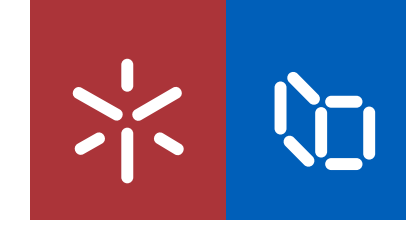


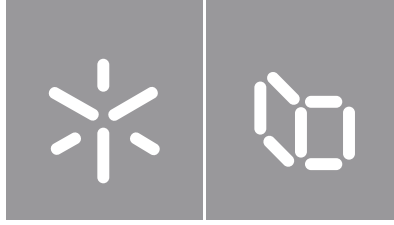


Nayel Ameer-Zalimèche

**The citizens' initiative referendum: a tool to
fight against inequality and the absence of
counter-power**

Universidade do Minho
Escola de Letras, Artes e Ciências Humanas





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Abstract

The French representative democracy should be reformed to make it better adapted to the principles of a modern democracy with a high level of inclusion and participation. The CIR contributes to an effective participation in decision-making, because it is a very efficient instrument for citizens to express their will forcefully. It is a tool that can strengthen democracy, and not to worsen it. And for this reason, it is one of the best measures that we could adopt in France. Although the CIR can have negative effects such as decreasing the participation in the elections, by associating it with the basic income, we avoid this, but in addition we decrease the economic inequalities that are also creators of political inequality

Keywords: democracy, inequality, freedom, basic income, citizens' initiative

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

In 2018, a tax on fuel called the domestic consumption tax on energy products, set the world on fire and initiated an unorganized and sporadic social revolt in France. This social movement was named "the yellow vests" because the demonstrators who protested every Saturday all wear yellow high-visibility vests. In reality, the carbon tax, which would have increased the price of gasoline, was only a blank check. It is the pauperization of French society, the increasingly poor living conditions, the increase in economic and social inequalities and the social divide that gave rise to this movement. Thus, this movement that started against a tax ended up opening the debate on French institutions. Five years after the Spanish social movement "Nuit debout", the protest fever touched France. Every Saturday, the yellow vests manifested in the big cities of France. They were slandered by the media, but despite this, 80% of the French population supported them more or less actively. From week to week, the yellow vests understood that even if the government would give in on the tax, the situation of many French people would remain miserable. On December 5, 2018, one month after stating that it would not give up on the tax the government abandoned the tax. This concession was deemed insufficient by the yellow vests. What many opponents of the yellow vests had not understood was that this tax was the last straw for many French people in precarious situations. The yellow vests have therefore decided to make a list of their demands. They asked everyone to make proposals and then grouped them together. Each citizen could participate in this list of grievances. But they realized that the list of their claim was very long and very diverse (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 187). The government, and the media, therefore once again attacked the movement on the pretext that they did not really know what they wanted.

One of the major claims of this collective was the implementation of a citizen's initiative referendum. It was very quickly unanimous:" After a short time, these three letters were written on all the traffic circles, in all the demonstrations, at every motorway toll booth." (Ibid, p.188). They decided to demand a CIR (for "Citizens' Initiative Referendum" a referendum that citizens can launch) CARL, for constitutive, abrogative, revocatory and legislative. If it is abrogative it will allow citizens to repeal laws; on the contrary if it is legislative it gives citizens the

possibility to vote laws. If it is revocatory the citizens will be able to demand the departure of an elected person. Finally, if it is constitutive the citizens will have the power to modify the constitution. It should be noted that even if the constitutional CIR is consequently abrogative and legislative, the Yellow Vests wanted to specify it with this denomination because the mechanisms of the CIR are not very well known in France (ibid, p.9). Moreover, although the scientific literature about the CIR is very rich, in France it has been attributed catastrophic effects, just as it was attributed the same effects in Switzerland in the 19th century. However, the majority of Swiss people are very satisfied with their political system, much more than the French, it seems.

The difficulty that the yellow vests had to make themselves heard and the means used against them were extremely violent to the point that the United Nations spoke of an excessive use of force. This violent repression transformed the movement into a struggle for civil rights and more particularly for political rights.

Today in France, the political rights of citizens are limited to the power to vote in elections, to be a candidate in an election or to be a member of an association with a political purpose (Ibid, p.25). The right to manifest is guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but it is clear that this right is rather fragile in its implementation. On the one hand, because this right is subordinated to a preliminary declaration delivered to the prefecture and on the other hand, because it is very possible to attend a violent repression of the demonstration under the pretext of maintaining security and public order. What the Yellow Vests wanted through the CIR was to be able to enlarge the list of these rights. In effect, with the CIR, citizens have the right to draft or repeal a law. Citizens could also prevent any change in the constitution, or they could make a change themselves by initiating a constitutional revision. Finally, with the CIR citizens would have the right to organize premature elections in order to change representatives before the next election. In sum, the demands of the Yellow Vests were to give more power to the people through the CIR. Unfortunately, the French democratic government refused to grant more democratic rights to citizens, even if it meant using unprecedented violence. At the beginning of the year 2020, the movement was aborted, breathless by the pandemic of COVID-19 and the sanitary

restrictions. At the end of this year of protest, the bloody repression of the movement left a heavy toll. More than 4000 people were injured, including more than 140 seriously injured and ten deaths.

But a question is still on the minds of many French citizens. Why did a democratic country like France refuse to grant more rights to these citizens? The Constitution of 1958 stipulates in its article 3 that "national sovereignty belongs to the people who exercise it through their representatives and by means of referendum". The difficulty of the citizens to obtain democratic rights leaves us doubtful about this sovereignty which would belong to the people. The ignorance of the French government concerning the grievances of these citizens leaves a bitter taste. Why wouldn't the state accept the main claim of a social movement supported at the time by 80% of the French people? Already in 2003 the French were in favor of a citizen's initiative referendum at 83% (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 10). However, the representatives never adopted it. The silence of the representatives gives way to the hypotheses which would explain this refusal of the French State to adopt the CIR. Perhaps the CIR is not as effective as the yellow Gillet claim. It is possible that instead of solving the country's problems it would create others. Possibly, France has long ceased to be a democracy, and as an oligarchy the CIR is a threat to it. It is clear that whatever the reason why the state, through its representatives, refuses to adopt the CIR, representative democracy has reached its limit for some time. The Yellow Vests crisis has been a tipping point, a strong signal of this limit. The lack of transparency in political life and the decisions of sometimes controversial representatives have largely caused citizens to lose confidence in the so-called democratic institutions. Many complain about the lack of representation of citizens' wishes in the decisions of elected officials. (Ibid, p.111).

Faced with ecological, societal and now health crises, representative democracy in its current form has shown itself incapable of making good decisions. The French middle class is falling into poverty. The country is lagging behind in terms of environmental and ecological policies, even though this is a major issue of our time. The government is failing to stand up to the interests of the big industrial groups. Faced with the democratic and societal crisis, the CIR

appears as a lifeline. But several questions arise: What are the real benefits of the CIR for democracy. Is the CIR a relevant instrument in a democracy like France? Is representative democracy associated with the CIR a better option than representative democracy without this democratic instrument? We will then ask ourselves throughout this reflection: In what way and how can the CIR be considered as a tool to fight against social inequalities and the absence of counter-power in order to achieve a stable democracy? In order to answer the question of whether the CIR is capable of solving social, economic and democratic problems, our study will be conducted within a limited spatial framework. Indeed, the analysis will be focused on France, but we will make many comparisons with countries that have a CIR such as Switzerland or some US states. It is important to remember, however, that this study is not intended to be an exhaustive study that is simply comparative. Indeed, out of the 36 states in the world that have some form of CIR, it did not seem relevant to mention them all. Indeed, all these countries have different conditions of use of the CIR and some of them have never been used. It would therefore not have been meaningful, for example, to talk about the CIR in Russia when it has never been used. The method used to carry out this analysis has to be restrictive. It will then be a question of making a choice to retain only what seems to be the most important. Thus, the choice of this method will give greater demonstrative force to the analysis. It is true that the analysis of the CIR must not be a Manichean analysis, it must be nuanced. However, this analysis will not be limited to a specific time period. Indeed, if the starting point of this study is the contestation of the social movement of the yellow vests, throughout this paper it will be referred to political ideas, philosophical considerations prior to the movement. Simply because the CIR is not a new political idea even if it is from the 2018 protests that we discovered or rediscovered this neglected instrument in France. However, it is indeed the social movement of the yellow vests that has democratized the debates on the CIR.

We have chosen this topic to prove that the main demand of the yellow vests, the CIR, is quite legitimate. And that the resistance of the State to adopt the CIR, was illegitimate. On a personal level, this study is particularly dear to my heart. On the one hand because I am French but also because I followed these debates

very closely. I was indignant like the yellow vests or rather like the French were indignant. It is not only a movement; it is the France that once guillotined its king for a popular sovereignty that cries out its hunger for democracy. I also felt the bitter taste that my fellow citizens felt in front of the decredibilization of the movement by the media and the ignorance of the grievances of the people notably on the CIR. This study does not aim to be exhaustive on the subject of the CIR, but rather to propose the best way to use the CIR. We have chosen to talk about the CIR in a context of representative democracy, it could have been interesting to imagine what the CIR could be in a democracy without representatives, thus completely direct. However, in practice direct democracy cannot yet exist in a state like France with 66 million of people. Perhaps we could have imagined the implementation of a CIR in a purely direct democracy, but this utopian vision would not have been relevant in an analysis that aims to be rigorous.

From these considerations, we will develop an argument in three parts to answer the problematic. We will ask ourselves whether the CIR is an appropriate tool to correct the shortcomings of French representative democracy. First, we will see why the French government has not agreed to grant more democratic rights to its citizens. Then, we will see precisely how the CIR would bring more democratic rights to citizens. Finally, we will see how the CIR can be used in the most optimal way.

Chapter 2 - Should citizens be allowed to participate more in representative democracy?

1) An excessive amount of independence for the representatives

After the French Revolution, the monarchy gave way to a system of governance by representation. The people elected representatives, such as deputies, who were charged with governing on behalf of the people. But only a few years after the establishment of this system, Robespierre addressed a sharp criticism to it. He criticized this system of governance for giving too much independence to representatives to the detriment of the people. That of simple representatives, they became despots. The problem that Robespierre raises is how to control those who have power: "And as it is in the nature of things that men prefer their personal interest to the public interest when they can do it with impunity, it follows that the people are oppressed whenever their representatives are absolutely independent of him." Since there is no way to control the representatives, they are free to abuse their power. And we know today that what comes with power is the desire to abuse it. Two years after this criticism, Robespierre died; and with him the criticism he had formulated. For we are still more or less in the same system of governance today, the very one that offers great independence to the representatives. Since then, many thinkers have defended representative democracy. The main argument is that politics is too complex for the majority of citizens. According to Schumpeter, direct democracy is too demanding and citizens should only be able to vote in elections (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011, p. 1) Another argument warns against citizens, if they had more power, they would misuse it, a very pessimistic or infantilizing argument. Either, as Dahl thinks, citizens would encourage authoritarian ideas, or, according to Sartori, they would strengthen extremist ideas (ibid, p.2). The first argument is simply elitist, and the second is infantilizing. If we look at history, we can see that the people have often made better decisions than the elites. In 1921 the Italians voted 80% against the fascists, and in 1922 the deputies supported Mussolini as prime minister. In 1936 the Spanish elected the Popular Front to power, a few months later the Spanish elites supported Franco's coup. Finally, in 1939 the French people expressed themselves in a poll, to know if Hitler should be stopped if he invaded Czechoslovakia, 70% were for it, yet in

1939 the government did not flinch when Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia (Dupre, 2019, p. 32). Who are those who favor the appearance of authoritarian ideas then? Who are those unable to see the complexity of a situation?

The defenders of representative democracy have an argument that they make incessantly. Since direct democracy was born and has flourished in a city, it is only suitable for that scale, a small scale. Also, if we leave the scale of the city for something much larger like a country, direct democracy is no longer possible. In a city, as was the case in Athens, public debate could take place in places like the agora. How to debate if we are not in the same cities? How to get along if we are millions? Was Aristotle right to think that a state with too many individuals would not be a real state?

To answer this question, we must begin by defining what democracy is, and what the differences are between a system of direct democracy and a system of representative democracy. Democracy has two characteristics that make its strength and allow it to be considered today as a world standard. First, democracy is a legitimate system, because its form is sought by the people. It is therefore more legitimate than a dictatorship where the form of the regime is decided by one man. Democracy will always enjoy more support than a dictatorship for this reason. Secondly, democracy allows the collective intelligence to be used more effectively than an autocratic regime. It allows for a broad spectrum of ideas to emerge. Democracy is constantly evolving, a hundred years ago women's suffrage was unthinkable, and today what is unthinkable is that women have not always had the right to vote. It is therefore very likely that democracy will continue its evolution. Democracy is a government by the people, and the regime in which democracy is most likely to fall is oligarchy, when the elite governs the people. Concretely, the power of the state lies in its ability to make laws, so in democracy the people make the laws. The legitimacy of laws comes from the fact that they come from the people. The highest authority in a democracy is supposed to be the people.

In France and in other countries democracy is exercised through representatives, we elect citizens to represent us. Democracy is therefore representative when the representatives have more power than the citizens who elected them. On the

contrary, direct democracy is when the citizens have more power than the representatives or no representatives, in a direct democracy the citizens are supposed to have the last word : "A decision A is more important than a decision B if A can contradict B without B being able to contradict A" (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 17) What characterizes democracy is not, as many people think, that the people make their own laws themselves, but that they always have the last word. To think that we can do without representatives today is rather naive (Ibid), on the other hand the citizens can very well have the last word on the representatives. An ordinary law cannot contradict a constitutional law, but a constitutional law can contradict an ordinary law (Ibid). Those who have the power to write constitutional laws are guaranteed to have the last word, if the people had this ability, we could consider that we are in a direct democracy because the representatives could no longer have the last word on the people. But in France the only ones who can modify the constitution, are the representatives therefore we cannot say that France is a direct democracy.

It is not that direct democracy is not compatible with large territories or large populations, but for political and technological reasons representative democracy was preferred. The technological reason is that the more numerous we are, the more difficult it is to apply the oral, so the written word became the means of communication of the institutions, but it was not mastered by all. The orality gave way to the written word, and this allowed to manage a huge territory, even if the information could take days to reach some places of the country. On the other hand, and this is the political reason, the people were excluded from politics, because only a small part of them was literate. A new paradigm was set up, it was necessary to be educated to make politics. The written word made it possible to separate the people, between the tiny party that could read and write and the immense majority that was illiterate. But this was a pretext. For two reasons, representativeness is not the only way to govern a large territory. With a decentralized power it would have been quite possible. Secondly, if the problem was that the population was not educated enough, then why are we still in a representative democracy? At a time when illiteracy has almost completely

disappeared. The caste that took power at the time of the revolution had no intention of sharing that power with the people.

Throughout this reflection the word sovereignty appears but it is important to make a point of what this notion implies while distinguishing between national sovereignty and popular sovereignty. Thus, Popular Sovereignty is associated with direct democracy. The supreme power in a state belongs to the people. Only the people have sovereignty. The idea is that every citizen should hold a part of sovereignty. National sovereignty is associated with representative democracy. A contrary, popular sovereignty is considered insufficient to account for the nation. The holder of sovereignty is the nation. In this idea, the nation is not the people, it is much more. It is an indivisible collective entity and thus distinct from the individuals who compose it. This conception was consecrated by the Revolution of 1789 and many thinkers of the Enlightenment, including Montesquieu in the *Esprit des Lois*. The aim was to restrict the role of citizens who were poorly prepared for political life. What really differentiates these two types of sovereignty is the status of the representatives. Thus, the conception of popular sovereignty consecrates the imperative mandate. Direct democracy being difficult to implement, the election of deputies is conceded. However, the election of deputies must be corrected by the imperative mandate. Thus, if an elected representative is not faithful to the program which allowed his election, he can be revoked by the people. The conception of national sovereignty condemns the thesis of the imperative mandate. The mandate must be purely representative. The elected official must be able to make these decisions in all conscience and is free of these political decisions.

France is a mixture of these two concepts, because the sovereignty belongs to the people as it is mentioned in the constitution, so it is the popular sovereignty. But there is no imperative mandate in France, which is proper to the national sovereignty. So, we have a sovereignty that says popular but in reality, does not allow people to be sovereign. And we are in a system of governance called representative. But how is it representative? Even today, women represent only 20% of the world's parliamentarians, the average age of a parliamentarian is 53 while the median age of the world's population is 28. Representative democracy

fails to represent, if that was its intention. We will see why we are not in representative democracy but in oligarchy.

2) Why exclude citizens from political decisions?

So, to justify the limitation of power that citizens suffer in representative democracy, the elites explain to us that not everyone is capable of participating in political life. So, it is better to pass on political power by voting for a representative. Because according to our elites, citizens are incapable of governing themselves. The citizens would just be able to choose representatives, which is strange because if the citizens are not able to govern themselves why would they be able to choose good representatives, if they have the choice. According to Abbé Sieyès, one of the fathers of the French representative democracy, by passing on our political power we give up the right to make laws by ourselves. And this is precisely what differentiates a system of governance by representation from a democracy:

The citizens who appoint representatives renounce and must renounce making the law themselves; they have no particular will to impose. If they dictated wills, France would no longer be a representative state; it would be a democratic state. The people, I repeat, in a country that is not a democracy (and France cannot be one), the people can only speak, can only act through their representatives. ¹

One wonders why it is called representative democracy; it is an abuse of language. It seems that the elites are convinced of their superiority, to the point where they have confiscated political power. As if there are people who are capable of leading and others who are capable of being led. One wonders if the postulate of representative democracy is not the inequality of intelligence.

The heart of the matter, the original element that differentiates those who want the people to be involved in political decisions from those who want them excluded, is the presupposition of the equality of intelligence. Whether we accept

¹ The abbot Sieyès - Speech of September 7, 1789.

this presupposition or not, it radically changes our conception of democracy. If we presuppose the inequality of intelligence, then it is perfectly adequate for an elite to rule the people. This is what Chomsky calls restrictive democracy in which the people are excluded from political affairs and the information media are strictly controlled (Dupre, 2019, p. 25). Why exclude citizens from decision making? If we let those with inferior intelligence participate in governance it would be counterproductive, even catastrophic, since their intelligence does not allow them to understand the stakes nor the situations.

There is a logic in all this and even a kind of binding moral principle. That principle is that the majority of the population is simply too stupid to understand things. If they tried to participate in the management of their own affairs, they would only succeed in creating problems. Therefore, it would be immoral and improper to let them do so. (Chomsky & Mcchesney, 2000, p. 24)

And the reason for controlling the information media is that it is necessary in order to guide the people. It is necessary to control what the people know, for two reasons: first to control the elections, and second to manufacture consent. For these two reasons, control of information is crucial. The control of elections is to ensure that power is always in the hands of the elite. From this point of view, we can legitimately doubt that the citizens really have the choice of their representatives, which can explain why the elite let us choose our representatives. So that these last ones are legitimate. And the manufacture of consent is to obtain consent for decisions that the people do not want. If the elites believe that a war is necessary, then the media apparatus will ensure that the idea is accepted by the majority.

The democratic state, precisely because it assumes the expression of the public opinion and does not gag it, must, if one takes into account reality and not the ideological dream, contain and form this opinion [...] But there is more: in a democracy, it is necessary to associate the citizens with the decisions of the State. This is the great role of propaganda. (Ellul, 1962, p. 142)

The media are then tools of propaganda with an unparalleled influence, capable of delegitimizing any serious opposition. Propaganda manipulates

citizens to internalize the choices of the elites, as a necessity: "We are in a democracy, because we can vote". As if voting were enough to declare oneself a democracy, but that is how propaganda works. It constantly repeats the same things, until the citizens believe it. According to some, such as Walter Lippmann (Chomsky & Mcchesney, 2000, p. 10), a political journalist who has had enormous influence in the United States, this manipulation of the masses is necessary because most people do not understand the notion of the common good. It calls the citizens "the bewildered herd". It therefore assumes the inequality of intelligence.

On the other hand, if we presuppose the equality of intelligence, then citizens must have the means to participate actively in the management of public affairs, since we have the same intelligence it would be counterproductive not to want to use all the brains available in the decision-making. The means of information must be independent, so that the information that citizens receive is the best and most neutral possible, and so that their decision is better. This is the broad democracy according to Chomsky, broad because it includes all citizens in the decision making. The broad democracy, is the one that comes closest to the definition that we have given of democracy. And this is what Aristotle called democracy: citizens capable of governing and being governed. Which presupposition is right? Is restive democracy legitimate or not? Do men possess equal intelligence?

First, it is clear that we are all capable of understanding what has been produced by human intelligence. How else can we explain that babies learn the language of their parents without any explanation. Languages that are a creation of human intelligence. Then if we believe that there are superior and inferior intelligences, then how could those with superior intelligence make those with inferior intelligence understand their superiority? If superiority really existed, no dialogue would be possible, just as one does not argue with an earthworm: "Superior brains would not take the useless trouble of demonstrating their superiority to inferior brains, incapable by definition of understanding them. " (Rancière, 2014, p. 88). The slave understands the domination that he undergoes from the master, it is the proof that their intelligences are equal. Thus, for Rancière,

even in an unequal relationship, equality must be presupposed. To demonstrate this, Rancière uses the experience of the pedagogue Jacoto as an example. Jacoto was the founder of the theory of universal education. When he was sent to Leuven as a teacher, he realized that his students spoke only Flemish (Ibid). Since he did not speak Flemish, he decided to send them to get a bilingual edition of Telemachus, and asked them to learn the French version by heart with the help of the translation only. The experiment was a huge success because after only a few weeks, the students were able to speak French. And not a child's French, a writer's French.

At that point Jacoto realized that he had managed to teach without giving any explanation, as he and the students spoke two different languages, and he could only let them figure it out for themselves. He began to understand the power that an ignorant master could have, the experience of fortune exceeded his expectations. Jacoto repeated his experience several times, and was able to teach Hebrew to a boy who was considered retarded, this language was never of any use to him, but allowed the boys to understand that he was capable of learning anything he wanted to by himself. And he taught a grandmother who thought she was unable to read and write, and who was then able to teach her grandchildren to read. Jacoto understood that everyone is capable of learning for themselves. By teaching this young boy Hebrew, he taught him much more than a dead language (at the time), the boy now knew that he was capable of learning everything by himself. Rancière interpretation is that by teaching subjects that one does not know, by being an ignorant teacher, one puts oneself at the level of the student. The teacher and the student are on an equal footing, and this is how the student can believe in himself and in his ability to learn and to find solutions by himself. The teacher's role is to believe in the student's ability to succeed on his own. The ignorant teacher presupposes the equality between him and his student. And it is this presupposition that frees the student from the belief in his incapacity. The presupposition of the equality of intelligence allows emancipation. Jacoto's opinion on this subject is very clear, for him all men have equal intelligence. It is this certainty that allowed him to create a revolutionary learning method. when he denied that all men were equal in intelligence, it was just for

humor: "If someone asks you, laughing, "Do you believe in the equality of intelligence? Answer without laughing, if you can: Sir, I have believed it until now, but I had not the honor of knowing you." ²

Rancière, in his book, explains that in order for knowledge to emerge from the student, the teacher must be ignorant. It seems paradoxical, how in the master-student relationship the ignorance of one can facilitate the understanding of the other. The explanation is a tool of domination (Rancière, 2014, p. 24), says Rancière, of a person who knows towards another who does not know. It has a regulating function, because the one who does not know must stay in his place and listen. The challenge of explanation as a means of transmitting knowledge is to make the pupils believe that the teacher is necessary. The teacher is needed to explain:" the logic of the explanation thus includes the principle of a regression to infinity" (Ibid, p.12) the teacher must also explain the explanation, in short, the explanation makes the student dependent on the teacher. Jacoto explains to us that the function of the teacher is not to teach a knowledge that he possesses, but to make the pupil aware that he is capable of learning by himself. For that the teacher can propose challenges to the pupil, ask him questions to which he does not know the answer. The teacher must verify that the student is serious, because it is easy for humans to notice the mistakes of others.

The frontier between the one who possesses knowledge and the one who does not is broken, all are at the same level and the teacher who has become ignorant can learn from his pupil. The question is not to have or not to have knowledge, but to be or not to be knowledge: "It is not a question of explaining what scientists, artists or philosophers say or do, but of being, in a way, scientists, artists or philosophers. " (Cerletti, 2005, p. 83) It's a whole new paradigm.

The concept of the ignorant teacher is based on the postulate of equality. Everyone is capable of learning and understanding everything. The teacher's job is to remove from his student's head the idea that he is not capable. Acknowledging the equality of each person allows knowledge to be "horizontalized", whereas the classical teacher asks questions to which he already knows the answer, the teacher ignores by questioning the student, recognizes that the student can teach

² text extracted from the universal education, of Jacoto, Louvain 1824

him knowledge. And this is how the student loses his belief of being less intelligent or of not being capable.

We can make the parallel between the education in the ignorant master and the politics. The representative or restrictive democracy, would be then a classroom with the teacher who explains us for whom to vote. This teacher does everything to confine us to our role of student. In this comparison, the teacher obviously represents the elite and the student the citizen. The purpose of the elite is to keep the citizens under the illusion that the affairs of the state are to be managed by "experts". The only purpose is to maintain their position. Besides, the representatives tend to make the issues more complex. Because just as the traditional teacher has no reason to exist if the student learns by himself, the elite becomes useless if the citizens understand that they do not need anyone to lead them.

They instill in the citizens the belief of their incapacity. Lack of knowledge or education are not the real obstacles to a more intense participation in political life on the part of citizens. What is problematic is that citizens may think they are incapable of self-government. This is how passivity sets in, and true freedom flies away. That they may believe in the inferiority of their intelligence. For Rancière, equality should not be an objective to be reached, because that is how it is never achieved. Equality is constantly practiced, by recognizing in everyone the capacity to learn without an external explanation, for example. The postulate of the inequality of intelligence does not seem correct. We too, like Jacoto's students, can emancipate ourselves, like those young people who decided to learn by themselves, with only an ignorant teacher who didn't speak their language, they went from being passive students to active ones. Just like them, citizens must be active if they want to emancipate themselves politically. choosing our representatives is not enough, in a real democracy the citizens have the last word. The argument of incompetence which is used today for direct democracy, was used yesterday against the right to vote for women, against the right to vote for blacks in South Africa. But when women or blacks had the right to vote, the argument of incompetence proved to be completely false. The same goes for direct democracy, since Switzerland is doing very well. And then the argument of

the incompetence of the citizens is only valid for direct democracy, since in representative democracy the citizens also have to make choices, but we never hear that we have to stop the representative democracy because the voters are incompetent. If they are not competent to decide on a subject, then they are not competent to choose representatives either.

"Critics of direct legislation frequently see legislators as bordering on the mythical: highly intelligent; and as competent as business leaders and university professors. The same critics tend to see the people as a "rabble", untrustworthy. Yet the people, or so-called rabble, are the same ones who elect legislators. How is it that they can choose between good and bad candidates but cannot choose between good and bad laws? " (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 73)

In Switzerland, it has been observed that citizens who lived in cantons where direct democracy was important, had more knowledge than their compatriots who lived in cantons where direct democracy was less developed. Isn't the "political" competence, the one that allows to make good choices, in reality like all the competences a question of training?

3) Is making citizens more politically active beneficial?

To answer this question, it is important to introduce a recent concept, Skin in the Game. Introduced by Nassim Nicholas Taleb. He explains that when we put our skin in the game, we are very effective for the simple reason that we do not want to lose our skin. However, representatives do not have any counter-power in front of them capable of worrying them, they can break their promise without risking anything. Basically, representatives do not play for their skins, they do not pay for their mistakes. It is the citizens who pay for the mistakes of the representatives. This is the problem of asymmetry, on the one hand one group gets the benefits, while the other group only gets the risks. In politics, everyone is concerned, so the risks must be shared. To correct this asymmetry, representatives must play their part, which means taking part in the risk. To

illustrate this, let's look at investors, the first group invested on behalf of others and the second group invested for itself, which group will do better? Certainly, the second one because it risks its own money, in the end those who invest for others don't care if they lose or not the money invested. The representatives are in the situation of the first group. It makes no sense that those in power do not have to pay for the consequences of their actions:” Those who don't take risks should never be involved in making decisions” (Taleb, 2018, p. 26). Would there be so many wars if the representatives were the first to go to the front? Or would putting their skin in the game make them prefer dialogue and peace?

To let citizens, participate in politics is to introduce skin in the game in politics. Because the citizens themselves will have to make decisions that directly impact them. Since it is the citizens who take the risks in the end, is it not normal and legitimate to let them participate in the decisions?The concept of Skin in the game shows us two things, firstly there is an asymmetry between the power of the representatives and their responsibilities, as long as there will be this asymmetry the representatives will not be able to act for the whole of the citizens with a maximum of effectiveness. secondly to let the citizens take part in the political decisions, is perfectly legitimate and would be beneficial because the decisions that the people will take will concern them directly, the people put their skin in the game contrary to the representatives

Representative democracy has a flaw that is dangerous. Since we delegate our political power to representatives. The people also delegate the responsibility of failures. To return to the metaphor of the teacher and the student, when we have an explanatory master it is tempting for the student to reject his share of responsibility on the teacher. But when we have to learn by ourselves, if we fail, we can't put the blame on anyone, so we have to question ourselves. The representative democracy, allows to crystallize the reproaches on the representatives but does not allow to make progress the citizens. Integrating citizens into political decision-making means sharing the responsibility for failure and success between citizens and representatives. During a crisis, it is easy to choose a scapegoat, but it does not make progress. When everyone is concerned by the mistakes, it is easier to question oneself. This suits the elite well, because

with each failure, with each crisis, the discontent focuses on one or more representatives. The citizens do not think about questioning the system anymore but just change their representatives. But history repeats itself, it is necessary that the citizens take part in the decisions which concern them, it is only thus that we will be able to emancipate ourselves. Just like the students of Jacoto, who by learning by themselves, by taking part in their own learning, have improved.

Countries where direct democracy exists, such as Switzerland, allow us to study the consequences of citizen involvement on the politic. If indeed it is beneficial to involve citizens in political decisions, we should be able to see this by observing Switzerland. In politics there are two types of effectiveness, the internal effectiveness which is related to the individual abilities of citizens, such as their knowledge of politics for example (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011, p. 4). And the external effectiveness how citizens feel their representatives are effective. (Ibid). What is observed in a study that examined the context produced by direct democracy is that it makes citizens more effective from an internal and external point of view (Ibid, p.14). In other words, the higher the political involvement, the higher the degree of political effectiveness. On the one hand, citizens understand the political process better (because they are involved in it), on the other hand, participating in referendums makes citizens more interested in politics, so they acquire the necessary skills and information. This allows them to participate much more effectively. On the other hand, citizens feel that their preferences are taken into account, which only increases participation. The control that direct democracy implies over elected officials reinforces citizens' belief that they can influence policy. Thus, external effectiveness is increased (Ibid, p.5). Lack of accountability is one of the aspects of representative democracy that pushes poorer social categories to abandon politics. But since direct democracy allows citizens to influence the final decision, the latter will most likely be in line with the citizens' choice. Direct democracy thus strengthens both types of political effectiveness. A study of 56 randomly selected Swiss municipalities tends to confirm this (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011). In all Swiss municipalities direct democratic institutions are present, but the degree of these participatory rights varies between municipalities. The inhabitants of these communities were asked

to answer a series of six questions. The first three questions aimed to assess the level of internal effectiveness, i.e., the capacity to participate in political life, that the inhabitants thought they had. The other three were designed to probe the responsiveness of local authorities, measuring external effectiveness. The results obtained show that the communes with a citizens' assembly have a better political efficiency, both internally and externally, than the communes with only a communal parliament. This shows that there is an undeniable benefit to involving citizens. The benefits are far too important to ignore the idea of involving citizens more in representative democracy.

So, the representative democracy, is a system of governance in which the people choose the political decision makers, the latter take the decisions but not the risks. To help them make their choice, the people are subjected to an enormous amount of propaganda, from which it is difficult to escape. Having no counter-power, the citizens therefore hand over all their political power to representatives. The latter are not representative of the people. This system is judged optimal by those who think that the people are not able to govern themselves, or by those who think that we are not equal in front of intelligence. Now we have seen that to think that there are superior and inferior intelligences is a nonsense. On the other hand, we have seen that making citizens participate in politics makes them more competent in politics. The benefits of involving citizens are therefore absolutely not negligible, we have seen that believing that only certain people are capable of governing is a baseless nonsense, which only suits those who govern. Some intellectuals and academics, like the representatives, also fear the involvement of citizens in democracy. The citizens that these experts consider as less educated, more impulsive. While these intellectuals have a crucial role in democracy, that of enlightening the choices of the citizens, instead they prefer to participate in the propaganda of the state, and contribute to educate the citizens in the same way as master explainers : "Participatory democracy is therefore a system where the crowd is "educated" and the elites are left to decide alone. It has nothing to do with direct democracy, where everyone has the fundamental right to directly modify the legislation to which they are subject. "

(Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 29). There is no valid reason to exclude citizens from decision making, on the contrary there are only valid reasons to include them. How can we include citizens in the decision-making process in a representative democracy?

Chapter 3 - The Citizen' initiative referendum

1) What is a counter-power?

What differentiates a representative democracy from an oligarchy is the presence or absence of a counter-power. Having a counter-power is of crucial importance for a democracy, because it is what makes it possible to control the representatives. Without counter-power, the representatives can act contrary to what the citizens want, and if the citizens and the representatives do not agree, then they become masters rather than representatives and the representative democracy becomes an oligarchy. The representative democracy can be considered democratic only if it represents the citizens and if the citizens agree with the choices of the representatives (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 80). Without counter-power the representatives have a greater freedom of action, they can make unpopular laws without fearing the consequences. Without control of the representatives, a representative democracy is democratic only in name. The counter-power has been defined by John Holloway, as allowing to decrease the power of the official institution: "the counter-power is a real power which is organized in front of an established authority (political, economic, social...). Its role is to restrict the exercise of the power in place and to propose an alternative to the decisions of this authority." (Holloway, 2002) A counter-power, is a power able to act against an established authority. It can take many forms such as associations, media, opposition parties or trade unions. Its role is to provide an alternative to the established power. Let's imagine a hospital, the power is the electrical system and the counter-power is the emergency generator. If a malfunction occurs in the primary system, the secondary system is there to keep the hospital running. The counter-power must be able to correct unjust or unpopular decisions. So that the citizens can have the last word, and that their opinion has real weight.

In a democracy, counter-powers are essential, in order not to fall into regimes where the people do not have power. Let's take representative democracies, we elect candidates who propose their programs, which means we elect them on

what they propose to do. But if they don't do what they promised, then the citizens can only wait for the next election. This situation occurs systematically, because without counter-power the representatives are free to act as they wish, it is in the nature of man to prefer his own interest rather than the collective interest as Robespierre stated. It is necessary to set up a framework in which, the interest of the representatives is to prefer the collective interest. For that it is necessary that the citizens have a means of control on the representatives, it is essential. If a representative knows that he can be fired, his interest will be to represent the citizens in the best way. When we employ someone, we are able to fire him if he does not do his job properly (to a certain degree). Why can't we fire our representatives, they are the employees of the people though. The fact that it is not possible to fire, or force new elections, shows that the representatives have an advantage in the balance of power that opposes them to the represented. Before talking about the counter-power that is needed, we will see the counter-powers that we already would have in our representative democracy. And why they are not effective.

So, there are already counter-powers, but we will see now that each of them is only a simulacrum of counter-power. First, the worst counter-power: the media. We have seen that the media are used to manufacture consent, they don't deliberately give the floor to the various opinions in a balanced way, in order to manipulate their audience and propagate a unique thought. They do not have anything of a counter-power anymore, on the contrary they have become the privileged tool of the power. The media serve the interests of those who own them, and the majority of them belong to billionaires, or at least to big financial groups : "The mass media tend to defend the views of their owners" (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 79). In France the majority of the media belong to nine billionaires. We have to trust the media, but considering their owners it is difficult. Nevertheless, the media independent of the big financial structures tend to fulfill the role of counter-power as well as possible. But the independent media are too few, and their influence too small. The mass media are definitely not a counter-power.

The opposition parties are in a struggle for power, but once they get it, they do exactly the same as their predecessors. Political parties are such rigid institutions, that in the end they represent only one more obstacle for the citizens. Besides, they are deserted by the citizens, who only consider them as a group of oligarchs (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 22). If an inclusive system is not rigorously solid, then it turns into an oligarchy. Those who participate feel that those who do not participate do not have the legitimacy to criticize or oppose. This reasoning is totally false, but it suits the oligarchs. The political parties are the illustration of this phenomenon. Moreover, in Germany, citizens no longer have confidence in political parties; in fact, the level of confidence in political parties fell from 41% to 17% between 1995 and 2005 (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 9).

The trade unions are a serious counter-power, but their negotiating power is very limited. To go on strike you need money, and although the trade unions are organized for that purpose, it is not enough to negotiate anything. The trade unions have less and less members, and the less members they have, the less strong they are. But the trade unions are theoretically an excellent counter-power, which allows to stand up to the representatives.

Finally, there are several types of referendums in France. A referendum allows citizens to participate in political decisions. So theoretically, we can consider the referendum as a good counter-power, because it allows an alternative to the decisions of the representatives. But we will see that in the French case, the referendum is not an effective counter-power. It is already considered by the government as an exceptional procedure. There are 4 types of referendum in France: The legislative referendum, the president can submit a bill. The constituent referendum, initiated by the president under proposal of the prime minister and the parliament, it aims to change the constitution, the changes must be approved by the national assembly and the senate and then validated by a referendum, but the referendum is not mandatory to change the constitution. Finally, the local decision referendum, it allows under the initiative of local communities to launch a referendum on a subject that falls within its scope. These three types of referendums cannot be considered as counter-power, for the simple reason that they can only be launched by the power in place, the citizens cannot

use these referendums to make propositions. These referendums have at best a complementary role, at worst they are only accessory. But in no case they can really be an alternative to the decisions of the representatives, since it is the representatives themselves who choose the subjects. Besides, in the whole history of the French 5th republic, the referendum was used only 9 times. The major problem of the French referendums is the initiative, who decides to propose a referendum on a question, who has the power. Another problem is that these referendums are not coercive, in the case of the legislative referendum nothing obliges the representatives to follow the opinion of citizens. To imagine an election where the candidate with the most votes does not win is absurd. This is what happens with referendums, which the people may decide to ignore. For the constituent referendum it is not even mandatory to change the constitution, so the representatives are not forced to organize it. Finally, the last and most recent, the referendum of shared initiative. It allows to make a proposition of law, for that the parliamentarians propose a bill and if this one is supported by a minimum of 185, then it can be proposed to the citizens. If the bill receives the support of one tenth of the voters registered on the electoral lists, the bill returns to parliament where both assemblies will examine and vote on it. For this referendum, as for the others, the initiative belongs to the representatives. To call it a referendum of shared initiative is an abuse of language since the initiative is not shared. In reality, the referendums that we have in France are plebiscites. They are referendums, but their purpose is not to make a decision, but to give legitimacy to the projects of the representatives. The result does not commit to anything, it is indicative.

Without counter-power, representative democracy is more like an oligarchy, and it is necessary either to be part of the mass media or to be blind not to see it: "The State and the politicians are, on the whole, in a condition that only professional optimists and hypocrites can claim to be the result of the will of the people" (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 8). But the referendum is a good way to offer to the citizen a real counter-power. It is necessary to be inspired by the referendum that already exists in France and to make the opposite. So, a referendum, in order to be an effective counter-power, must be launched by the citizens, the initiative must belong to them, and it must absolutely be binding. We

are in a representative democracy, but without any real counter-power. So, we need a new counter-power, and the CIR is the ideal candidate. We will see why the CIR would be a very good counter-power. In reality, the referendums we have in France are plebiscites. They are referendums, but their purpose is not to make a decision, but to give legitimacy to the projects of the representatives. The result does not commit to anything, it is indicative. So, a referendum, in order to be an effective counter-power, must be launched by the citizens, the initiative must belong to them, and it must absolutely be binding.

2) The CIR

The CIR (Citizens' initiative referendum) is a referendum whose initiative comes from a part of the citizens. It gives the choice of questions and answers to the citizens. It is present in 36 countries in different forms. The result of a CIR is binding, which means that its application is immediate and automatic. Contrary to the French referendum, a decision taken by the CIR cannot be ignored by elected officials. The latter are not replaced by the CIR, but lose part of their power to the benefit of the citizens. They lose, for example, the monopoly of voting on laws. The CIR is a junction between direct and representative democracy. Switzerland is the best example of this junction; the Swiss people are the fourth power thanks to the CIR. When the people decide, the system commits itself to follow them, in France it is the opposite.

The oldest traces of the CIR in France date back to 1791. A committee was responsible for writing a new constitution, under the supervision of Condorcet. The committee integrates in the new constitution a right of popular initiative, the latter is legislative and constitutional: "censure of the people on the Acts of the National Representation, and the Right of Petition". A citizen can submit a proposition to a local assembly, it must be supported by fifty fellow citizens. The proposition is then transmitted to the parliament which organizes a national referendum. Unfortunately, this constitution was never applied. For Condorcet it was important that the people had a counter-power, allow citizens to participate

in the making of laws, makes it possible to improve the laws (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 47)

How does the CIR work? Each country has its own modalities, but some steps are common to all. We will take the Swiss example: The question must be about one subject only (Ibid, p.23), and respect human rights. The question must not contain any hate or insult, it must be well formulated, a committee is in charge of checking that the question respects all these criteria. Then it is necessary to collect enough signatures, it is neither more nor less than filling a petition. Depending on the referendum that is being launched, the number of signatures may vary. For example, if it is a question of modifying the constitution, in Switzerland it is necessary to gather 100 000 signatures, and the deadline to reach the objective is 18 months. Then the country organizes a debate. Finally, the vote is organized, if the majority of "yes" prevails and in a majority of canton the "yes" prevails, then the "yes" prevails. The case of Switzerland is special because it is a federation, but overall most of these steps are present in countries that have adopted the CIR. The CIR is not a mirror reflecting the general will. It is a tool that allows two essential things. First, a minority of citizens can submit proposals to a majority of citizens. Secondly, the CIR allows to control the elected representatives, by censoring a law or by advancing the date of the next elections. The CIR increases the rights of citizens, and we will see in detail how?

The CIR has many functions, and each of them acts as a counter-power. The first function is the most obvious for a referendum, and that is the legislative function. That is, the ability to add laws. A legislative CIR is a counter-power because it is an alternative to elected officials to pass laws. On the other hand, a CIR that is not constitutional is very limited, because it cannot change the constitution. The ability to change the constitution allows for the last word.

“When the CIR can change the law, but not the constitution, there are always constitutional clauses that indicate on which matters the CIR cannot be launched.” (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 76) As a result, what happens in countries where the CIR is only legislative is that elected officials make constitutional clauses to limit the scope of the CIR. Thus, it becomes impossible even with a CIR to make proposals on certain issues. This is the case in many former USSR countries, such

as Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Ukraine, where the CIR cannot deal with budgetary issues or foreign policy and cannot affect public power (for example, the role of elected representatives). Elected officials can also impose conditions, such as the number of signatures needed to launch a CIR, or set a quorum that is difficult to reach. For example, in Russia, it is necessary to gather 2 million signatures within 2 months, and that 42 regions have participated. Meeting these conditions is quite difficult, so no CIR has yet been created in Russia. Another condition that is often used among countries with a legislative CIR is the quorum. It is a participation limit, a certain number of people registered on the electoral roll must participate to validate the referendum. In Hungary, a quarter of the registered voters must have taken part in the vote for the referendum to be valid. The (Blondiaux, et al., 2019) (Blondiaux, et al., 2019) CIR alone tends not to be an effective counter-power, the conditions to launch it are often difficult and its scope is limited by the representatives.

To avoid having to endure overly demanding conditions for launching a CIR, and to ensure that citizens can have the final say, the CIR must be constitutional (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 63). The decisions made are then set in stone and difficult for representatives to change. The constitutional CIR is the CIR that brings representative democracy closest to direct democracy. In Switzerland at the federal level there is no legislative CIR, only a constitutional CIR, all laws voted through this CIR change the constitution. No constraint can be exerted on the constitutional CIR, all subjects can be discussed (except international law). And the country has no quorum. To have a constitutional CIR is to have the guarantee that the elected representatives cannot ignore the decisions taken by the CIR. It is therefore a very effective counter-power because its scope of action cannot be limited, so it allows a real alternative in the field of law-making. The constitutional CIR and the legislative CIR have the same goal, that of allowing citizens to do without intermediaries to vote the laws, but the legislative CIR not being constitutional is not sufficient to have the last words in front of the representatives. So, either the CIR is not constitutional and it will only be an option, or it is constitutional and it will really matter.

Another function of the CIR is that it can abolish a law. It is a right of veto for the citizens. It is a counter-power that allows the control of elected officials since they cannot pass the laws they want without the consent of citizens. The abrogative CIR has the same problems as the legislative CIR, if it is not constitutional the elected officials limit its scope and impose difficult conditions. This is the case, for example, in Venezuela, where the participation quorum is 40% (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 75), and it cannot deal with fiscal policies or international political issues. Some abrogative CIR are constitutional, so they can act on the constitution, but another option is more effective. The mandatory referendum is a referendum that is necessary if elected officials want to make a change in the constitution. In Italy, the abrogative CIR is not constitutional (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 72), so it cannot be used for certain issues such as the budget or foreign policy. Italian elected officials can change the constitution without the need to consult the citizens. This is where the mandatory referendum makes sense, it is a protection against elected officials. In Switzerland there is no quorum for the abrogative CIR, and no restrictions on the subjects. But it doesn't have to be constitutional, because the Swiss have a mandatory referendum, so if the elected officials wanted to change the constitution a referendum would be launched automatically. The mandatory referendum is not a CIR, but it is a very useful protection against representatives.

Finally, the function that is most useful to guard against abuse of power by elected officials, the revocatory CIR, allows for early elections to replace an elected official. The revocatory CIR is a threat to the representatives, it does not mean that we should not trust the representatives, but that simply the risk that they can deceive us exists: "We need a sword of Damocles on the elected officials, not that they are all rotten, but for the only reason that one of them could be" (Ibid, p.189). In the United States since 1911, 53 representatives have been removed from office (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 80). It is also a counter-power that protects directly against elected officials. It is the right to dissolve the assembly reserved for the president in France, but it is also the right to dissolve the presidency; a right that simply does not exist yet. It is the right for the people to fire their employees. The purpose of the revocatory CIR is to prevent elected officials from

making electoral gifts at the beginning of their mandate, because if they make such gifts the citizens could fire them right afterwards. This function allows to have control over the representatives. This CIR is particularly useful when democracy is dysfunctional, but less so when it is functioning. For example, the US states that use the revocatory CIR the most are the states where it is not possible to legislate without intermediaries (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 83). Peru holds the record for revocations (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 82). The legislative CIR is not usable, so Peruvian citizens use the revocatory CIR much more, although it also has difficult conditions (a quorum of a quarter of the registered voters). If the other CIRs work well, then the revocatory CIR is little used. At the beginning of their term of office representatives give electoral gifts to their electoral clientele, they also pass all their unpopular measures. Then at the end of their mandate they make more generous policies, but these tend to increase the deficit of the country (Ibid, p.34). This cycle is directly linked to the fact that elections have fixed deadlines, the revocatory CIR can disrupt these deadlines since it allows to trigger elections at any time. The revocatory CIR allows that the representatives never make too unpopular measures at the risk of having early elections.

So, what we can conclude is that, first of all, to have a CIR that is not constitutional is to take the risk that its range of action is very small, or that it will be very limited by conditions that are difficult to fulfill. The abrogative and revocatory CIR allow for greater control over elected officials. If the CIR is not constitutional, it will be difficult for it to fulfill its role as a counter-power. Half of the world's citizens' initiative referendums have taken place in the three countries that do not have a quorum : Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Palau (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 86). The rights that citizens get in countries where the CIR is strong allow them to compete with representatives. And this is what is expected from a counter-power.

Following the social movement of the Yellow Vests, the French government proposed a "great debate", of course it was only a means to attack the movement of Yellow Vests. this "great debate" was supposed to receive the grievances of all the French, and the CIR was of course part of it. So the president of the majority

party, proposed a CIR, but the form that this CIR was very interesting we will analyze it : “As soon as a subject mobilizes a certain threshold of citizens, one million for example, a bill is elaborated by a consensus conference of citizens drawn by lot, before being examined by the Assembly” So the threshold is one million citizens to launch an initiative which is reasonable, knowing that in Switzerland the threshold is 100000 citizens but for 7million inhabitants. Then a law is made by citizens drawn by lot, it is again reasonable to proceed so. And best of all, the proposal ends with "before being examined by the Assembly". It is not up to the representatives to examine a law proposed by the citizens. This CIR proposal takes away the essence of the CIR, which is to be able to counter the representatives. Some might think that this is just a detail, but let's take for example tax evasion, even if the threshold of citizens was reached, the representatives could add amendments inspired by the lobbies of big business. So what would be a real CIR proposal, we just have to change the end: “As soon as a subject mobilizes a certain threshold of citizens, one million for example, a bill is elaborated by a consensus conference of citizens drawn by lot, before being examined by referendum” this example serves to explain an essential thing, if we let the representatives write the modalities of the CIR, then we will end up with an unusable CIR, like in Russia (to remind in Russia it is necessary to collect 2 million signatures within 2 months, with at least 42 regions represented and not more than 50 000 signatures in one region. And the issue must be approved by the central electoral commission (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 77).

In France, having a CIR would be perfectly legitimate. In article 3 of the constitution, it is well specified that sovereignty belongs to the people, and that the referendum is a tool of this sovereignty: "National sovereignty belongs to the people, who exercise it through their representatives and by means of the referendum." Thus, the French constitution founds in law the legitimacy of direct democracy procedure like the CIR. The CIR is not only legitimate, but it is also widely approved by the citizens. We will see what its effects are, both on the citizens and on the representatives.

3) The positive effects of CIR

In different countries the CIR has allowed citizens to obtain more rights. Women have been able to benefit from the right to vote thanks to the CIR in the United States and in Switzerland. (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 88) But this statement must be qualified, because firstly, in the United States, not all the states have a CIR, and Switzerland was late in voting for women's right to vote. In the United States, women's suffrage was enacted at the local level through the CIR in three states years before it was enacted at the federal level: Colorado in 1893, Idaho in 1896 and California in 1911 (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 90). New York State had strong demonstrations for women's suffrage legislation and a large petition in 1894 that was ignored. Without a CIR, citizens could not act directly and had to rely on representatives. The latter waited until women's right to vote was legislated at the federal level in 1920, 37 years after the state of Colorado. Switzerland voted for women's right to vote at the federal level in 1971, 27 years after France, which does not even have a CIR. The explanation for this delay in Switzerland is that Swiss men have been reluctant to share their right. In general, citizens are reluctant to share their civic rights. For example, LGBT minorities have not acquired more rights with the CIR. Ireland is the only country in the world to have authorized same-sex marriage via a referendum in 2015 (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 94). Mentalities take time to evolve in some areas, but without the CIR it is even more complicated to get more rights for citizens.

On less divisive issues, the CIR has made it possible to save an endangered language. In Switzerland, Romansh, a very small minority language in the country, has become an official language in 1938 (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 92). In Spain, Catalan is not recognized as an official language, despite the fact that almost a tenth of the population speaks Catalan. On the other hand, in Latvia the CIR did not allow to add Russian as an official language, although it is spoken by many Latvians (38% of the population has Russian as a mother tongue), but this can be explained by the fact that Russian is much more widely spoken than Latvian, and therefore Russian could have competed with Latvian (Magni-Berton

& Egger, 2019, p. 93). The CIR, allows the minorities which are cultural, ethnic or other, to have much more opportunity for the whole of the citizens to reflect and decide on the question of their choice. In fact, in a study conducted in Texas in 1999 (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 75), the purpose was to find out which ethnic groups were in favor of direct democracy. The black and Hispanic minorities were very much in favor of direct democracy, 72% for the blacks and 86% for the Hispanics. It seems that minorities know that their interests are best served by a direct democracy system. In another study (Ibid, p.75), this time in California in 1997, the ethnic group that felt that direct democracy was a bad thing was the white ethnic group at 11.5%. The group that was most against direct democracy was also the one that had the largest majority, which suggests that direct democracy and especially the CIR are tools for minorities.

Regarding minority rights, the majority of referendums held on minority rights are in favor of minorities. Referendums that threaten minority rights are less adopted than other subjects. A study looked at Swiss citizens' referendums between 1970 and 1996 to test the impact of CIR on the civil rights of minorities (Frey & Goette, *Does the Popular Vote Destroy Civil Rights?*, 1998). The researchers calculated the frequency of unfavorable outcomes for minorities, focusing on referendums on foreign policy, religious freedom and some other referendums. The result shows that opponents of civil rights have more opportunities to attack civil rights, but that their chances of success are very low. On the contrary, minorities seem to benefit from the CIR. In fact, at the city level, only 17% of the referendums aimed at extending civil rights were rejected. And at the federal level, only 20% of referendums allowed the suppression of minor civil rights, none of which concerned religious freedom.

One of the most interesting effects of the CIR is that it neutralizes citizen violence (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 128). Since citizens have the capacity to express themselves in a broad way, they no longer have a reason to express their discontent by violence. For violence is not an end, but a means. If conflicts cannot be solved by parliamentarians or by changing the government, they will escalate and go beyond the political framework : "Policies made by the majority may be as wrong as those made by its representatives, but they are less likely to

produce protest insofar as they are, by definition, supported by a majority of voters." (Ibid, p.12) It is easier to accept a decision that you have participated in, rather than a decision made by a representative. The CIR puts an end to the feeling of exclusion of the citizens, it is pacifying, the most radical political actions are abandoned. In 2019, a law was passed in Bern that allows municipalities to charge the organizer of a demonstration for the damage caused by it (Dupre, 2019, p. 16). The most extreme opponents of this law have wisely accepted the result. For they can propose their own law, or change the existing one by modifying the fine for example. What follows from this appeasement is that citizens trust the institutions again. Whereas we are in a time when citizens are disillusioned with politics. The CIR can allow citizens to regain confidence. Since citizens have the means to control their representatives, there is no longer any reason to doubt the institutions. The power that citizens have is a crucial element in gauging the legitimacy of a political institution. With the CIR, citizens feel more heard. But the mere presence of a CIR is not enough. It must not be accompanied by restrictive measures, such as a high quorum or an astronomical number of signatures, because these measures would increase distrust of representatives. In Switzerland, the easier it is to access the CIR in the cantons, the more satisfied the citizens are with their political system (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 136). The CIR has the effect of calming violence among individuals, but also of calming state violence. Indeed, since it became a direct democracy, Switzerland has been one of the least warlike states in Europe (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 11). The people become the ones who decide on war, and whether a state wins or loses, the people always suffer during a war. It is then logical that if it is the people who decide, the people avoid to the maximum the option of war. The CIR has therefore also the effect of making the states more peaceful.

The CIR makes it possible to visualize the distance that separates citizens from representatives, because with the CIR citizens can decide to vote on issues that representatives had chosen to ignore. The campaigns before the votations, allow to see the difference between what the representatives want and what the citizens want. the frequency of use of the CIR cannot be associated with the confidence of citizens in their representatives. so in countries with a CIR where

the government clearly states its position, trust in political parties is lower in countries with CIR in the constitution (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 138). Obtaining the trust of the citizens is difficult, but their acceptance is possible. The CIR allows for the acceptance of decisions, in a study where individuals were presented with three decisions on the importance of religious authority in education, nuclear policy and school diplomas. Individuals were randomly told how these decisions were made, either by direct democracy, by parliament, by the two majority political parties, or by an expert committee. Individuals were then asked to indicate their level of agreement. Thus, the more important the decision is to the individual, the more direct democracy will promote acceptance, even among those who strongly disagree with the decision. (Ibid) Nevertheless the CIR, gives well to the citizens the impression to be heard, the citizens thus gains in external effectiveness, that is to say: "External effectiveness denotes citizens' evaluations of the authorities. In particular, this dimension focuses on the aspect of responsiveness. It therefore focuses on whether citizens feel that political authorities take their preferences into account." (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011, p. 4) If the CIR is really usable, without any measure to counter it on the side of the representatives, the citizens feel like full decision makers. But the CIR allows to see clearly the difference of opinion between the people and the representatives.

Participating in political life strengthens the bonds between individuals (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 135). Some citizens particularly affected by an issue, will become experts on a certain subject and will do everything to have the most adapted law. The collective intelligence can be put in place with a direct democracy tool like the CIR. The CIR increases the social capital of individuals. Participation in non-profit associations increases with the CIR and associations multiply, as well as volunteering (Ibid). The number of lobbies on the other hand does not tend to increase, the CIR is not a tool for the big economic groups, on the contrary. The big lobbies' campaigns do not have the same weight as the citizens' networks. The big lobbies' campaigns tend to make the citizens distrustful. Effectively citizens tend, if they know the position of the lobbies on the issue, to vote against what the lobbies promote. In this way, they make the same decision as the citizens who have studied the issue (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 132).

The CIR seems to be a tool that is difficult to manipulate, and it is a way for individuals to increase their social capital.

Thanks to the CIR, citizens acquire an essential skill in democracy: the ability to participate in politics. Whereas in representative democracy, citizens have little incentive to become informed. Rare are the citizens who read the program of the candidates to an election, even concerning the presidential election which is the most important in France. In direct democracy citizens are not only more informed but also more competent. In Switzerland the citizens who have the most access to the CIR are those who are the most informed about politics (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 130). The knowledge that the CIR brings to the citizens is so important, that to have such effects on the citizens without the CIR, it would be necessary to oblige high school students to go to university. But the CIR is less expensive. Still in Switzerland 70% of the citizens are able to justify their vote with arguments (Ibid, p. 131).

In the United States, in states with a CIR, citizens receiving contradictory information will tend to favor the neutral source of information. This shows that citizens are less manipulated in countries where CIR is used (Ibid). Thus, the CIR has the direct effect of increasing the internal effectiveness of citizens, "Internal effectiveness is about citizens' judgments to understand and participate adequately in political processes" (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011, p. 4). According to one study the internal effectiveness of citizens increases in a context of direct democracy (Ibid, p.14). On the other hand, the gap between the highly involved and the less involved is much smaller in a context of direct democracy (Ibid). We have seen that the CIR strengthen the social capital, especially the associations multiply. It also participates in strengthening the internal effectiveness of citizens, because citizens who are part of an association have their internal effectiveness much stronger (Ibid, p.13). We can safely say that the CIR, makes citizens more competent on political issues.

The constitution determines the form of the state, the organization of its institutions, but also the devolution and conditions of exercise of power. The constitution can also be seen as a guarantor of citizens' rights. Indeed, it protects citizens against, among other things, the abuse of power by representatives. It is

a fundamental text, the basic contract between the representatives and the represented, the holders of power and the citizens. Moreover, the representative must respect the constitution when he makes the law. It is therefore problematic that representatives can change it without the authorization of the citizens; this changes the balance of power considerably. It is true that in theory, in the best of all possible worlds, representatives act according to the goodwill of the citizens. But the reality is quite different. The representatives, the legislators, pass laws that they believe are good for the people. Thus, citizens give their trust to representatives who are supposed to be more capable of knowing the general interest. But Man is ready to do anything to maximize his interest regardless of his morals. "The human mind contains an ineradicable core of selfish passion"³. The people thus submit to laws that they never really choose. Representative democracy reaches its limit when the considerations of the representatives do not converge with those of the represented people. A representative system is democratic as long as the citizens agree with it, but studies show that this is no longer the case since 1970, these same studies support decisions making by direct democracy (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 82). The idea of a modern western democracy is that a representative has a certain knowledge and it is for this knowledge and these competences that the citizens elect him. However, the representative and therefore the legislator is never really a scientist and acts more according to his political party than to the citizens he is supposed to represent. And a State whose representatives lose the value, the notion and the objective of democracy, is no longer democratic but oligarchic. Building a stable democracy requires much more than a governing assembly and a constitution. Democracy can only be stable if power is balanced by power. That for the power of the representatives there is a counter-power among the citizens. Imagine you employ someone and they write their own employment contract, you would have a problem with that. Well, we are in the same situation, the only people who have access to the constitution are the ones who should fear it the most. The people approve the constitution by referendum, but they are no longer called upon for revisions to the constitution adopted by parliament. This is a confiscation of the

³ In *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, of Reinhold Niebuhr, 1932

supreme power, the power to revise the constitution. The lack of transparency in the political life of elected officials and the condemnation of the imperative mandate expose citizens more and more to the abuse of power. We are therefore increasingly witnessing a loss of trust by citizens in their representatives (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 9). The CIR then appears as a lifeline. If it is constitutive, it allows the constitution to be modified, the balance of power changes: the employer rewrites the work contract. The representatives can no longer modify the constitution without the agreement of the represented, thanks to the abrogative CIR, or to a mandatory referendum. A sine qua none of the sovereignty of the people is the capacity to modify its own constitution. The idea is to move from a rigid constitution, where its modification obeys a procedure more solemn than the legislative procedure with a special body different from the body invested with the legislative function, to a flexible constitution, where it can be revised under conditions close to the legislative procedure, thus by referendum. Moreover, all free constitutions are intended to evolve

Contrary to what one might think, wealth does not have a huge impact on the happiness of individuals. We can take the example of Japan, where the inhabitants had their income multiplied by six at the end of the XX century, but their level of happiness did not increase enormously. However, unemployment leads to a strong decrease in happiness. How is this possible? On the one hand, income is not a key element of happiness, but being unemployed strongly reduces happiness. This implies that there is something more important than income in work. Work allows many people to realize their potential. Moreover, individuals who are autonomous in their work are happier than individuals who do not have much autonomy. This leads us to think that work makes people happy not because of the income it provides, but because of the freedom to accomplish oneself. So, we can ask ourselves if the autonomy that the CIR offers, makes citizens happier as for the image of work. Effectively, the CIR has the effect of making citizens happy. According to a 2016 survey, Swiss citizens are among the happiest citizens, just behind the Scandinavian countries (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 139). It is difficult to say how important the CIR is in this result, especially since France, which does not have a CIR, is just behind Switzerland. But a study

based specifically on the level of happiness in the different Swiss cantons (Frey & Stutzer, 2002) shows that citizens of the more democratic cantons are happier. The researchers set up a scale to measure the level of happiness in the different cantons, 1 for the least democratic canton and 6 for the most democratic. Going from a less democratic canton to a very democratic one represents an evolution of happiness similar to going from 2000 Swiss francs per month to 3000 Swiss francs per month (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 46). In cantons with a high level of democracy, the municipalities have more autonomy (Ibid). This autonomy at the level of the communes also seems to be a factor of growth of happiness. French representatives tend to support a centralized structure with very little autonomy for the communes, but the level of autonomy of the communes is partially correlated with the level of happiness of the citizens. Switzerland is not an isolated case, since citizens of states in the United States that have a CIR in their constitution declare themselves happier (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 140). The higher an individual's income, the less impact the CIR has on their happiness, so poorer citizens are happier in states with a CIR.

But what element in the CIR makes citizens happy? There are two elements, first the direct resolution of a problem or voting a law in accordance with the desire of the citizens brings happiness, this is called outcome utility (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 47). The second element is the procedure itself, procedural utility (Ibid), having the ability to participate in the decision-making process independently of the outcome. To know which element is the most significant in the happiness of citizens, it is enough to observe the foreigners living in Switzerland who cannot vote. They benefit from the consequences of the CIR, outcome utility. On the other hand, not being able to participate they do not have access to the procedural utility. By comparing the level of happiness of the Swiss and the foreigners we obtain that the procedural utility procures three times more happiness than the outcome utility (Ibid). So, what makes people happiest is to be able to participate in collective decisions. And this is not surprising because human beings do not only need bread to be happy, they need to take their social destiny in hand with their fellow human beings and to be able to participate in the organization of society. As Aristotle said, man is a political animal. We see therefore through these

indirect effects, that the CIR has indeed a role of counter-power. It emerges that the citizens are more emancipated, more united and happier.

Finally, the CIR is popular in the countries where it is practiced, it makes the citizens satisfied. The young Swiss citizens are satisfied with their political system (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 24), and this fact is notable because in the neighboring countries of Switzerland it is not really the case. In France for example, the young citizens who are the most radical in their political thinking, like the anti-capitalists or the nationalists, are dissatisfied with the French political system, while the young Swiss who share with the young French the radicality of their thinking are satisfied with the Swiss political system. The reason for this difference between French and Swiss radicals is that the CIR allows a better inclusion of all opinions and tends to exclude less than in a purely representative system.

The CIR allows citizens to obtain the rights they want, although it is often difficult to grant rights to people who were deprived of them, the fact is that if the people want to grant more rights to a minority they will do so. By including all citizens in the decision making and law-making process, the CIR neutralizes violence, as those who could not express themselves had to resort to violence to be heard, the CIR allows everyone to express themselves and is therefore a peacemaker. The citizens become more competent in politics, they are more satisfied with their political system and finally are happier. In spite of all these positive points the CIR remains very unpopular among the elected, is it justified?

4) The disadvantages of the CIR

Representative democracy, with its system of majority decision-making, is not a democracy because the people cannot prevent the enactment of an unwanted law. In a democracy the people are supposed to have the final say. This reasoning does not convince at all the detractors of the CIR. The distrust that they have for the CIR, and above all directed towards the citizens. As we have seen in chapter 1, some of them start with the a priori of the inequality of intelligence. It

is also this a priori that has blocked the vote of women for many years. Critics of direct democracy believe that humans are egocentric, even when it comes to voting. As if we were unaware of, or rather unable to aspire to, the general good. While of course the elite is capable of it. We will see the criticisms that they address to the CIR.

The CIR has a bad reputation among the representatives, indeed the French prime minister said on January 25, 2019: "The CIR makes me bristle" (Blondiaux, et al., 2019, p. 35) which could prove that it is a serious counter-power. More seriously, the representatives are those whom the CIR disadvantages the most, because more power for the citizens means less power for the representatives. Especially since the CIR does not have a bad reputation among citizens, effectively in France for the year 2019, 77% of the French citizens would be in favor of a referendum whose initiative belongs to the citizens.⁴ The criticisms and fears that circulate in France today are the same as those that circulated in Switzerland two centuries ago (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 11). Since then, these fears and anxieties have proved to be totally unfounded. Similarly, for universal suffrage, it also suffered from a bad reputation. However today, going back on universal suffrage would be unthinkable. The CIR is an advancement just as fundamental as universal suffrage. The fear of the representatives to include more the citizens in the decision making, were always unfounded. because the inclusion of citizens in the decision-making process has proven to be very positive in the case of Switzerland. Democracy is about questioning itself, and evolving. Our elites refuse this evolution, because they would be the big losers of an inclusion of citizens in political decisions. However, direct democracy is in every way better than the so-called representative democracy, which should rather be called non-participatory, the CIR is a tool that would allow to introduce direct democracy in this representative democracy. We will therefore examine the main flaws that are attributed to the CIR, and try to answer them.

⁴ "Citizen's initiative referendum: what the French want" Ifop for Valeurs Actuelles, done in 2019. On a sample of 1210 peoples.

Some issues may be too deep for citizens to decide. For let us remember that the referendum offers a binary choice to the voters. In 1992, the Belgian Prime Minister Dehaene stated this characteristic of the referendum: "there are few problems that you can solve with a yes or a no" (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 80). The binarity of the choice would offer little alternative, either one makes the right decision or one is wrong. Thus, faced with a sensitive issue, the choice of citizens could have consequences that they had not envisaged. This was the case in the United Kingdom, which decided to hold a referendum to decide to leave the European Union. The yes side won. Gradually the citizens understood the consequences of their decision. In the end it seems that the British citizens took this referendum lightly, since according to a survey conducted the day before the exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union citizens were unfavorable (Blondiaux, et al., 2019, p. 13). This example is interesting, but it is not relevant to the CIR. The British do not have a CIR, but it is with regular practice that citizens become more and more competent. The CIR must be accompanied by a public debate, which was probably lacking for the Brexit.

The referendum question and how it is framed can lead to several biases. First, supporters of the status quo may have more diverse and varied motivations than supporters of the yes side (Blondiaux, et al., 2019, p. 14). In 2005, a referendum was held on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe or Treaty of Rome II. The No side won. The reasons for voting no were quite varied, there were several types of Eurosceptics, one who was against a liberal Europe, another fearing that their country would lose sovereignty to a post-national Europe, or another fearing that they would not be able to change the text in the future. While the "yes" supporters had more or less the same reasons: For them the treaty was an improvement of the old one and therefore it was beneficial for the country. The referendum thus puts forward more what the citizens do not want, while being unable to show what they do want. The binary formulation of the question reinforces this problem. Although binary is very convenient to have a majority, it does not allow to decide between two projects or to have a third option. This was the problem in the referendum on the creation of the Notre-Dame-des-Landes airport, where the "yes" vote won. But it was not enough to create a legitimacy

that could overcome the opposition, the project was abandoned. If the referendum had proposed to expand the existing airport, to create a new one, or to do nothing, the result of the referendum would have been less than that. The outcome of the referendum would have been less debated. Nevertheless, having more than two choices is not necessarily a better solution.

Because despite this bias, which makes the referendum by its very nature a better way of knowing what the people do not want than what they do want, the binary character of a referendum is a strong point. This makes it impervious to manipulation (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 23). Let us take the example of the airport and imagine that a third option was possible, a poll states that 60% of the people are for the construction of the airport. A third option is then proposed for a construction that respects the biodiversity of the place. The camp of those for would then be divided by two, 30% for the construction of the airport and 30% for an airport that respects biodiversity, and the camp of those against the airport could win with only 40% of the votes. The binary nature of the referendum prevents this kind of ploy. Especially since with a CIR the citizens could launch another referendum later to stipulate whether the construction of the airport should respect biodiversity. Moreover, concerning the formulation of the question, in Switzerland they have opted for a clear rule (Ibid), which should serve as an example for the future CIR. In Switzerland, a CIR can only deal with one subject. This again avoids manipulations, otherwise one could slip a subject into the referendum to influence the result. One cannot reduce the salaries of civil servants and decide on a tax cut at the same time, for example. This kind of manipulation is extremely rare.

The referendum certainly offers a binary choice. But does representative democracy offer much more choice? Decisions in representative democracy are made or not made, depending on whether the representatives voted for or against. Is this not a binary situation? The difference between a referendum and a vote of representatives for a law is that the latter can propose amendments to change the draft law until the last moment. But citizens cannot change a proposal that comes from a citizen's initiative. Despite this difference, direct democracy offers voters many more choices. Because in representative democracy, voters can

choose their elected officials based on their programs, which may not be implemented. These programs are a set of proposals, the voters can be attracted by one of them but not by all of them, so the choice is actually very limited. A survey of American voters (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 80), to determine their preference on political issues, shows that the preference of American voters is a mix between conservative and progressive party ideas. A majority of respondents would like to see higher salaries and gun registration, two ideas that can be classified as progressive. But at the same time, a majority of Americans would also like to see affirmative action policies abandoned and prayer legalized in schools, ideas that can be classified as conservative. No party is proposing these ideas, although the majority of Americans are calling for them. In a direct democracy, the people could choose these ideas at the same time.

The CIR could be biased by what is called the support vote, which is when citizens vote not after reflection but to support a party or a personality. Voting against a person or a party also exists. With the CIR the initiative comes from the people so a priori this bias should not appear too much. Nevertheless, if political parties start to support this or that proposal, it could have an impact. But the risk remains low, because we have seen that citizens in states with a CIR are not influenced by parties.

Lobbies could try to manipulate public opinion, on issues in which they have an interest, to the detriment of the general interest. For the detractors of the CIR this argument is very important, they think that with a tool like the CIR which integrates direct democracy mechanisms, the lobbies would have so much more influence that the citizens would be manipulated. And it is true that today with social networks it is not very complicated to manipulate the opinion, in particular with the Fake news. We know that social networks are able to manipulate their users, by promoting some information and hiding others. In the United States, there are heavy suspicions that Russia tried to manipulate the American election through social networks. It should be understood that a huge part of the population spends more time in front of their social networks than in front of the television. The risk of manipulation by social networks is very present. But the drifts of social networks are increasingly known to the general public, which could

lessen its harmful effects on democracy. Nevertheless, this criticism is also valid for the representative democracy. "Groups of great financial power also spend large sums on the election campaigns of political parties and presidential candidates, as well as on lobbying legislators and senior officials." (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 78) Regarding the campaign for the citizens' initiative referendum, it is also true that lobbies invest huge amounts of money to influence the outcome of certain referendums. again, if we compare with direct and representative democracy, we realize that the influence of money is just as present in representative democracy. We can ask ourselves if it is not fundamentally worse in representative democracy, because it is enough for the financial groups to influence a small number of individuals (the representatives). In direct democracy, however, financial groups must influence all citizens, a task that seems more difficult. Since the 1980s in California, lobbies have spent more money influencing citizens' initiatives than they have influencing parliaments (Ibid, p. 59). A study of CIRs in Colorado between 1966 and 1994 found that only one lobbying referendum passed (Ibid,78). The big financial groups are not fans of direct democracy. For example, financial groups have strongly opposed the introduction of the citizen's referendum in many American states, such as Minnesota, New Jersey and Rhode Island (Ibid, p. 79). Their argument was that organizing a citizens' referendum was very expensive and that it would favor wealthy organizations. Why would the financial groups be against the adoption of a CIR? if it would allow them to secure their interests. If the financial groups were against the introduction of the CIR it is because they consider that on the contrary it would prevent them from assuring their interests.

On the other hand, lobbies are more effective in influencing other people's initiatives. Indeed, economic interest groups are more successful in forcing the failure of citizens' initiatives and sometimes even in launching counter-proposals. The strategy of the lobbies is to launch an initiative that resembles the original, but has quite different subtleties. This technique was used in 1978 against an initiative that aimed to lower taxes, the representatives launched a similar initiative but more moderate, this time the counter-proposal failed. In 1974, an initiative to limit spending on referendum campaigns was launched in California and

approved. But in 1976 the Supreme Court overturned the decision, ruling that using one's own money for campaigning was part of the constitutionally guaranteed right to free speech (Ibid, p. 60) It is no longer possible in the United States to limit the costs of campaigning for a citizens' initiative referendum. In 1990, an initiative was passed to require campaign financiers to come clean. So, during the campaign against the "Nickel per drink" proposal (Ibid), which was a tax on alcoholic beverages. To counter this initiative, the alcohol industry launched an initiative: "Penny a drink" whose goal was also to tax the drinks but the amount of the tax was lower than the proposal "Nickel per drink". It was mentioned that it was financed by the Beer Institute and the Wine Institute. This measure was very effective, the citizens knew who was behind the initiative, they understood the trap. But the industry has found a way to hide itself with the help of a fake name. In 1988 the tobacco industry launched an initiative to limit smoking under the name of an organization they named: "Californians for the Statewide Smoking Restriction's"(Ibid, p.61). Except that the real goal was the opposite of the one stated, they wanted the smoking restrictions to be relaxed. When the deception was discovered, the Californian Wellness Foundation and the Public Media Center published a pamphlet, in which the real motives behind the proposal were listed, as well as the names of the campaign's biggest financiers, all of whom were from the tobacco industry. The proposal was not accepted. A simple informational pamphlet countered a multi-million-dollar campaign. Lobbies can effectively influence citizens' initiatives. But they can't afford to do everything, because when an initiative is very popular, even using a large amount of money, it is not enough to influence the initiative.

To counter any form of manipulation, either by the traditional media or by social networks, the state can, as in Switzerland or California, distribute to each voter a brochure explaining the issues and arguments concerning the proposal. The latter is quite complete. In fact, it contains the full text of the initiative, the arguments for and against plus additional text for each side to respond to the arguments, and a concise summary. This brochure is the minimum necessary, the public debate should also take place in the media. In fact, until 1992 in the United States there was a law that obliged the various media of the time, such as radio and

television, to give time to the different camps so that they could submit their arguments to the citizens (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007: p.61). But this law was repealed. We can learn from this law and apply it to public service media.

The CIR could make it possible to cancel bills that have required many hours of work by representatives. It is a risk in effect, but even without a CIR, bills often fall through. And the work that has been done is not in vain, even if it is rejected, citizens can come back to their decision later. For example, it took three referendums for women's suffrage to be accepted in Liechtenstein (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 83). Beyond the fear that certain projects may be abandoned by the people, it is above all the fear that the representatives will lose their authority. This fear is not justified, because even if the CIR was in effect an element that participates in the decrease of the authority of the representatives, this decrease would be the consequence of more power for the citizens. Having representatives with strong authority is not an end in itself, but a means to govern when citizens have little power. Democracy is not just about the authority of representatives. To say that the CIR could lead to a loss of authority of the representatives, is to deny the fact that the citizens have long since lost all confidence in their representatives, which could explain the popularity of the CIR. Moreover, it would be rather the opposite, the CIR could strengthen citizens' trust in their representatives. Since if citizens do not vote against a law made by representatives, it can be considered as an implicit vote of confidence. Because in a representative democracy, citizens cannot express their support, they can only vote every 5 years. And the CIR will not bring us into a direct democracy, the role of representatives remains essential. In the United States in the states with CIR, there were 102 referendums held in 1996. In the same year representatives passed 17,000 laws. Even in the CIR states 99.9 of the laws are still passed by the representatives (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 83). what the CIR would produce is not a diminution of the authority of representatives, or a loss of their draft laws; the CIR prevents representatives from imposing laws that have no support among citizens. Representatives with the CIR must consider the will of the citizens. In the United States, for example, states with a CIR tax their citizens less than other states, and in a survey of Americans, the majority are in favor of lower taxes and

public spending (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 111). We can conclude that the CIR produces policies that are more in line with the will of the citizens.

There is a risk that citizens will be carried away by emotion just before a referendum. We can imagine that after a particularly horrible event such as a sordid murder, the citizens, driven by emotion, impulsively decide to reinstate the death sentence, for example. A simple measure that could curb this phenomenon is to introduce a delay between the initiative, the moment when a proposal is made, and the referendum, the moment when it is voted on. This delay of at least several months would avoid results biased by emotion. This risk is therefore quite minimal, especially since if citizens vote by listening to their emotions, just after an attack for example, it will be possible for them to reconsider their decision with another referendum.

An argument we hear everywhere concerning the CIR is that it would be used to restore the death sentence. To this we answer that if the citizens really want to reinstate the death penalty, since the people are supposed to be sovereign, there should be no problem. In a democracy the people are not right or wrong, the people decide. Anyone who argues that the majority should not be listened to on this point is in fact arguing for dictatorship. Especially since this argument is also valid for representative democracy. A candidate can very well put in his program that he will restore the death sentence, if he is elected the representative democracy will have then allowed the restoration of the death sentence. Should we then abolish representative democracy because it can be used to restore the death sentence? But more seriously, France was the last great European country to abolish the death sentence, but we know that already at the time of the French revolution many criticisms were made about it. Indeed, the National Convention had abolished the death sentence in 1795, then it was reinstated under the Restoration. Objectively, it was the elites who re-established the death penalty, even though it had been abolished by the people. But let's look at the United States, after two attempts to abolish the death sentence, the state of Oregon voted to abolish it in 1914, 67 years before France. Oregon then had other referendums to authorize it, then to abolish it again until 2011 when no proposal was made to reinstate it. The people are free to change their minds, and thanks to the CIR they

can. The island of Guam abolished the death sentence by referendum in 1979 and since then no proposal has been made on this subject (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 98). Finally, it should be noted that in the United States, although the death sentence is present in some states with a CIR, it is almost not applied, while states without a CIR apply it fully (Ibid), Texas is the state with the most people sentenced to death, and does not have the CIR for example. It can also be noted that in the European countries with a CIR, no referendum has been organized to restore the death sentence (Ibid, p.99). So, to say that the CIR is an open door to the reinstatement of the death penalty is true, because the CIR allows citizens to legislate and have the last word on representatives, however if the people do not want the death sentence then they will not reinstate it. If the death sentence is popular in a country, then with or without CIR, there is a good chance that the death sentence will be there.

But the example of Oregon makes you think. This back and forth between the abolition of the death penalty and its reinstatement presents a risk. The public debate could be captured by divisive issues, obscuring more pressing ones. In the worst case, representatives could use this ploy to divert the attention of citizens and pass freedom-destroying laws, for example. But the case of Oregon is quite extreme, because the issues are generally not revoted, with exceptions such as women's right to vote. And since citizens have a way to censor laws, this diversionary strategy makes no sense.

The CIR is not the best tool to increase voter turnout. In some cases, it can even contribute to decrease it. This is the case, for example, of the revocatory CIR. According to a study conducted on 31 states it is a decrease in participation of about 20% (Magni-Berton, 2019, p.133). How to explain this decrease? Let's imagine that you are a landlord and that you are looking for tenants, if you have the right to change tenants whenever you want, you will be less careful about the people to whom you rent. On the other hand, if you only have the right to change tenants every four years, you will be much stricter about who you rent to. The citizens having a way to fire the representatives at the slightest fault, the importance of the elections and for much decrease. However, if the votes for the CIR take place simultaneously with the elections of the representatives, then it can

help to increase the participation in the elections (Ibid, p. 134). Empirical studies show that citizens in direct democracy are more competent (Bühlmann & Bernhard, 2011), but it seems that they are not more interested in politics. In Switzerland the CIR gathers at each votation about 40% of the registered voters. A study of 94 countries on the effects of the CIR on the interest of citizens in politics shows that there are no effects (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 113). Because citizens are interested in specific subjects, and they become selective. This can be explained by the fact that citizens cannot have an opinion on all issues. The knowledge of the citizens about the subject on which they vote, and the interest in politics are the factors that make or break the participation of the Swiss in the referendum. The primary reason for abstention is therefore the belief that they do not have the knowledge required to participate in the vote. Also, the more votes there are, the less likely citizens are to participate, the CIR would be too demanding for the citizens, by asking them to go and vote often, it would decrease the participation in elections and votes. So, the referendums must be well distributed on the calendar to optimize participation. Another possibility to limit the phenomenon of lassitude is to increase the threshold of signatures required to launch a referendum, in order to limit the number of votes. Especially when elections and votes take place simultaneously. Another solution might be to limit votations, but even citizens who do not vote remain supporters of direct democracy (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 83). but it seems that the main reason of abstention during the citizens' initiative in Switzerland, is that the citizens do not feel competent on the question which was asked to them. The CIR is therefore not the best tool to increase participation in elections.

If effectively the participation decreases, the representation would be upset because it is the poorest citizens who withdraw early. A study conducted on countries that have implemented compulsory voting shows that when voter turnout decreases, inequality increases (Chong & Olivera, 2008). And on the contrary, when voter turnout increases, inequality decreases. This is due to the fact that the poorest citizens are the ones among whom abstention is the most common. One of the reasons may be that the poorest citizens misjudge the potential benefits of going to the polls, compared to the time it takes to vote.

abstention implies that citizens who vote voluntarily are not representative of all citizens. And since abstention is not evenly distributed among citizens, the poorest citizens as well as the least educated and those from minorities are overrepresented among abstainers (Chong & Olivera, 2008, p. 394), creating a bias where the wealthiest citizens are more represented. So, representatives abandon redistributive policies, because those who would benefit from these reforms do not vote. Representatives base their policies on the median voter, who is inevitably closer to the wealthy citizens if the poorest citizens abstain. Compulsory voting corrects this bias, in countries where it is applied inequality is inexorably decreasing (Ibid, p. 396). But compulsory voting takes away the freedom of citizens not to participate. If the CIR contributes to a decrease in voter turnout, then it would be a cause of inequality. Because the less participation there is, the more inequality there is.

The CIR could contribute to the questioning of the role of representatives. This could be problematic in the medium and short term. The risk is that the CIRs multiply, to the point that the idea of having representatives becomes obsolete. This could lead to a decrease in participation in elections. If indeed the CIRs multiply, we could see inconsistencies between several votes, or contradictions. Especially since the trust of citizens towards their representatives is quite low. The answer we can give to this is that in Switzerland they do not have these problems. The representatives have not disappeared from Switzerland, while the Swiss citizens have the power, in fact their CIR is constitutional, they could decide to get rid of the representatives but they do not. This proves that the representatives of the Swiss citizens are still useful for the Swiss. Besides, in Switzerland representatives can make counter-proposals (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 84). If the proposal does not go directly to parliament, then they have to submit it to a referendum, but they can also make a counter-proposal. So, the referendum will be about the proposal of the signatories or the counter-proposal. So, in Switzerland, surely the country with the best CIR, the representatives keep an interest. The fear that the CIR will make representatives disappear is unfounded, in any case if it happens it would be a first.

Concerning the elected representatives, the CIR, especially the revocatory CIR, would contribute to create a chaotic situation where the representatives are replaced too often. According to the people who express this criticism, a strong power is preferable especially in a crisis, and the ability of the people to revoke their representatives would create a situation where the power is not stable. The purpose of the revocatory CIR is not to be used, it is to dissuade. In countries where democracy works it is almost never used. The purpose of such a tool is to protect against abuses of power, to prevent elected officials from making electoral gifts, and to dissuade elected officials from pursuing policies that are too unpopular (such as advocating a war). since the CIR has the effect of aligning the policies of representatives with the desires of citizens, the argument of chaos does not hold. A chaotic situation could happen if the legislative CIR would not be usable, so the representatives would continue to make unpopular policies, and the citizens would be forced to use the revocatory CIR to show their disagreement as it is the case in Peru (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 83). In sum, the risk that the CIR will contribute to create a chaotic situation, by firing the representatives far too often, is extremely minimal. Once again, Switzerland does not seem to be a chaotic country, and recall procedures are rare.

Also, the CIR by giving power to the citizens, also gives them the possibility to make bad decisions. Bad decisions are decisions that are not in the collective interest. In the United States, states with a CIR tend to tax much less than other states (Berry, 2009). We can think that this makes the governments in question smaller than others, or that savings will be made in non-essential areas. But in reality, the size of government is unchanged from other states and savings are made in an area essential to all citizens. The lower taxes in these states result in education budgets that are smaller than the budgets of states without CIR (Ibid, p.14). The schools that are most affected by this are those in the poorest neighborhoods, as they will receive less aid (Ibid, p.32).

Among all types of local governments, only school districts experience a statistically or substantively significant differential in state aid between initiative and non-initiative states. Specifically, school districts in initiative states receive \$74 per capita less in state aid. This figure represents 18 percent of mean state aid to school districts (\$425 per capita). Moreover, school

districts account for approximately two-thirds of the total reduction in state aid to local governments in initiative states (Ibid, p.19)

Inexorably, the reduction of aid to schools in disadvantaged areas increases inequalities (Ibid, p.16). The reduction of taxes via the CIR, implies a reduction of an essential field which is education. However, in the opinion polls (Ibid, p.27), American citizens are in favor of increasing the education budget. While states with a CIR spend less on education than states without one. How to explain this gap between what citizens want, and what they get? Yet we have seen that the CIR was supposed to bring the politics of the representatives closer to the desires of the citizens. It seems that once again it is a question of median voters, because the poorest districts are those where the decrease in school aid is the most important. "If residents of high-spending districts are most likely to vote, it may be that the spending shifts in initiative states are consistent with the will of the most politically active citizens; that is, policy outcomes may reflect the preferences of the median voter if not the median citizen."(Ibid,) Thus, paradoxically, the CIR contributes to increasing inequality, inequality in access to a good education. Education being a primordial sector, this inequality will be reflected throughout the life of these young citizens.

We can then ask ourselves if most countries are right to introduce limitations to the CIR, like Italy and unlike Switzerland, especially on budgetary issues. The CIR would lead to budgetary chaos, as citizens would systematically reduce taxes to the point where the state would no longer be able to function properly. Concerning the budgetary question, we observe that the countries with a CIR know a decrease of their public debt. It seems that citizens are able to balance the budget of a country. In the United States, the modalities differ from one CIR to another, notably the threshold of signatures necessary to launch an initiative, which can vary from 2% to 10% of the registered voters. In states with a low signature threshold, the CIR has an impact on public spending of about 7% (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 74). Whereas in states with a CIR that requires a high signature threshold the impact on public spending is almost zero. Thus, the ease of launching a citizens' initiative is correlated with the level of taxes, the less

easy it is to launch an initiative the higher the taxes will be. in Switzerland too, the easier the CIR is to access, the lower the public expenses are. Cantons with a more difficult to access CIR have higher public expenses (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 113).

So, the CIR seems in effect linked to lower taxes. But does it produce budgetary chaos? It would seem not. One can even say that citizens are more competent than representatives in this field. We observe that the more likely it is that a government will lose the next election, the more the debt tends to increase (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 74). The short-term thinking of officials may explain these examples. In the Swiss cantons where the budget is subject to CIR, the latter spend 19 percent less than cantons that do not vote the budget via CIR (Ibid). The CIR also has the effect of lowering taxes, about 4% of public revenues. In the cantons where citizens have access to the budget, the public debt was 15% smaller than in the cantons where citizens do not have access to the budget via a citizens' initiative (Ibid). The fact that the CIR could contribute to lower public spending is not a valid argument, because public spending can be synonymous with redistribution. As we have seen in the United States, the decrease of the state budget with a CIR is affecting the poorest citizens. On the other hand, if the citizens take control of the budgetary issues. It will be much more difficult for representatives to give electoral gifts. When citizens have full control over the budget, every expenditure is carefully examined. For it is those who pay who are ultimately in the best position to make decisions : “No more big, expensive but useless projects or spending in support of active lobbies.” (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 174) It can be concluded that direct democracy allows the reduction of the public debt, and that giving citizens the possibility to intervene in the budgetary issue does not produce economic chaos. Italy is one of the most indebted countries in the world, while Switzerland's economy is doing very well. Yet Italy excludes the citizens from the budgetary issues. What could explain the positive effects of the CIR on a country's budget is that the issues become transparent, whereas the representatives like to make everything more complex, because they have to justify their presence. The effects of the CIR, when it is able to modify the budget, is to decrease both public spending and taxes, while

lowering the budget deficit. Since it is the people who must assume the consequences of fiscal and budgetary decisions, it is normal that they can have the last word on this question.

Finally, to conclude with the criticism of the CIR, we will talk about the argument that the CIR would block innovations, because citizens generally prefer the status quo. Once again, we can criticize the representatives, they are extremely reluctant towards the CIR, even though it is a democratic innovation. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the CIR has not allowed homosexual marriage in any country. The Californian example shows that the CIR is used to pass so-called progressive measures, such as the use of medicinal cannabis or measures taken for the protection of animals. Nevertheless, the practice of the CIR in the United States and in Switzerland shows that voters are extremely cautious, when they are not sure they tend to prefer the status quo. The CIR allows the same issue to be voted on several times, and the fact that voters are cautious is a good thing, because it means that if a proposal does not pass despite the fact that it is necessary, then the public debate has not been sufficient. In reality, it is easier to convince the representatives of the benefits of a proposal than the people, because of the small number of representatives compared to the citizens. So, of course, citizens tend to prefer the status quo when they are not sufficiently informed, but it cannot be said that the CIR blocks innovations, on the contrary. If an initiative is good and brings a real benefit for society, and that despite everything it does not pass, it is because the public debate was not sufficient to convince the people and that it is therefore necessary to try again later. Let's take a family, the father is the only one who can propose what kind of pizza the family can eat. But a change occurs and the mother can also propose a pizza. Every member of the family, including the children, can choose between the two proposals. The children's situation can't be worse, now that the mother can also make a proposal. The father's option is always available, the mother's is there to offer a variety of choices. If the mother's proposal is better, then it will be preferred. The situation of the children is only improving. The father represents the representatives, the mother represents the citizens who launch an initiative, and the children are the voters.

Like all democratic advances, the CIR is frightening, especially for the representatives who will see their power diminish at the same time as the power of the citizens will increase. They think that the CIR has many disadvantages. Its binary character would not allow to know precisely what the citizens want, to that we answer that the binarity is a strength for the CIR because it protects it from eventual manipulation. It would be manipulated by the lobbies, in the countries where the CIR is well applied the lobbies have difficulty in influencing the results, on the contrary it is easier for them to influence or bribe representatives than a whole people. The CIR could accentuate the gap between the representatives and the citizens, we think that on the contrary it can contribute to re-establish the trust of the citizens towards the representatives because fundamentally the CIR has the capacity to align the representatives with the desires of the citizens. Nevertheless, the CIR has many problematic defaults, first of all it can contribute in some circumstances to decrease the participation in the elections, and it tends to weary the citizens who participate for the most part only sporadically of the initiatives. Secondly, the CIR, when it allows to act on the state budget, can have unexpected negative consequences such as the increase of inequalities. Are these defects redhibitory or can we mitigate them?

Chapter 4 - Associate the CIR with a basic income

1) Introduction

The CIR as a counter-power is very interesting. It brings new political freedoms to citizens, such as the right to launch an initiative, or the right to vote on laws directly without intermediaries. In theory, political freedoms should allow every citizen to influence politics, and every motivated and gifted citizen to access positions of political responsibility (Scanlon, 2018, p. 76). But the value of political freedom depends on several criteria. The legal context is an important criterion, for example the value of the right to vote is determined by the absence of censorship laws (Ibid, p.90). For everyone must be able to express themselves freely, if only a single thought is allowed the right to vote becomes anecdotal. Also, political freedoms are interdependent, so the freedom to express oneself freely increases the value of the right to vote because then citizens have access to a wider spectrum of ideas (Ibid, p.92). The value of political freedoms is diminished when there is too much economic inequality among citizens. Economic inequality is therefore a big problem for democracy. When rich citizens monopolize the channels of expression, they prevent poor citizens from expressing themselves. What happens is that the richer citizens buy these channels, such as radios or newspapers, and put forward their ideas. The problem is that the poorest citizens cannot do the same. Economic inequality creates political inequality. Because poorer citizens do not have the same opportunity to influence politics as richer citizens. Another problem that creates economic inequality, much more difficult to correct, is that it destroys the fairness of democratic procedures. For example, one of the most important aspects of democracy is education, and if some citizens can provide a better education for their children, the right to vote loses its value (Ibid, p.89), because then some citizens have less chance to influence politics. Procedural fairness is weakened by economic inequality. Economic inequality translates into inequality of influence on politics, just look at the candidates who win the US elections, it is almost always those who have spent the most on their campaign. We must therefore act on economic inequalities, so that the political freedom brought by the CIR has a real impact, and drives positive change. And that the possibility to influence politics does not depend on the economic situation.

And basic Income would reduce economic inequality, by giving every citizen a sum of money. We propose to use this income to encourage citizens to participate in politics, especially the CIR. The objectives are to increase participation in the CIR and in elections simultaneously, and to reduce economic inequalities. Basically, voting in elections and voting in referendums is the sine qua non for receiving the Basic Income.

What are we talking about when we refer to Basic Income? And how is it different from existing redistribution policies?

2) what is the Basic Income?

In 1772, during a speech Robespierre expressed that the most fundamental right was the right to exist. According to him, society should guarantee this right.

"Society is obliged to provide for the subsistence of all its members, either by providing them with work, or by ensuring the means of existence to those who are unable to work. The indispensable help to the one who lacks the necessary is a debt of the one who possesses the superfluous. "

The text was adopted and a part of it was even included in the 1793 constitution. Unfortunately, this constitution was never applied. A year later Robespierre was guillotined. This event contributed to propagate the idea that the state should take care of its most disadvantaged members. The basic income is following this logic.

Basic income is a sum of money distributed to all members of a community in a defined area. It is distributed in cash, as this is the most efficient way to distribute the basic income. Some people may be excluded. Like prisoners whose imprisonment has a high cost to the taxpayer, which may exceed the amount of a Basic Income. Tourists who pay their taxes in another country, or even people in an irregular situation, such as people without papers, will not be entitled to it (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 25). It offers a huge freedom to citizens, the freedom to choose to not be employed. Unlike traditional redistribution policies that only target the poorest part of a community, the basic income is distributed without condition.

It is strictly individual. All individuals in a household are eligible, and the amount is independent of the household's situation. In traditional redistribution policies, the amount an individual can receive depends on the situation of the household (Ibid, p.34). For example, an adult may receive a higher amount if he or she lives alone than if he or she lives with other adults. This is understandable because the cost of living is higher for a person who has to pay rent alone. It is reasonable to make a differentiation. However, paying more to individuals who live alone is encouraging them to live alone, verifying that people live together is a difficult task. Since people who live together are somehow penalized by a lower income. In addition, cohabitation is becoming more and more difficult to control; marriages, for example, are more versatile than in the past. If we want freedom for all, it is better to encourage individuals to live together than to push them to live alone. The argument for differentiated household income is less interesting than the argument for undifferentiated household income. "A basic income is important for feminism and democratization precisely because it is paid not to households but individuals as citizens." (Paterman, 2004, p. 24) This is why basic income is strictly individual.

The universal character of the basic income promotes equality of opportunity. It provides a similar economic capital to everyone. The basic income therefore chooses equality rather than equity. We can ask ourselves if it would not be more efficient, from the point of view of reducing inequalities, to not distribute the same amount to the richest individuals as to the poorest. If we want to reduce inequality, shouldn't we focus on the poorest citizens? Critics of Basic Income use this argument to describe Basic Income as unfair. The problem is that if we decide to target the poorest populations, individuals would have to take steps on their own to benefit from this targeted income. However, people are not always aware of the benefits to which they are entitled, they may be ashamed, or they may simply be too shy. This is what is happening today with our anti-poverty policies. The paradox is that the basic income, by targeting all citizens, can help to reduce poverty more effectively (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 39). In addition, the human and administrative costs of targeting a part of the population are considerable. The basic income, being universal, has the capacity to help the

poorest citizens without stigmatizing them. It is paid to all citizens without their having to apply for it. Contrary to social welfare, where the citizens who benefit from it feel stigmatized. Many people refuse to apply for these benefits because they are afraid of this feeling. Also, decisions to include a person in a basic income that would target the poorest citizens, gives a place to arbitrariness and clientelism. With a universal Basic Income, we do not divide the population into poor and non-poor. There is no shame for the poorest citizens to receive what everyone else receives, and the procedure for distributing the money is simpler than if it had to be targeted to a part of the population. The Basic Income is indeed universal, the richest and poorest citizens are eligible for it. No resource test is required to receive it. In traditional redistribution policies, the higher the resources of individuals, the lower the aid. It is said that the distribution of aid is done *ex-post*, in other words, after the evaluation of individuals' resources. The basic income being universal avoids that people prefer not to work in order to continue to receive their aid, because even small salaries cancel the right to aid. It is partly for this reason that the basic income operates *ex-ante*, meaning that it is distributed without income verification.

Finally, it is free of obligation, so it is not necessary to be looking for work to have access to it. For example, with the current redistribution policies, people who leave their job of their own free will are not entitled to any help. Yet their situation is similar to those who get fired, they are both unemployed. Doing so only strengthens the negotiating power of the employers, because the state penalizes those who do not look for work or those who leave their jobs voluntarily, thus assuring that the employers always have employees, even if they pay the workers poorly. This constraint: "ensures that the worst employer, who pays the worst wages for the most degrading jobs, does not remain without employees as long as a man in full disposition of his movements is available" (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 46)

With a Basic Income, because it does not require people to be looking for work, no need to check if the individuals are really looking for a job or if they are just lazy. Only well-paying jobs will become attractive to individuals. Individuals

will be able to refuse low-paying jobs without fear of losing their Basic Income, because it is free of obligation.

It is crucial that the basic income is both non income-tested and free of obligation. As we have seen, its universal character allows us to free ourselves from the unemployment trap, because it allows us to make low-paid work interesting. And the fact that it is free of obligation allows to free from the employment trap, the individuals could resign without being afraid of not getting any help. These two features work together, one without the other would be able to make the situation worse. if it were not universal, the absence of obligation could then be a factor of exclusion, in fact an allowance free of obligation but subject to resource conditions would be like buying the silence of those who are in the unemployment trap. And without the absence of obligation, employers could lower wages and employees would be forced to accept to get the basic income. With these two features, the Basic Income would increase salaries. the universal nature of the Basic Income facilitates the acceptance of low-paid jobs. But since the Basic Income is free of obligation, only sufficiently attractive jobs will be accepted.

How can basic income reduce economic inequality?

3) How basic income reduces inequality

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights explicitly says in the article 25, that the right to live in dignity is a fundamental right: "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family". The basic income guarantees this right to all. France is one of the richest countries, if we look at its GDP, yet 14% of its citizens live below the poverty line, that is to say more than a tenth of the French population. Poverty degrades the existence of people both on a material and social level. It also degrades the economy of the country, because it excludes many individuals from participating in the creation of wealth. The basic income is the most effective tool to fight against poverty. Being universal, it does not create guilt or shame among the less fortunate. One of the strongest arguments for a Basic Income is its ability to

reduce poverty, and therefore economic inequality. Basic income is a response to poverty, which tends to get worse. In a democracy, the poorest individuals are not free because they do not have the material means necessary to exercise their freedom. The basic income would allow the poorest citizens to be free again, and to become interested and participate in politics.

The basic income is seen to be a way to stop working. But this is the opposite. Because the Basic Income aims to allow citizens to work in much better conditions. We can speak first of all of volunteering work. Volunteering is the use of one's own time in an unpaid activity. It differs from domestic work in that it can be performed outside the family setting. Its field of action is immense, it goes from the help to the most precarious individuals to the creation of collaborative site. The introduction of the basic income would result in a greater incentive for individuals to volunteer. People who are reluctant to start volunteering would have one more argument. Encouraging volunteerism can only lead to beneficial societal changes. This one would finally be valued. In fact, the basic income allows those who do unpaid work to continue to do it in good conditions. And many people know how to be useful with unpaid activities. Especially since on a national scale, the invisible work is considerable. The largest encyclopedia in the world, Wikipedia, for example, is maintained by volunteers, all the wealth that this encyclopedia has contributed to create is incalculable, yet in the eyes of the state participating in Wikipedia is not a productive work.

Volunteering has a fundamental role in the social fabric because it is an activity that focuses on others and brings people together. How can we reach out to others if we are preoccupied with our own survival? The basic income will undoubtedly allow citizens to practice volunteering with more serenity, offering a monetary compensation for this work done for free. Nevertheless, we should not think that the basic income is a salary for volunteering. Because it could encourage companies to delegate a certain number of tasks to associations or individuals, thinking that it is free labor.

Domestic tasks are also unpaid work, generally carried out by women, who must devote themselves to them full-time or combine them with their own jobs. Domestic work activities can be very varied, from taking care of a house, cleaning

and tidying up, to taking care of very young or very old people. domestic work is done mostly by women, 80% of women in the European Union who have a child spend about 4 hours a day on domestic work, and only 29% of men spend as much time as women (Raventós, 2007, p. 88). The case of Spain is even more striking, the men would devote an hour and a half to the domestic task against 4 hours and a half for women (According to a survey conducted on 46000 people between 2002 and 2003(Ibid)) Thus, a woman who takes care of her home is not paid despite the difficulty of the tasks she must perform, the basic income would reward this domestic work. A woman who wishes to devote herself to her home will be able to do so, while having a minimum income and without having a job. The Basic Income greatly facilitates part-time work, as well as career interruptions related to having children. So, the basic income would offer economic independence to women, this independence would allow women to have many more possibilities. the idea that the basic income is universal, prevents the head of the family from deciding alone what to do with it. Women would benefit from a basic income : “In relation with men, women would gain enormously with the introduction of a basic income, both in terms of income and freedom to choose” (VANDERBORGHT & VAN PARIJS, 2005, p. 68).

Women's participation in the labor market is lower than men's, as is their salary, which creates an asymmetry in the couple relationship. Women do not always dare to divorce for fear of losing their income during the transition period. During an experiment on negative income tax, where each member of a poor household received an allocation, the number of divorces increased. This could prove that a basic income would allow women who are no longer happily married to divorce more serenely, as they would then have a guaranteed income (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 307) The basic income will compensate for the lack of unpaid work. Whether it is volunteer work or domestic work.

Then, the Basic Income increases the negotiating power of workers. With the basic income, workers have a guaranteed income. This implies that they will be able to go on strike as long as necessary. We saw in chapter 2 that the syndicate could be a counter-power, if it had more economic power, and this is exactly what the basic income brings. Today the trade unions have strike funds in

order to be able to live during the days of struggle and thus hold social movements, but the employers know that once this fund is empty the strike will cease. So, with the basic income the strikes could last much longer. So, the balance of power between the strikers and the employers would be more balanced.

Basic income would also play an important role in negotiating salaries. By providing a living wage, the balance of power between employees and employers changes. Employees would be in a position to negotiate a better salary and better working conditions. Especially for the difficult and poorly paid jobs, these jobs are not valued, but individuals have no choice but to accept these jobs, and the bosses know it. Since there will always be someone willing to work for the amount of money offered, why raise wages? This is the reasoning of the bosses, a reasoning that relies on the precariousness of the least qualified workers. With a Basic Income, individuals will not be forced to accept these difficult, low-paid jobs in order to survive, so employers will be forced to raise wages in order to find workers. A Basic Income would also allow women to increase their negotiating power, and thus fight more effectively against salary inequalities. The guarantee of a basic income could also free women to speak out against sexist behavior in the workplace, as having a material safety net would reduce the fear of losing their jobs. The Basic Income drastically increases the negotiating power of workers and trade unions.

The basic income is a tool particularly adapted to the 21st century. Indeed, with the exponential increase of automation, work is becoming scarce. This trend is already underway and will continue. Robotization is so advanced that the old fantasy of driverless cars is coming true. Artificial intelligence has already proven that in some areas it is more competent than humans. Including the most technical fields like medicine. Work as we know it is being revolutionized, the transition period we are living in is going to be difficult. A basic income would be perfect to make this transition easier for individuals. How are we supposed to live without work? If Basic Income was born with the objective of overcoming poverty, especially among individuals who could not work such as those suffering from a physical illness. Tomorrow individuals will no longer be able to work, even those

who are in good physical condition, because they will no longer have work. Of course, new forms of work are starting to appear, especially linked to the emergence of the Internet, but citizens will need to be supported during this transition, which looks difficult.

The basic income reduces the fear of not having an income in the future, it is like a safety net for individuals. Encouraging risk-taking, it would be easier to launch projects, because they would no longer have to be profitable as soon as they are launched. The basic income, by considerably reducing the risks of starting an economic activity, would encourage self-employment. The basic income thus encourages the creation of risky activities, or those that are not profitable at the beginning of the creation of the activity. In Namibia, after a few months of experimenting with a basic income, unemployment has decreased and income has increased by 29%⁵. The reason for the decrease in unemployment and the increase in income is that the Basic Income has enabled people to start microenterprises. Traditional unemployment benefits have a flaw. When citizens receive these benefits, they tend not to accept jobs that pay slightly more than what they receive while unemployed. This is called the inactivity trap. By wanting to fight unemployment, we put individuals in a situation where it is not interesting to work. The Basic Income is cumulative with a salary, so it will be more interesting for citizens to accept jobs even with a low salary, than if they were unemployed. The Basic Income does not create a situation where professional inactivity is preferable.

On the other hand, it creates a situation where the reduction of work is not a handicap. Because the citizens who decide to reduce their working time, in the end, taking into account the basic income, will receive the same salary, more or less depending of course on the amount of the basic income and the amount of working time given up. This reduction in working time would be beneficial for people looking for work, because the reduction in working time should lead to the creation of new jobs. If part-time work increases, then new jobs will be needed to fill the gap. Part-time jobs are not attractive today because they do not offer

⁵ NAMIBIA. The miracles of guaranteed minimum income," *Courrier international*, April 28, 2010 : <https://www.courrierinternational.com/article/2010/04/29/les-miracles-du-revenu-minimum-garanti>

sufficient economic compensation. The basic income would make part-time work more attractive.

Another argument in favor of a basic income is that it would make citizens happier. Indeed, there is a strong correlation between income and the level of happiness of individuals, although as we have seen, beyond a certain amount, income is no longer really correlated. So, we are not saying that Basic Income will make all citizens of a society happier, but that for the poorest citizens Basic Income will undeniably be a source of happiness.

The basic income is fundamental, the autonomy it offers to citizens is more than necessary for a democratic society. It allows to break the link between work and money, the work which until now was not remunerated will be rewarded thanks to the basic income. It also offers a power of negotiating to the citizens, which would allow them to work in much better conditions. Citizens would finally be able to refuse dangerous and degrading work or work that is simply not paid well enough. And their negotiating power would be greatly increased. It offers individuals a safety net that allows them to take more risks. As we have seen, the basic income is a good tool to fight against economic inequalities. However, it suffers from a bad reputation, as its detractors accuse it of inciting free riding. And yet it allows to reduce the negative impact of the husbands' free riding on the women. It also encourages volunteering, and above all it helps to fight against poverty. Finally, to a certain extent they would make the individuals happier. All these elements allow us to say that it is an excellent tool to fight against inequalities.

4) The critics of basic income

As we have seen, the basic income is a good tool to fight against economic inequalities. However, it suffers from a bad reputation, as its detractors accuse it of inciting free riding (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 169). The basic income would above all allow people to stop working, so that these parasites would live at the expense of those who work. First of all, a life without work is not necessarily vain, one can find happiness in meditation, in the practice of an art or simply in

searching oneself. Indeed, the security offered by a basic income would allow citizens to practice fulfilling activities, such as studying fields that are not valued by the labor market. In particular philosophy or art which are not profitable activities in the short term, but whose practice can in the long term be a source of wealth creation.

Then the people who take advantage of the work of others to "enjoy their lives" did not wait for the basic income. In fact, we have talked about domestic work, which is generally the responsibility of women, and well, men, husbands, happily take advantage of women's work without paying them (Paterman, 2004, p. 98). In fact, free-riders take advantage of other people's work, but the basic income would solve a problem of free-riders, that of husbands who take advantage of their wives' work, and this problem is forgotten, although it is very present.

The husbands therefore live at the expense of their wives who take care of the ungrateful tasks. That is why there is massive free-riding in the household-by husbands. To say that a Basic Income would encourage free riding is not correct. Since it would rather reduce the free-riding of husbands among others. Especially since in all societies there have always been parasites, with or without a basic income. Critics of the basic income say that it will be used by surfers to surf all day, that it is a parasite behavior. But they forget to mention that the biggest parasitism has not waited for the Basic Income, it is the one of husbands towards their wives, and this parasitism there the Basic Income can fight.

Other critics think that dissociating work from money is complete nonsense. According to them, economic value comes from work, and the money that will be used to finance the Basic Income also comes from work. And they are right on one point, work creates value, the problem is that not all work is paid, even though it all creates value and wealth, domestic work is not paid, neither is volunteering. The basic income corrects this. On the other hand, they are not right to affirm that the financing of the basic income will necessarily come from work, we will see this point in detail later, the question of financing is certainly very debated, of course taxes are a track, but there are other more interesting in our opinion.

However, we can question the merchandization that Basic Income encourages, because by distributing a sum of money, we continue to convey the

idea that everything can be bought, including the goods necessary for survival. For example, we could distribute all the necessary things for survival, food, water and even housing. But two problems arise, the first is technical, it would be logistically very complicated to distribute these goods to citizens. The second is that we would lose a lot more than we mentioned above, for example invisible work would no longer be valued if we distributed food and water to everyone.

One of the detractors of the basic income is Bernad Friot, who defends what he calls the life wage. He calls the basic income the spare tire of capitalism. The lifetime salary is a salary that we receive from the age of majority until death, it depends on personal qualifications and can only increase. A bit like the civil service, where you pass a competition and are paid for your rank. There is no unemployment, and the salary is not linked to the job itself but to the person. The lifetime salary shares with the basic income the desire to break the link between employment and income. Proponents of both ideas agree that neither a Basic Income nor a Lifetime Wage will create laziness, but that it will enable citizens to invest more in the community. The point of divergence between the two ideas is the work market. The basic income would increase the bargaining power of workers against employers. Proponents of the lifetime salary believe that this is not enough, that the work market is the problem. The basic income does not, according to the supporters of the lifetime salary, have the vocation to emancipate from capitalism. In fact, Friot said in a conference that the basic income was a key element of capitalism⁶. The purpose of the salary for life is to recognize the political quality of producer of the individuals (Van Parijs & Jakse, p. 58), what would not allow the income, indeed the means of production and the conditions of its implementation remain in the same hands. In the hands of investors, of capital. Friot criticizes basic incomes for not changing capitalism; even with a basic income the labor market will remain the same, that is, an alienating machine. The basic income would be a medicine against the symptoms of capitalism but not a cure:

⁶ Conference excerpt available at this address: <https://youtu.be/lHujBHqNSBg>

Although it is not enough to meet this challenge, Basic Income does help us to face it, by offering a solution to unemployment that does not rely on the continuation of indefinite growth. It also addresses many other destructive aspects of capitalism, such as allowing workers to take a break before they burn out and give up jobs that don't make sense to them (Van Parijs & Jakse, p. 53).

Basic income is not conceived as a tool to fight capitalism, but rather as a tool to fight inequality. The lifetime salary has the great ambition to emancipate us from capitalism, but it requires a revolution. Whereas the basic income is thought as a transition.

Finally, we would like to discuss the morality argument, one of the criticisms of Basic Income is that paying individuals without a counterparty would not be moral. By counterpart, they mean that without work, the Basic Income would encourage idleness. This is probably the worst criticism. For on the one hand it is much more immoral to leave individuals in poverty, and on the other hand receiving an inheritance encourages idleness just as much. Distributing a basic income to individuals is by no means an act of generosity aimed at creating lazy individuals. Namibian Bishop Zephania Kameeta, who is a strong advocate of a Basic Income, uses as an example the exodus of the Jewish people in the desert, an event recounted in the Old Testament (Parijs & Vanderborcht, 2019, p. 50). During their flight from Egypt, they received manna from heaven, and this help did not make them lazy, on the contrary it enabled them to move forward. It is reproached to the basic income that it would create parasitism, but the researchers affirm rather that it would allow to reduce the parasitism notably the one within the home. It is also reproached to disconnect the individuals of the work, but once again the researchers affirm that on the contrary it would allow to work in better condition. Finally the basic income would not be anti-capitalist enough, and it is true that its objective is not the end of capitalism but rather a more equitable distribution of wealth.

On the other hand, we should not expect any manna from heaven to finance the basic income. But there are several possible ways of doing this, which we will look at.

5) How to finance the basic income

To finance the basic income, the solution that immediately comes to mind is to tax capital. We can, for example, eliminate tax loopholes and unnecessary exemptions. We can also set up a personal wealth tax, and do it in a way that is as progressive as possible. We can also tax companies, by including the tax in corporate taxes. Finally, we can tax legacies and gifts between people, it may seem unfair that a fortune is taxed more once it is left to others, but money coming from a legacy will be taxed less than money that comes from work and this too may seem unfair (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 245). We can also imagine that part of the economic surplus can be used to finance the basic income. But for this, it is necessary to nationalize the means of production. James Meade proposes that the enterprise be managed by the private sector, but that half of the shares of the enterprises belong to the state. In this way, half of the income created by the companies could be returned to the citizens in the form of income, and without the need to tax.

Another way is to use natural resources to finance a basic income. Using natural assets belonging to the state, it is to sell raw materials from non-renewable resources in order to finance a Basic Income. (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 248) For example, a country that has oil within its borders can sell it in order to redistribute the money. But for this, the state has to declare the oil as public property. Between 2010 and 2012 Mongolia used this process, thanks to the mining industry of the country. The state could distribute to all its citizens cash benefits. Unfortunately, unless you have huge resources like Saudi Arabia, a basic income cannot last long based on non-renewable resources. The solution to this problem is to use the sale of non-renewable resources to create a permanent sovereign wealth fund. The only state in the world to have used this process is Alaska. The Alaska Permanent Fund is financed by the sale of oil, and the money is invested worldwide. This fund allows to pay to the citizen an income which represents approximately 2% of the PIP of the state, that is 1200\$ (Ibid, p.250). Other funds have been inspired by the Alaskan model, but none of them pay

dividends to citizens. The huge disadvantage of this model is that it is not accessible to countries without natural resources.

A variant of this idea is to use renewable resources instead of non-renewable ones. The state could dispose of a country's renewable resources, such as soil. Then start renting it out to provide the money to distribute the basic income. The radio waves could also be rented by the state. The Sky also can be considered as a resource. This track would solve another of our problems, global warming. Indeed, the capacity to absorb the carbon dioxide emissions of the atmosphere, without producing damages, is not unlimited. We can then consider the atmosphere as a scarce renewable resource. The use of the atmosphere as a dumping ground for carbon dioxide emissions can be taxed. From this tax one could finance a basic income. And thus, encourage companies to pollute less while reducing inequalities.

We can also tax data. Internet giants like Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Amazon or Google all have more or less the same functioning. They provide a free service on the internet (except Amazon which is a store) to users, in return users provide a myriad of personal data. These personal data were at the beginning a means to improve the various services offered. But today they are mainly used to feed targeted advertising. Depending on your searches on Google, you will receive advertisements for products that are perfectly suited to you. A search engine like Google, knows more about you than you do yourself, it is for example able to predict a pregnancy even before the mother has the idea to do a test. So, this data is valuable, and it will be more and more valuable in the future. In the future, insurance will be entirely personalized, each person will pay for his insurance according to his behavior, behavior that will be tracked by the phone or smart objects and then transformed into data. This is why the value of data will continue to grow, many sectors will do like insurance and the data will be very valuable. This new Eldorado of personal data, we all contribute to it, without touching a cent, and the internet giants are becoming more and more giant. Some are richer than states. Personal data can be what petrol was to Alaska, an excellent way to create a savings fund and distribute dividends to citizens. We can also distribute the benefits directly to the citizens, but by doing so we encourage individuals to reveal

themselves more and more on the internet in order to create personal data. Taxing data is a very viable solution to finance a basic income.

It is important to note that at the beginning of the basic income, it can be quite partial. What is meant by partial is that it will only allow a single person to live. The advantage of this approach is that it is not necessary to find all the funds to start promoting the Basic Income. We can start now with a partial basic income. This avoids the chaos that would be involved in the distribution of income, a full Basic Income would greatly improve the lives of adults living together, because it is individual, and on the contrary it could worsen the financial situation of single-parent families. The risk is to have to deal with inflation, if we do not go through a partial basic income. Because if a basic income is distributed all at once, without any transition, the prices of current consumer goods might increase. The same is true for housing, where landlords, faced with a new demand, will not hesitate to raise rents. The partial basic income allows for a transition, which does not upset either the rents or the consumer products. So, if we want to avoid that the poorest households see their situation worsen, it will be necessary to keep a minimum of social assistance at the beginning. A basic income at a lower level can greatly improve the lives of the disadvantaged, while moving directly to a full basic income could worsen the lives of the disadvantaged. On the other hand, even a partial Basic Income is still emancipatory. According to Van Parijs, moving directly to a full Basic Income would be irresponsible (Van Parijs, 2019 p.275).

The criticisms on the basic income are not relevant, the most relevant remains that on the question of the financing. There are many solutions for financing a Basic Income, and since we should also start with an incomplete Basic Income, it is not true that financing a Basic Income is impossible. We are not in the realm of utopia; Basic Income is perfectly feasible. It was important to look at ways to finance Basic Income, because obviously the strongest criticism of Basic Income is the question of financing. Basic income is an excellent way to bridge economic inequalities among citizens. But why should we distribute it based on political participation? Wouldn't that distort the basic income?

6) The combination of CIR and basic income

It is necessary that the basic income be distributed according to political participation, that the Basic Income not be distributed to citizens who do not vote, and that it be distributed in part to citizens who vote sporadically, and that it is distributed entirely to citizens who do not miss any vote. Because as we have seen the CIR can have a negative effect on participation in elections (Magni-Berton & Egger, 2019, p. 133). But the CIR can also cause a phenomenon of multiplication of the citizens' initiative and that can contribute to create lassitude among the citizens, in Switzerland the average of participation in the initiative is only 40% (Verhulst & Nijeboer, 2007, p. 83). A high participation for elections but also for citizen initiatives is absolutely essential to reduce inequalities (Chong & Olivera, 2008, p. 406). This is the reason why we propose to give the basic income to the citizens according to their participation, to drastically increase the participation in the elections and in the citizen initiatives. Because we know that the poorest citizens are the ones who tend to vote the least in elections (Ibid, p.394). The implication is that the median voter will be more affluent than the average, and this is problematic. It is absolutely necessary that the median voter is representative of all the citizens, the countries which set up the obligatory vote understood it very well. Representatives will therefore tend not to promote redistributive policies, since those who would benefit the most from them do not vote. The idea is that high participation translates into better representation of society's desires. And since the non-voters are the most disadvantaged, including them in the vote would support redistributive policies, whether for elections or citizen initiatives. In Fiji social spending increased after the adoption of compulsory voting, in three years social spending increased from 16.2% to 17.1% of the PIB (Ibid, p.396). Although there is no evidence of the consequences of compulsory voting on the CIR, as countries with a CIR have not enacted compulsory voting, nevertheless we can assume that the effects would be a better representation, and that initiatives advocating more redistribution or social justice would be favored (Ibid). Basic income would greatly encourage the poorest citizens to vote, and this

could only be beneficial to reduce inequalities. The reason why the voters who would benefit the most by voting tend not to vote, is that they think the transaction costs tend to be extremely high, compared to what he could get out of it (Chong & Olivera, 2008, p. 392). Furthermore, the marginal impact of the vote of one single voter, especially in non-urban areas, is perceived, true or not, as inconsequential, which ends up biasing the cost-benefit calculation of individuals against voting (Ibid, p.393). the belief that a single vote will not change the final outcome of an election or a vote in a citizens' initiative is therefore more prevalent among poorer individuals. Individuals do not adequately assess the positive externalities of voting outcomes because they are typically not internalized in the utility functions of the voter. In this context, compulsory-voting mechanisms have been encouraged to make voter turnout more representative of the democratic process. but there is a nuance, the countries that have opted for compulsory voting are divided into two categories, those whose abstention is strongly discouraged and those whose abstention is punished. in the first case, citizens who do not vote can no longer participate in the next election, or are slightly penalized if they do not justify their abstention. This is the case in Italy and Mexico, there are no sanctions, but social pressure is exerted, the Italian non-voters have a hard time finding a place in a nursery for their children for example (Ibid, p.398). In Australia also non-voters have to justify themselves, many justifications are accepted such as having been abroad, or being a member of a religion that prohibits voting or another reason that prevented citizens from voting (Ibid). And in Singapore non-voters are excluded from the electoral list, until they justify their absence at the polls (Ibid). theoretically these countries have compulsory voting laws but the penalties for not voting are not dissuasive enough. And in the second case, abstainers receive a fine. this is the case in Uruguay, where non-voters receive fines, to pay them the procedure is very restrictive (Ibid). this is also the case in Greece where non-voters are penalized because it becomes difficult for them to obtain a passport or a driving license (Ibid). Finally, in Bolivia the sanctions are the hardest, the voters receive a card, without it they cannot withdraw money from the bank (Ibid). However, we notice that inequality decreases only in countries that distribute fines to abstainers (Ibid, p.404). It is

therefore necessary that citizens feel obliged to go and vote for the compulsory voting system to be effective. In effect, in countries that have compulsory voting laws, but do not distribute sanctions, there is no real change in the distribution of wealth (Ibid, p.406). This can be explained by the fact that these countries do not encourage enough citizens to go and vote in sufficient numbers so that the representation is that of all voters. While countries that sanction non-voters see an improvement in their wealth distribution (Ibid). This is probably because the representation of all voters is better. What we can learn from the effects of compulsory voting is that it allows for a better distribution of wealth, provided that there is a sufficiently compelling element for citizens to take compulsory voting seriously. As is the case in countries that distribute a fine. Because the citizens, as we have seen, do not go to vote because they think that their vote will not change much and that it is useless because they will not gain anything. But with the fines the calculation changes, if they don't vote they will lose money, which is much more encouraging to vote. But we can do even better than compulsory voting, in fact the idea of losing money is strong enough to motivate citizens to vote. So, the idea of earning money should be just as strong, if not stronger. Indeed, by distributing the basic income to citizens according to their participation, not only do we ensure that citizens will vote massively, which will lead to a better representation of all voters, which will lead to a better distribution of wealth. But we also make sure to reduce inequalities at the root with the basic income. If the poorest citizens do not go to vote it is because they believe that the potential benefit is not interesting, but with the basic income the calculation is upset, so it will be more interesting for them to go to vote. It will be more interesting for them to go and vote, even if they don't expect any results. It is essential that the poorest citizens participate in the elections, so that the median voter is representative of all citizens. And that redistributive policies are enacted. The Compulsory Voting Study shows that when citizens are forced to vote, the poorest people start voting. The median voter then prefers redistributive policies. The effect of compulsory voting is to improve income distribution (Chong & Olivera, 2008, p. 406). Except that instead of a law to force citizens to vote, we propose that voting gives them access to a basic income. The result will be the same, and it will even encourage

more citizens to vote. But why not implement a mandatory voting policy, and in parallel implement a basic income policy. We could do that indeed, but we also have to take into account the CIR. As the CIR can increase abstention, it is necessary to encourage citizens to vote, to counterbalance the negative effects of the CIR on participation. Moreover, let's imagine that the CIR is adopted as well as a compulsory voting policy, then citizens would be obliged to vote at every citizen initiative. But we have seen that one of the reasons for abstention in Switzerland concerning citizen's initiatives, Switzerland has an average of 40% for each initiative, is that the citizens do not feel sufficiently knowledgeable about the issue. So, if we force citizens to vote in every vote, it is very likely that with fatigue the results will become less relevant. We want citizens to participate in every initiative, and that takes time to learn about it, so a positive incentive like a basic income is better than a negative incentive like a fine. Another reason for distributing a Basic Income to citizens for their participation in various votes is that the Basic Income should be distributed to all members of a community in a defined area, but how to choose the criteria for this community membership, the vote is the ideal candidate to be the criterion that allows to grant the basic income.

The CIR must so have a high turnout, a high turnout of voters is essential. That is why we must make the CIR necessary to obtain the basic income. Because with a direct democracy mechanism like the CIR, citizens are no longer divided into abstainers and voters. A third category appears, the selective citizens. The latter choose to participate according to the votes that interest them. These voters are those who do not vote because they are afraid of not being competent on the issue. By doing so, they think they are doing the right thing, but in reality, they are biasing the representation of all voters. It is necessary that the median voter is representative of all voters to reduce inequality. In Switzerland we observe this phenomenon, a small part votes in every referendum, another small part does not vote at all, and finally a very large part that votes by selecting the referendums that interest them. The fact that citizens choose the referendums that interest them also problematic for another reason, because it can lead to a situation where abstentionism has less value. A proliferation of forms of participation can lead in practice to more inequality. This is the so-called paradox of participation. The

more opportunities citizens have to participate in decision-making, the greater the inequality between those who benefit and those who do not. And as for the elections, the citizens who tend to vote less are the less fortunate, the decisions taken will be biased because the median voter will not be representative during the votes. One can explain the abstention of the less fortunate citizens during the referendums, by a weariness due to numerous votes. In fact, the elections of representatives are rather rare and participating in them is not so constraining, whereas with the CIR it is different, the votes can multiply if no restrictions are put in place, and thus weary some voters, especially the poorest, who are the part of the population to be wearied the fastest. If a segment of the population tends to vote less, this will have a large-scale effect. In France, for example, it is necessary to register on the electoral lists, which favors the sedentary, because those who tend to move often, the young, neglect to register, so the elderly vote much more than the young and political decisions are impacted. Education and income also appear to be more important predictors of referendum participation than in countries where direct democracy instruments are less important. Disadvantaged citizens who refrain from participating in referendums also refrain from participating in elections in the representative system. It is therefore necessary that the basic income be distributed according to the participation in the election, but also in the votes. Because abstention is very problematic for elections but also for votes. A CIR accompanied by a basic income will be much more efficient than a CIR alone, at least to reduce inequality.

Distributing the Basic Income in exchange for participation in votes would have several positive effects. For example, the benefit of having a large turnout in each referendum is to have results that are not biased, not only in the sense that the result would be more representative. Indeed, some countries with a minimum quorum for validating referendums, supporters of the status quo, the citizens who vote no, instead of campaigning against the proposition, tend not to talk about the referendum to avoid reaching the quorum. The objective of this maneuver is to prevent the quorum from being reached so that the referendum does not take place. Let's imagine a citizen's initiative to authorize homosexual marriage, the people who are against it have to avoid talking about it so that few

people will mobilize and the quorum will not be reached. But if we distribute the basic income to the citizens who vote, this technique will not be sufficient. When it could have passed. The result is then biased, a proposition that might have been a societal advance could not be voted on because there was not enough participation. If we distribute a basic income in exchange for participation in the CIR, this strategy will no longer be effective, because it will no longer be sufficient to avoid a quorum. The citizens to obtain the basic income will make the effort to participate. This said, having a participation quorum is generally more of an obstacle than a help, Switzerland does not have one. Another positive effect is that the higher the participation, the more competent the citizens will be. Since the CIR makes citizens more politically competent, encouraging citizens to vote often can only increase their competence and radically transform the public debate. With the emergence of social networks, citizens will be able to exchange, discuss and debate, this is already the case but with the CIR these exchanges will take a truly political aspect. For that the CIR has the effect of making citizens more competent in politics, but to become more competent it is necessary that citizens participate. Without compensation, negative or positive, the poorest citizens will participate less, they will not be as competent as the rest of the population, which could create additional inequality. This can lead to a snowball effect, the less the poorest citizens participate the less competent they are, and the less competent they are the less they want to participate. The first cause of abstention in Switzerland is the fear of not being competent on the issue. And the more competent the citizens are, the more appropriate their decisions will be. A Basic Income would attract not only the poorest citizens, but also selective voters. It is the selective voters who participate in referendums only if they are interested in the issue that a Basic Income could encourage to participate more. In this way, we can ensure a high level of participation in each vote, so as to have increasingly competent citizens, and a representativeness that provides unbiased results.

Finally, by distributing the basic income in exchange of the participation to the CIR, it allows to counter the argument that the universal income is distributed for doing nothing, because the minimal condition to benefit from it is to

participate to the political life. The image of the surfer who receives the basic income, and who spends his time surfing will have to evolve, he will always be a surfer but if he wants his basic income, he will have to be above all a citizen, a citizen who votes. Paying citizens for their participation may seem strange, but it is forgetting that by voting we participate in creating a better representation of the general opinion of the citizens, so we can consider the action of voting as an essential information sharing. We are used to paying for various forms of information, so it doesn't seem crazy to receive an income in exchange for information like this. The main interest of combining the basic income and the citizens' initiative referendum is to increase participation in elections and initiatives. Although if the CIR works properly as in Switzerland it should not have a negative effect on the participation in the elections, nevertheless even if the CIR does not impact the participation in the elections which is not sure, it is necessary that the participation in the initiatives is also high. This is why the CIR must be associated with the basic income.

The worst disadvantage of the CIR is that it can potentially contribute to a decrease in participation, but by combining it with the basic income we avoid this problem. If we hope to reduce inequalities, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a strong participation in elections and votes. Basic income is an excellent way to reduce inequalities, and CIR is an excellent counter-power. In order for the redistribution of wealth to be as effective as possible, it is crucial to increase participation in elections and citizens' initiatives. To this end, the basic income should be distributed according to the participation of citizens in elections and referendums. In order to create an incentive at least equivalent to the fines that have shown positive results in improving the redistribution of wealth. Citizens can only benefit from association of the CIR and the basic income, the more they participate the more effective they will be in participating in politics, and the old idea that people are not capable of participating in political decisions will be buried under the blatant competence of citizens. Also, we have seen that used together they allow to increase participation drastically. But what are the risks if we combine them?

7) the risks of associating the CIR with a basic income

The most obvious risk is that citizens will vote blindly for the sole purpose of obtaining a Basic Income. Like clocking in and out of a company, or showing up to school just to keep getting the scholarship, the idea of a positive incentive could do exactly the opposite of what it was designed to do, citizens wanting to vote only to get the universal income would do no research and vote at random. The results of the vote would then be biased, as citizens would vote without information or discernment. Nevertheless, this criticism is not founded, because with a negative incentive like the fines, in countries that have opted for compulsory voting, citizens do not vote randomly. Why would it be different with a positive incentive? On the contrary, countries that have opted for a negative incentive, provided that this incentive is strong enough, have convincing results concerning the redistribution of wealth. A positive incentive can therefore only give even better results.

Furthermore, this objection is also valid for representative democracy, where a part of the population may vote blindly in elections. In countries that have chosen compulsory voting, citizens do not vote blindly when they are forced to do so. Compulsory voting reduces inequalities in countries where it is practiced. Distributing basic income in exchange for participation is a better option for citizens than being fined for not voting, so one can assume that if citizens do not vote blindly when forced, they will not vote blindly when rewarded either. Distributing money rather than taking it out, also has the advantage of helping the poorest citizens to live. Let's take an example, a school that has trouble filling its classrooms, in the first case we distribute a fine to the absent students, and in the second case we distribute money to the present students. In which case the students are more attentive? Probably in the second case, because the students who don't want to go to class won't get money because they are not present, while in the first case the students who don't want to go to class will be penalized. In the first case the students don't really have a choice, because nobody likes to lose money, but in the second case they have the choice to go to class and earn money, but if they decide despite the reward not to go to class then they don't lose or earn anything. The situation is therefore more advantageous in the second case,

especially for students who absolutely do not want to go to class. On the other hand, citizens might feel infantilized, as some citizens consider that voting is a right, and so granting them a Basic Income in exchange for their participation turns the right to vote into a duty. Nevertheless, individually, the Basic Income and the CIR reinforce the non-profit associations, so we can think that by uniting them, it will allow even more citizens to have an associative life, or to increase the social capital of many citizens. So, the risk of attracting citizens who consider the CIR only as a means to obtain the basic income, and counterbalance by the immense benefit of considerably strengthening the social fabric. On the other hand, citizens who do not wish to participate in voting or elections will be penalized because they will not be able to benefit from the Basic Income. Even if the situation of those who do not vote is neither negative nor positive, they are still deprived of the basic income.

This is very problematic, especially if it is those who need it most who refuse to vote. But with compulsory voting, the fine system means that these citizens would have to pay, so it's the same thing. We believe, however, that a positive incentive will be strong enough to encourage the poorest citizens first, as they are the ones who need a basic income the most.

To associate these two ideas is also to take the risk of bringing together the detractors of the CIR and the Universal Income. Not encouraging citizens to vote, whether through fines or basic income, is only beneficial for the richest citizens. But it is precisely these citizens who own the vast majority of the media. As for the CIR, it is the representatives who do not wish to benefit from it. So, to put together the CIR and the basic income is to be sure to have a strong opposition from the media and the representatives.

Another risk is that having to vote to benefit from the basic income could distort it. Indeed, the Basic Income is unconditional, yet having to participate in the CIR to obtain it is a condition. The basic income is indeed unconditional, no need to be looking for a job to get it unlike unemployment benefits. The theorist of the basic income, Philippe Van Parijs, specifies that this income cannot be distributed to all without distinction, there is a basic condition: "Its beneficiaries must be members of a given community and territorially defined. In our

interpretation, this condition implies fiscal residence rather than permanent residence or nationality." (Parijs & Vanderborght, 2019, p. 25) Paying taxes in a country would give the right to this basic income, and this allows not distributing it to tourists and illegal immigrants. We consider that voting is just as important as paying taxes for a citizen, so distributing the Basic Income on the condition of political participation does not distort the Basic Income. Voting could therefore be the common denominator that defines the members of a community in a given territory. By participating in votes and elections, one proves on the one hand that one is a citizen and on the other hand that one is interested in the country in which one is. Is this not a good way to define the members of a community? Of course, it may seem restrictive to have to vote in every election, and in as many votes as possible, but this solution allows us to avoid setting up a mandatory voting system with fines. And fines don't have the advantages of a basic income, in terms of fighting inequality. Some refuse to accept that a basic income can be subject to a condition as we propose (Paterman, 2004, p. 94). They compare Basic Income to the right to vote, so with the right to vote citizens are free to participate, not to participate or to choose when to participate. If citizens are forced to participate in politics in order to obtain the Basic Income, what to do with those who will not participate in politics? One solution would be to count blank votes in elections and in citizens' initiatives, so that those who do not want to participate can still receive the Basic Income. If the number of blank votes is too high, it means that the communication of the initiative was not good, or that the initiative should be modified. Especially since we have seen that citizens abstain from participating in the initiative when they do not feel competent on the issue, the basic income will motivate citizens to go and vote even if they do not feel competent on a subject, and will vote blank to receive the basic income anyway. But if it is the act of voting that bothers them, then in effect they won't get the Basic Income. Our solution requires efforts from citizens, but as Thucydides said, we have to make a choice between ease and freedom. Especially with the technology that are internet and blockchain the vote will be more and more accessible as we will see.

One aspect that may create difficulties if the number of votes increases is the organization. Also, we recommend voting by internet so that the action of voting is the least restrictive possible. Because the CIR must not be time-consuming, it is essential to allow all citizens to participate. If citizens can vote by internet, then the feeling of lassitude caused by the initiatives will be reduced. Indeed, voting in a traditional way, that is to say going to the ballot box physically, is quite constraining and time consuming. And when you are abroad, it is even more restrictive. For citizens who work all week, having to go and vote on the weekend can be unpleasant, especially since it can be crowded depending on the time of day you go, it can take a long time due to the large number of citizens. It is clear that with the traditional way of voting, if we organized voting every month, there would be a great lassitude to go to vote, even with a positive incentive. In effect, the countries that have opted for compulsory voting do not have a CIR, so we do not know the impact of a negative incentive on citizens who should vote every month. This is why it is important to make voting as easy as possible in order to limit to the maximum a potential lassitude of the citizens.

the binding nature of the vote is one of the elements that puts off the poorest citizens, having the feeling of wasting time especially for a subject that may not concern them. But voting on the internet is still scary, it is rightly considered not reliable enough. Internet voting is a vote that is carried out remotely. Estonia was the first country in the world to adopt electronic voting. You can vote at home or in a public place, you just need to be connected to the internet. It is necessary to use an identifier and an access code, these are strictly personal, some countries have opted for a digital identity card to facilitate this approach. Internet voting has many advantages. First of all, it facilitates the organization, in effect it would allow a much faster counting of votes since it is digital the result is almost instantaneous. The result obtained would be much more reliable, because the risk of human error would be eliminated. And the ease of use would be so important, that it could help to increase participation. Indeed, the access to the vote would be easier for people with disabilities, for people living abroad. We have seen that young people tend to move more than older people, and therefore they

are less registered on the electoral lists, and well with the Internet voting young people could much more easily vote being much more used to this technology.

Nevertheless, Internet voting has its drawbacks. Indeed, the vote by Internet is not 100% reliable, being based on several electronic system, computer flaws can exist and be exploited by malicious individuals, or by a foreign government. Especially since the personal computers of individuals are not for the most part, secure. Another risk is that if a data leak occurs, we could know exactly who voted for whom. This is problematic in times when data is used against us. Moreover, if voters stay at home to vote, they could be pressured by a member of their entourage to vote for a candidate, while the classic vote allows to be isolated when voting. In the same way, since we can vote in front of witnesses, thanks to Internet voting, vote buying is possible, a party would pay citizens to vote for it and pay them in return for the proof that the citizen has indeed voted. But this argument is not very plausible, in a context where the basic income exists. Indeed, it would be necessary to pay more than the Basic Income to convince citizens to sell their vote, which is not profitable. Finally, for people who are not at ease with digital technologies, this could represent a significant brake. A new technology could correct the flaws of Internet voting. Indeed, it is the Blockchain. It is a technology that offers a lot of advantages, and that is revolutionizing many sectors, we compare the blockchain in terms of impact on the future way of life to the internet :” By checking data at the input and avoiding malicious actors, it increases the level of knowledge gained from the data. In terms of usage cases, blockchain combined with data analytics has the potential to change almost every market.” (Verma, 2021, p. 997) it is undeniable that blockchain will play a role in our democracy, to vote remotely it is the perfect tool. This technology keeps the history of all exchanges between users, from its creation to the last exchange. This database can only be modified by adding new data, new blocks to form a chain of blocks, a Blockchain. Because of this, the Blockchain is unforgeable, the risk of fraud or identity theft is almost entirely eliminated: "Blockchain technology brings a high level of reliability, trustworthiness, and veracity to data." (Verma, 2021, p. 998) Another characteristic that makes the Blockchain safer is its decentralized aspect that allows all users to have a copy of the Blockchain, so everyone can

consult it and verify its validity: "The merit of blockchain is that it allows for a transparent system and records data of votes are unchanged." (Ibid, p.1000) So, the blockchain offers the advantage of being transparent, we can compare this to an open source software that allows everyone to check the code, this allows to check if there is no hidden function to spy on the user for example. This technology could allow us to vote online without fear, and thus enjoy the many benefits of online voting without its most problematic drawbacks. The time saving and the economy of means for the organization of the votes or the elections is amazing : "The time it takes to hold an election and declare the results is reduced due to the use of less labor with electronic voting based on blockchain" (Ibid) The Blockchain has given incredible projects in the field of finance, it has been possible to create a currency without creating a debt correlated to it, such as the famous Bitcoin. The Blockchain also allows to automate tasks, it is what we call intelligent contracts called "Smart-contract". It is already used in the field of insurance; these smart contracts can automatically reimburse customers for a cancelled flight. If we decide to vote via the Blockchain we could use the Smart-contract, which would allow us to distribute directly to the citizens who voted their basic income and this without delay. Thanks to these technologies, it will be very simple to vote, we will be able to vote even when we are abroad. The simplicity of use will be a factor in increasing participation. However, we suggest not abandoning the ballot box completely, not only so as not to exclude citizens who are not comfortable with this way of voting, but also for citizens who might be pressured by their entourage, this way of voting could allow them to make their choice in complete discretion.

Associating the CIR and the basic income will not make the citizens vote blindly, at least not more than if they were given a fine. Except that the basic income improves the situation of citizens, while fines worsen it. This incentive can be misinterpreted as an infantilization of citizens, especially by those who consider the act of voting as a duty. Citizens who do not vote are problematic, because they will not be able to receive the Basic Income, but if we take into account the blank vote, this should allow those who do not want to vote to receive the Basic Income. If we associate the CIR and the basic income, we take the risk

that these two ideas are rejected at the same time, especially since distributing the basic income according to the political participation notably via the citizen initiative could distort the basic income. Although in reality it remains unconditional. Finally, the organization of the initiatives and the distribution of the basic income can be problematic. But with blockchain technology, not only will it be easier to vote, but the distribution of the basic income will be done automatically.

We have seen the limits of such an association, now we will see how the CIR and the basic income are compatible to increase the civil rights.

8) Basic Income and CIR: a good combination to increase democratic rights

The CIR and the basic income would make a good team, we can say that they have the same objective: the implementation of pre-distribution programs. We can define pre-distribution with the help of a more familiar concept, redistribution. Redistribution aims to reduce inequalities by using ex-post transfers. For example, family allowances, which aim to help the most disadvantaged families, are financed by taxes. It is called ex-post because it tries to reduce inequalities that already exist. While a pre-distribution policy would have been to build more schools and libraries in the neighborhoods where there are more families in difficulty. In order to strengthen the individual capacities of the children of these families. These types of policies are called pre-distribution, because they try to reduce inequalities at the root (Merrill, 2018). It is also a fiscal transfer, but ex-ante. In addition to being pre-distributional policies, CIR and Basic Income also promote other pre-distributional measures.

Basic income can be seen as part of the republican conception of pre-distribution. The latter aims at strengthening the external resources of individuals (Ibid,1338). So that everyone has enough resources to guarantee their autonomy. Given that capitalism has created a great concentration of wealth, correcting inequalities with ex-post payments to the most disadvantaged individuals is like

pouring a drop of water into the Mediterranean Sea. Economic inequalities tend to become political inequalities, and the Basic Income is a response to this. Correcting inequalities with an ex-ante payment, that is, giving money before inequalities become too big.

But Basic Income can also be part of the liberal-egalitarian conception, which aims at strengthening the capacities of individuals (Ibid, p1334). Basic Income allows citizens to free up their time to learn about the subject that interests them. Or for citizens who have time, the Basic Income can allow them to finance training, courses or to buy books. The CIR can also fit into this conception of pre-distribution. Indeed, empirical literature has shown that direct democracy increases the political capacity of individuals (Marc Bühlmann, 2011). One can also consider that at each referendum, individuals learn more about the subject, which increases their knowledge. Such a gain in competence among citizens is not negligible.

Finally, as we have seen, a basic income drastically increases the negotiating power of workers, and also strengthens the power of the trade unions. This is what the democratic conception of pre-distribution recommends, to reinforce the collective capacities of individuals. In effect, democratic pre-distribution aims to transform the rules of the market to put forward the interests of each individual. And one of the solutions it advocates is precisely to strengthen the role of the trade unions. Democratic pre-distribution theorists believe that low wages are largely the result of an asymmetry between high-skilled workers and others, who represent the majority. It is therefore necessary to increase the negotiating power of this majority, and the basic income would allow this. The CIR allows the citizen to make proposals and to vote on them, it allows to reinforce the negotiating power of the citizens in front of the representatives.

Basic income coupled with CIR can act to strengthen the external capabilities of individuals, that is, the wealth of individuals. But they can also strengthen internal capacities, as individuals practicing politics with the CIR gain knowledge and political expertise, and the basic income allows them to free up time to learn or to finance their learning. Finally, the negotiating power of

individuals increases with the Basic Income and the CIR. All these elements make these two tools a very good team to fight inequalities.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

In France since the creation of democracy in the country, there was already no counter-power. This democracy was thought to give the least possible power to the citizens. The people would be unable to take part in the decisions that concern them, unable to understand what the general interest is. The people would be dangerous, because manipulable, attracted by extreme thoughts. The people had a say in Athens because the city is much smaller than a country, but now that democracy is spread over a vast territory the people have no say. They need representatives, who do not represent them in age, social origin or sex. The representatives, in order to fulfill their duty, must be as free as possible. The citizens can neither make them leave, nor force them to keep their commitments. In truth the French democracy has been stolen by an oligarchic elite. Taking advantage of the legitimacy implied by the elections to maintain its hold. Either they think that the people are full of intellectually inferior individuals and that they should be guided, which is an aberration in itself. Or are they just trying to maximize their own interests at the expense of the many? Whatever the reason, their behavior is fundamentally illegitimate. For the benefits of including citizens in decisions that affect them are enormous. Citizens as governors become capable of governing. Especially since it is the citizens who take the risks, all political consequences always end up affecting the citizens, especially the poorest. Those who do not take risks should not be able to participate in the decision-making process, but the opposite is true. It is the world upside down; we take for a democracy what is not. How could a democracy repress in blood the democratic demands of citizens? Not having introduced the CIR when it was demanded loud and clear by the people, in addition to being illegitimate, has tainted the word democracy.

The CIR, in addition to bringing new political rights to citizens, is a counter-power. If it is constitutional, the citizens will have the possibility to have the last word, the representatives will not be able to do anything that the people do not wish. The advantages it brings are innumerable. The collective intelligence can fully participate in the decision-making process. The diversity of ideas and solutions is much wider when citizens are included, this is one of the characteristics of democracy. By including them, citizens feel that their opinion

counts, so their trust in institutions is high. Citizens accept decisions made by CIR more easily, the use of violence to express themselves in a country with CIR is unusual. Every citizen has the right to propose a law, so when a citizen does not agree with a law, he just has to propose another one. Political violence is obsolete in a country with the CIR. The representatives in a country with the CIR take back their role of representatives, they have to make sure that they carry out policies that the citizens want, because if it is not the case, at best the citizens will make vote laws contrary to the one of the representatives, at worst they will make them dismissed. We need checks and balances so that representatives are not tempted to abuse their power, and they have shown time and again that they are capable of doing so. How many democracies have fallen into an authoritarian regime? The CIR is a vital tool for a democracy. Only citizens should be able to change the constitution, or at least allow it to be changed, it is the constitution that establishes the power relations between citizens and representatives, it is crucial that representatives cannot change the constitution without the consent of citizens. The CIR protects the constitution from the representatives. Citizens are happier with the CIR, because they can participate in the decisions that concern them. Man is not only a stomach on legs, he needs to be fulfilled especially in the political field. In all the countries where the CIR exists it is very popular, in the country where it does not exist it is just as popular. Nevertheless, it is not free of defects. First of all, it does not attract crowds, which is not a problem from a democratic point of view, but it is a problem from an economic point of view. This can create inequalities in the long run. In the same way, the CIR can in some circumstances participate in decreasing the participation in elections. And this is very problematic, because if the participation decreases, the representation of all citizens will be reduced. As a consequence, the economic inequalities between citizens will increase.

To avoid these risks as much as possible, it is necessary to create a strong incentive for citizens to vote in elections, and to vote in citizen initiatives. We could propose a fine, if the amount is high enough, that would be a strong enough incentive. But to force citizens to vote under the threat of a fine is not very democratic. What we propose is a positive incentive, citizens will receive a basic

income that will depend on their participation in elections and citizen initiatives. So participation will be high, but citizens will not be forced to participate. The basic income has many advantages. It actively participates in reducing poverty, even if this is not its primary goal. It allows citizens to work in much better conditions, it increases the bargaining power of workers vis-à-vis employers. It rewards invisible work, such as volunteer or domestic work. Its only real shortcoming is its financing. Which is far from impossible, but the financing tracks that currently exist require radical political measures. That the CIR could contribute to put in place more easily. Besides, the CIR and the basic income form a good combination, as they are both pre-distributional measures. The CIR increases the individual capacities of individuals, and the basic income increases the external resources of individuals. Also, both CIR and basic income increase the bargaining power of individuals. They are therefore complementary enough to be combined. Nevertheless, these two ideas are still rather unknown in France, which is already having difficulty adopting the CIR alone. In conclusion, the CIR is a tool perfectly adapted to correct the problems of the French representative democracy. It is an excellent counter-power, and associated with the basic income it is able to reduce inequalities.

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