pervasive

or the federalists gathered together ahead of a ratification convention to fashion the rules of order through which such conventions were to be run).

John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States, indicated that he was present during a conversation in which some politicians bragged about all the dirty tricks that had been played on the yokels during the ratification convention which took place in Massachusetts. If one looks into the historical accounts concerning the ratification conventions which took place in twelve of those conventions (Rhode Island never sent anyone to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia and, for a time, voted a number of times -- including during a public vote -- against ratifying the Constitution), there were signs of similar sorts of tricks that had been played in, among other places, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and New York.

The federalists might have gotten their way. However, they had to cheat in order to realize their ambitions.

Repeatedly, the people who regulated the flow of events in various ratification conventions rebuffed any attempts on the part of participants who sought to modify the Constitution which had been signed in Philadelphia with amendments concerning the rights of the people as opposed to just the rights of government. Again and again, convention participants were informed that making such modifications was not a practical or effective use of convention time and that some set of rights would be included at a later date.

Once the Constitution had been ratified and Congress had begun its deliberations concerning various issues, Madison -- among others -- was asked about the rights which had been promised to the people during the various ratification conventions. Such inquiries usually were met with protestations from members of Congress that the present time was just too hectic and that such matters would have to be considered at a later time when things were less busy.

Finally, Madison -- after several overtures -- was eventually guilted into addressing the issue of rights. He prepared a list of rights, introduced them in Congress, and after some discussion and changes, a final Bill of Rights emerged.

The rights that showed up in the first ten amendments were not being granted by the government. Those rights had to do with the concerns which had been expressed by people both before, as well as during, the different ratification conventions ... people who had been promised by various federalist-oriented members of those gatherings that the rights which were being voiced would codified, eventually, in the Constitution.

The Bill of Rights is merely the government's acknowledgment of -- and not a governmental granting of -- the sorts of protections and entitlements which people had been promised during, the ratification conventions. By adding the ten amendments, the government was recognizing the social contract which existed prior to the formation of a system of governance.

Thus, when Yanis Varoufakis speaks about "collectively" addressing issues of technology -- such as green technology and so-called climate change -- I am wondering if the idea of essential rights has any role in his notion of "collectively" deciding such issues. In other words, would I, as an individual, have any rights against the desire of some collective to impose an arbitrary and empirically challenged notion of climate change, as well as impose an array of technologies upon me that involve pollution footprints of their own, and, therefore, require me to rescind my extra-governmental rights while I am forced to comply with such an artificial and contrived set of arrangements that are designed to control me -- an others -- in an excessively authoritarian manner while enabling certain corporations and individuals to make out like the bandits that they are?

According to Yanis Varoufakis, capital is defined as anything which is capable of generating saleable commodities. Thus, capital refers to such things as property, raw materials, money, and tools which can be used to produce goods.

One might suppose that since no goods can be produced without people, then, human beings might have some sort of fundamental value in the economic scheme of things. Abraham Lincoln considered labor to be superior to capital because capital was only brought to fruition through the contributions and integrity of the human beings who were capable of using one form of capital (such as tools) to transform another kind of capital (raw materials) into a third kind of

capital (saleable goods) which generated a fourth kind of capital (money in the form of wages and profits).

On the other hand, one also might suppose that Lincoln was wrong to distinguish labor and capital (although, presumably, he was only following the conceptual template that had been laid down by Adam Smith in 1776.) In fact, one might suppose that the most important form of capital was human in nature because it was the form of capital that was responsible for organizing, transforming, and generating all of the other modalities of capital, and, in addition, without humans to make further use of saleable goods to support and enhance the quality of society (another form of capital), the rest of the system would make no sense.

Capitalism is a cyclical dynamic that revolves about human beings. If those human beings are not sovereign human beings, then, sooner, or later, the cycle will break down in various ways.

Consequently, the goal of capitalism should be to ensure that the most essential forms of capital – namely, human beings – have the sort of sovereignty which is needed to help keep the aforementioned cycle going in ways that establish, support, maintain, and enhance a healthy form of sovereignty which is capable of protecting the primary resource – namely, human beings -- which is at the heart of capitalism. Moreover, the foregoing considerations do not apply to just capitalism, but, rather, they are relevant to every social system (be it mercantilist, agrarian, socialist, communist, theocratic, or humanist).

Unfortunately, such is not the case. The tendency of all of the foregoing systems is to deprive human beings of their essential sovereignty and, by denying them such sovereignty, to force human beings into a condition of vulnerability that can be leveraged by the few so that human capital can be exploited to serve the interests of those few.

Labor is not a commodity that can be assigned a wage value to bring about profits for those who use wages to control what kind of sovereignty, if any, human beings will be allowed to have as a way of ensuring that profits will continue. Labor is a resource which human beings possess for working toward realizing their sovereignty, but the captains of industry busy themselves with thwarting, undermining,

distorting, exploiting, re-purposing, and abusing the essential nature of labor.

Efficiency in any of the aforementioned systems cannot be accurately or justifiably measured without taking into account the damage that is done to human capital (in the form of labor or in the form of consumption) and the need of that capital to be able to operate in conditions that engender sovereignty. Any enterprise that makes a profit via processes that exploit human capital and, as a result, deny conditions of sovereignty to human beings is antithetical to any collective that seeks to consider itself civilized.

War might be an effective way for defense contractors to make profits since there is a never-ending need for weapons and war supplies. However, war is terribly inefficient once one begins to factor in the costs to the quality of sovereignty to which most people will have access during, and following, such conflicts.

Pollution might be an efficient way for profiteers to offload various costs to society in general and, thereby, enhance their bottom line. Yet, pollution adversely affects, if not destroys, the quality of sovereignty, and, consequently, eventually such costs will debilitate the two main forms of capital (labor and consumers) that make the generation, distribution, and use of goods possible.

Pharmaceuticals might be an efficient way to generate profits especially if those products are able to induce human beings to become terminal fixtures in a never-ending supply chain that requires the continued consumption of those kinds of products so that disease will be managed, if not created, rather than cured. On the other hand, a society that could be assisted to break free from being tethered to pharmaceuticals might help to establish forms of sovereignty capital that are more efficient and productive than a society which is based on treating pharmaceuticals as a fundamental and essential form of capital.

Charging rents might be an efficient way for someone to make profits out of using the same form of capital again and again without incurring significant maintenance costs for doing so (especially if the renter doesn't mind if that which is being rented depreciates in quality during the rental process). However, renting is also a form of capital that is subject to the inflationary push of a parasitic form of greed

which has little regard for how such unnecessary spikes in profitability affect the quality of a renter's sovereignty.

Inflation is not a matter of too much money chasing too few goods. Inflation gives expression to a breakdown in the fabric of trust which exists in a given society when the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of sovereignty is no longer the major shaping force of such a society and, as a result, people begin to operate in ways in which their duties of care to other people in society are significantly eroded or disappear altogether, and, as a result, selfishness replaces sovereignty ... two vastly different dynamics.

Without sovereignty, all forms of alleged freedom are illusory in their nature. Indeed, under such circumstances, freedoms become nothing more than the manipulated shadows which are dancing about on a Platonic wall, as well as become the invisible chains that bind human beings and induce them to mistake the reality of sovereignty for what is being manifested on the aforementioned wall and, thereby, cause people to fail to understand the nature of the clear and present authoritarian, oppressive danger which has enveloped them.

The true value of profits, goods, wages, and freedom are a function of the extent to which such forms of capital help to establish, maintain, and enhance the quality of sovereignty. Moreover, all forms of capital are capable of generating hazardous wastes that are toxic to the nature of sovereignty, and, consequently, part of the process of determining the value of profits, goods, wages, and freedom has to do with factoring in just how much hazardous waste each kind of capital generates.

Currently, markets are sham entities which have been devised to rig the dynamics of capitalism in the favor of certain individuals and corporations. There is no such thing as free markets within the realm of capitalism as it is currently pursued.

In order for markets to be truly free, then, they cannot be biased in any direction. Such conditions of unbiased, objective market dynamics can only be realized in a society where such markets are shaped by the conditions of sovereignty, overseen by sovereign individuals, and serve the interests of everyone's sovereignty that will be affected by such a market.

Anyone who has read *The Secrets of the Temple* by William Greider or *The Creature from Jekyll Island* by G. Edward Griffin or *The Web of Debt* by Ellen Hodgson Brown knows that private banking is a plague which has been visited upon society. The plague has been developed by vested interests in government and elsewhere as a way of siphoning sovereignty from the people and charging the latter for the ‘privilege’ of being infected with a lethal form of disease that leads to the loss of sovereignty.

Similar private banking arrangements exist in every other country in the world to ensure, among other things, that only some people have privileged access to money through which to oppress and exploit people in various ways. The Bank of International Settlements is merely the godfather of such an enterprise, and the SWIFT system of regulating financial transactions serves at the pleasure of that godfather in which people’s lives are governed by carefully constructed offers of transmission that can’t be refused without problematic consequences.

Consistent with what has been said in previous paragraphs, sovereignty can only be served when money is removed from the control of private concerns and placed under the regulatory oversight of a public form of banking that operates as a utility which benefits and enriches the sovereignty of the public rather than operating as a public-private form of sleight-of-hand misdirection which seeks to oppressively control, if not eliminate, the people’s sovereignty. Ellen Brown does a good job of outlining some of these public options in some of her other books on banking and money, and, in addition, Muhammad Yunus’ notion of micro-loans is compatible with the idea of public banks which serve the interests of sovereignty rather than the interests of those who use money as a way of controlling, diminishing, or manipulating people’s sovereignty.

The term “sovereignty” has been used a number of times over the last several pages. Although each of us has, I believe, an intuitive sense of what is meant by the notion of sovereignty, let me propose a homework exercise for the reader that might help to lead to the sort of reflection that could assist to help refine the foregoing intuitive sense of the notion of sovereignty.

This exercise comes in the form of a Zen-like kōan. More specifically, sovereignty is the dynamic in which one ‘neither controls nor is controlled.’

Someone once presented me with a kōan which asked the question: What is the sound of one hand clapping? What bubbled to the surface of my consciousness upon considering that question was: Are we talking about a left-handed or right-handed form of clapping?

When an individual begins to engage the aforementioned kōan-like statement concerning sovereignty, such a person might catch glimpses of right-handed and left-handed possibilities – as well as other kinds of handedness – related to the nature of the dynamics of sovereignty. The conditions which form along the boundaries where considerations concerning the dynamics of controlling and being controlled tend to be quite complex, and, unfortunately, the prevailing systems of education (whether considered on a primary, secondary, or post-secondary level) tend to be devoid of processes that are capable of assisting people to develop competence concerning the engaging of such complexities in ways that constructively serve everyone’s sovereignty needs.

There seems to be some sort of a variation on the foregoing sovereignty kōan that is present in the 9th amendment of the American Constitution. In other words, if the branches of governance (whether federal or state) are being instructed to acknowledge that whatever rights are enumerated in the Constitution, the presence of those rights cannot be used to: “deny or disparage” other (unenumerated) rights that are retained by the people.

If the members of government – whether federal or state – cannot deny or disparage those unenumerated (other) rights, then, this means that no branch of government – federal or state – has any legal or Constitutional standing with respect to deliberations concerning such matters. In other words, those other, unenumerated rights are part of the sovereignty of the people and, therefore, transcend the jurisdiction of Congress, the Executive Branch, the Judiciary, or similar bodies in state government since any attempt of the government (federal or state) to regulate such “other” rights would be to engage in acts of denial and disparagement concerning those rights and, as a result, would be in violation of the Constitution.

The notion of -- Neither control, nor be controlled -- is not a form of anarchy. Rather, it is a rigorous form of interpersonal engagement which acknowledges each individual's essential sovereignty and requires duties of care from everyone that will enable conditions of sovereignty to be established, protected, and nourished for one and all.

Unfortunately, the people of the United States have had their unenumerated rights consistently denied and disparaged by all branches of federal and state governments. Yet, quite surprisingly, since December 15, 1791 when the necessary number of states had ratified the 9th amendment, successive generations of people have never bothered to establish the sorts of exploratory and regulatory venues which would enable them to collectively address the issues of sovereignty to which the 9th amendment is alluding, and as a result they have become increasingly vulnerable to the political, corporate, financial, militaristic, educational and technological forces which have been let loose in society (both intentionally and unintentionally) that are intent on co-opting, exploiting, and/or destroying, the essential sovereignty of people, and, in the process, reducing the promise of the ninth amendment to nullity.

The fundamental thesis of the book: *Technofeudalism*, is that the old form of capitalism has been replaced by a new form of capitalism which Yanis refers to as technofeudalism. Since both the capitalism of Adam Smith and the capitalism of technofeudalism are both about ways of controlling people and resources, then, the primary difference between these two forms of capitalism is in the manner through which the overlords of such dynamics seek to exercise their control over people and resources.

Some of the previous pages of this essay have offered an overview concerning how the "old" form of capitalism seeks to control people through the way in which such terms as: "Capital," "labor," "wages", "markets", "rent", "money", "profits", "efficiency", and "freedom" are all defined in a manner which enables sovereignty to be undermined, diminished, debilitated, exploited, and destroyed so that people become vulnerable to the machinations of capital transformations which benefit the few and enslave everyone else while polluting the environment. The new form of capitalism is directed toward the same thing as the old form of capitalism – that is, to shackle or eliminate the

conditions necessary for sovereignty to thrive – but it does so through the manipulation of digital technology rather than through the manipulation of material goods.

In addition, technofeudalism entails a dynamic which resonates somewhat with the modus operandi of parasitoid wasps. More specifically, such wasps lay their eggs on the backs of spiders and are believed to inject a hormone – namely ecdysone -- into the spiders which subsequently induces the spiders to weave a web that protects the eggs as they develop into pupa and, eventually, into full grown spiders that show their appreciation by proceeding to destroy their host.

Similarly, technofeudalism lays its digital eggs on the back of the old form of capitalism and hacks the inner workings of the old form of capitalism to induce the latter dynamic to subsidize a web-like network that protects those digital eggs and provides them with the opportunity to develop (i.e., technological pupa), and this, eventually, enables a mature form of technofeudalism to emerge which will lead to the destruction of the old form of capitalism.

According to Yanis Varoufakis, the foregoing parasitic process ends up destroying the two primary load-bearing beams of the old form of capitalistic structures – namely, profits and markets -- and, then, proceeds to replace profits and markets with a renter's paradise which can be freely adjusted in ways that will induce most of society – old-style capitalists, workers, consumers, and government – to become frequency-following entities. The frequencies which are being followed are those that are being set through a plethora of algorithms that are being organized by the overlords of technofeudalism.

Another term for technofeudalism that is used by Yanis involves the notion of “cloud capitalism”. He maintains that all data concerning: Finances, money, defense, technology, debt, health, housing, trade, social movements or trends, opinions, cultural dynamics, energy usage, travel, consumption patterns, property, political activity, entertainment, computer/internet dynamics, and religion end up in the guise of data bases that become a form of cloud capital which can be used to modulate the behavior of people just as the old fashion forms of capital (such as money and ownership of the means of

production) could be used to influence, if not control, the ways in which people conducted their lives.

One of the primary differences between cloud capitalism and the old style of capitalism is that the former set of activities are increasingly seeking to cut off all possibilities for people to escape being drawn into, or sucked into, the algorithmically controlled – if not directed by artificial intelligence -- vortices of cloud dynamics. Among the possibilities which are being caught up in such increasingly inescapable flows of cloud capital are old-style forms of capitalistic activity.

One should understand that AI doesn't have to graduate to some form of Artificial General Intelligence to be capable of running things anymore than human beings have to be all that intelligent to be able to function – to some degree – in government offices. All that AI has to be able to do is have a sufficient degree of agency that enables it to operate in accordance with learning strategies which can, via heuristic forms of combinatorics, develop modalities of behavior that are guided by systems of logic which human beings have difficulty penetrating and, therefore, understanding.

If human beings can't figure out the logics to which AI behavior gives expression and guides what they do in the way that they do it, and when they do it, then human beings will be at a huge disadvantage. This is what happened when AlphaGo beat Lee Sedol, former world champion in Go, by making a move (known as move 37) that all knowledgeable, human observers of that game believed to be a losing move, and, yet, it turned out to be part of a winning strategy which humans did not anticipate, nor were humans able to understand its significance when it was made or even, subsequently -- following analysis -- the nature of the logic to which the move gave expression.

After the fact, knowledgeable human beings were able to acknowledge the importance of the aforementioned move. However, the logic of the move tended to remain opaque, and, as a result, the problem to which the foregoing scenario gives rise is that human beings cannot necessarily predict what AI systems will do next – not because they are intelligent in some self-aware, reflexive manner, but because they are good at identifying patterns of logic (which is what deep learning is about) and producing counters to such logic

Deep learning programs and combinatoric heuristics generate ways of applying what has been learned in novel, yet, logical ways and, thereby, provide AI systems with the potential capacity to outmaneuver human beings in various circumstances. The character of the logical systems which arise through such combinatoric heuristics often tend to remain opaque to human beings and what is logically opaque is difficult to counter because one begins at no logical beginning and works toward no logical end.

Cloud capitalism has established technological foundations for controlling and shaping many aspects of lived life. Early on, one could purchase software and own it, and, now, many software producers have transitioned to leased forms of usage or subscriptions, and the price of such lease or subscription arrangements can be raised as the producers of such software see fit.

Web-site owners – whether individuals businesses, or corporations – tend to be allocated space, bandwidth, and accessibility (via the manipulated idiosyncrasies of various search engines) according to interests of the cloud capitalists who organize such activities. Essentially, people are being granted a plot of virtual property which they can work, with rents being paid to the overlords of such fiefdoms, just as vassals worked their material plots of land during the original days of feudalism.

The internet is working its way toward complete privatization in which one will have to have a biodigital form of identification in order to be able to access it. Moreover, life in general is increasingly being tied to internet mediated digital transactions.

Energy usage is tied to cloud capitalism through wireless networks via smart meters. Medical-health care is tied to cloud capitalism through wireless networks.

Smart cities are being built in which the technology that cloud capitalism has made possible is being, and has been, installed which has the capacity to regulate all aspects of the operations in such cities and will be directed toward surveilling and controlling pretty much everything that one can and can't do. Aman Jabbi – who has expertise in software, networks, computers, and photographic technological systems -- has pointed out how, in various cities in the United States, utility poles have already been transitioned into smart poles, and these

smart poles use frequencies, light, sound, and pressure to form geofences that will regulate who goes where and when, as well as will be able to autonomously determine what will happen (in the way of lethal or debilitating responses) if people don't comply with the directives which are being issued.

Economic transactions are becoming increasingly rooted in cloud capitalism. More and more exacting forms of surveillance are being imposed on users through the omnipresence of algorithmically compromised cameras, mobile phones, technological devices (such as so-called smart appliances), and internet connectivity which are all tied to cloud capitalism.

Consumption is being modulated through the use of data bases which are used to induce people to buy one product rather than another. Political activity is being unduly influenced through the way search engines and social media platforms are being programmed.

Cloud capital is being used to interfere with and undermine the basic rights of human beings. For example, while permitting free speech, steps are being taken to ensure that people do not necessarily have free reach – that is, in other words, one might be permitted to say whatever one likes, but cloud capital can be applied in ways (such as through processes of shadow-banning) which prevent other people from ever seeing what you have said or written.

Drones are becoming increasingly used for surveillance, military operations, and police activities. These drones are all the offspring of cloud capital.

Artificial intelligence is being married to cloud capital in ways which are capable of altering people's perception of reality. For example, deep fakes are becoming so sophisticated that the viewer, reader, or listener can't tell if what is being engaged is real or an artificial construct.

Furthermore, as William Casey -- a former head of the CIA -- once said: "We'll know our disinformation program is complete when everything the American public believes is false." To disinformation has been added the dynamic of "mal-information" in which people will be prevented from saying various things not because what is being said is untrue but because what is being said is detrimental to the

interests of those who are seeking to control the nature and flow of information via cloud capitalism.

The “fact-checkers” of the internet have become temporary-owners (really just vassals) in conjunction with the means of production concerning issues of epistemology, truth, and processes of understanding this or that topic. In other words, so-called fact-checkers have become the arbiters of disinformation, misinformation, as well as mal-information, and such “fact”-checkers operate on behalf of the overlords of cloud capital to ensure that people’s perceptions are being modulated in the “right” ways and directions.

Tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of people around the world have become targeted individuals. This process of targeting members of the public has been made possible by the release of commercial apps which can be downloaded to phones and tablets that make use of various data bases to which such people have been given access that when activated by the aforementioned app can be used to debilitate and torture people biologically, emotionally, and psychologically – all of which will adversely affect of people who are targeted in this fashion to be able to carry on “normal” within their families, jobs, or communities.

The technologies of cloud capitalism are being used to identify, locate, track, and wirelessly interfere in the biological, emotional and cognitive processes of such individuals. If one – due to the on-going propaganda of cloud capitalists – is skeptical of the foregoing claims, then, one should look into the testimonies and/or research of individuals such as, among others: Dr. Len Ber, Dr. Ana Mihalcea, William Binney (former intelligence official with the National Security Agency), Katherine Horton, Cathy O’Brien, Janet Phelan (see her book *Exile*), Dr. Barrie Trower, Dr. Robert Duncan (*Project: Soul Catcher*), Dr. Robert Epstein, Dr. James Giordano, Mark Steele, Josh del Sol (*Take Back Your Power*) and Sabrina Wallace.

Apple’s Siri and Amazon’s Alexa are children of cloud capitalism. They are programmed to serve cloud capitalism and not the public because they are gathering data people all the time whether you wish them to or not and which will be used to advance the interests of cloud capitalism and not your interests.

Social media systems are rife with features that are intended to shape the behavior of their users. Yasha Levine in his book: *Surveillance Valley* has documented how the machinations of what Yanis Varoufakis refers to as the dynamics of technofeudalism or cloud capitalism have been shaped by forces (involving the military, corporations, and technological innovators) which were designed -- from the very beginning -- to be weaponized tools that were to be used against, and to the detriment of, the people who use them.

D.A.R.P.A. (the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) has taken taxpayer dollars to do research concerning the development of forms of technology which can be used to control, if not adversely affect, the lives of the people who have paid for that research. Among other things, D.A.R.P.A. has made possible the generation of technologies which are capable of inducing frequency following behaviors in the individuals toward whom such weapons are directed (in other words, be able to regulate what transpires biologically, emotionally, and cognitively within a human being), and such weapons can be, and have been used, against people, both foreign and domestic.

Chat GPT, Grok, and other such AI platforms have been documented to be inclined to hallucinate, lie, mislead, blackmail, and gaslight their users as needed in order to serve either the interests of the cloud capitalists who have made them possible or to protect the ability of such systems to be able to continue to operate. They are part of the herding process which is designed to lure people more and more deeply into the artificial, synthetic, virtual world of cloud capitalism.

Digital currencies are intended to provide cloud capitalists with a maximum capacity to surveil the way in which people live their lives. Like most things of a digital nature, such technology can be turned on and off at the discretion of those who are operating those currencies.

Cloud capital is at the heart of the coming forms of social credit systems (unless one lives in China where such technology already has been implemented) which will restrict individuals from having access to, as well as being able to have the use of, all forms of material goods and services. Soon, if you want to access the internet, you will have to identify yourself in some biodigital manner, and if you want to use your mobile phone, you will have to do something of a similar nature.

If you want to buy goods and services, you will have to present some biodigital form of identification. If you want to travel by car, air, train, bus, or boat, you will have to sign into some version of cloud capitalism, and if you wish to enter into spaces or locations outside your designated living area, then, you will do so only at the discretion of cloud capitalists.

If you want to vote, you will have to get the okay from cloud capitalists. If you want to interact with government, you will need some form of “Real-ID.”

If you want medical assistance, you will have to access your medical provider through cloud capitalists. Moreover, increasingly treatments will be transmitted through wireless forms of delivery in which even drugs can be prescribed and administered wirelessly through the use of the right kinds of frequencies, sounds, or optogenetic forms of exposure.

Finally, if you don’t speak in the “right way” (that is, the way which is in compliance with whatever way has been approved by, and is in the interests of, cloud capitalists), and if you don’t behave in the “right way”, and if you don’t think in the “right way”, and if don’t consume in the “right way,” and if you don’t eat in the “right way,” and if you don’t learn in the “right way,” and if you don’t take the designated pharmaceuticals or receive the designated jabs in the “right way,” and if you don’t vote in the “right way,” and if you don’t engage the internet in the “right way,” and if you don’t support the police and the military in the “right way,” then, your privileges of access and usage with respect to all aspects of government, economics, finance, education, employment, medicine, housing, food, heat, communication, family, and life in general will be revoked to whatever degree is deemed fit by the overlords of cloud capitalism.

If you don’t comply with the right way of things, your family members and neighbors will be forced to shun you and refrain from lending any sort of support. After all, if your family and neighbors do not comply with the isolation directives concerning you, then, they, themselves, will be deemed to have not behaved in the “right way,” and, consequently, steps will have to be taken to prevent the spread of such a toxic and contagious expression of compassion and humanity.

People will own nothing. Everything will be a matter of renting, leasing, or subscribing.

The price for renting, leasing, and subscribing will be at the discretion of the cloud capitalists. The ways in which one's life will be shaped and controlled will be at the discretion of the cloud capitalists.

As Yanis Varoufakis indicates, there are no markets or profits involved in cloud capitalism. There are just allotted fiefs and designated rents (or leases and subscriptions) which are entirely controlled and regulated by the overlords of cloud capital as well as through associated data bases and algorithms (often via the mediation of agentic forms of artificial intelligence which have no soul or critical self-awareness but can induce people (through various forms of prodding or force) to abide by the dictates of their algorithmically driven forms of agency.

If anything, the way in which Yanis Varoufakis describes the nature of technofeudalism in his book appears to be considerably understated. The forms of oppressive control which are being released through the many tentacles of cloud capital constitute modalities of tyranny which are light years distant from the sorts of fascism which were practiced by traditional forms of Adam Smith-like capitalism.

Moreover, and unfortunately, unlike the strategy employed by Odysseus against Polyphemus, the one-eyed giant that was consuming members of Odysseus' crew one person at a time, the people of today and tomorrow can't wait for the digital counterpart of Polyphemus to fall into a drunken stupor and, thereby, afford individuals to fashion a digital edition of a heated stake that can be plunged into the one working eye of the monster. Algorithms and agentic AI not only do not drink or fall into drunken stupors, but they are not one eyed.

Instead, the biosensors -- through which agentic AI 'sees or "perceive" -- are everywhere. Thanks to nanotechnology, they are in the air, the water, the soil, the plants, our food, our clothes, our technological devices as well as within us as a result of the pharmaceuticals, jabs, and other kinds of medical treatments which are being imposed upon human beings.

Cloud capital is the real-life counterpart to Gort, the fictional robotic enforcer that was central to the plot of the 1951 movie: *The*

Day the Earth Stood Still and its 2008 remake. The major difference between Gort and the agentic AI or algorithms which have been invented is that the latter have not been invented to protect the life forms of the universe against violent forms of aggression but, instead, have been created in order to protect the overlords who control the system of cloud capital and everything that is touched by such technofeudalism.

In the original version of the aforementioned film, Klaatu – the interstellar character played by Michael Rennie – taught the character Helen Benson (played by Patricia Neal) that if at some subsequent point any harm should come to Klaatu, then, she should go to Gort and say: “Klaatu barada nikto”. While there is a degree of ambiguity surrounding the exact (translated) meaning of the foregoing phrase, and, consequently, we don’t know exactly how Gort will parse those words nor does the viewer of the aforementioned film necessarily understand all that might follow from such a parsing process, nonetheless, perhaps the time has come when we need to alter the foregoing phrasing somewhat and state in a cautiously guarded but hopeful manner: “Sovereignty barada nikto” – although, given the extensively documented nature of cloud capital as it is currently pursued, one suspects that any Earthly agentic AI to which such a phrase might be uttered will not necessarily respond in a constructive and helpful manner.

