

On the growing gap between  
citizens and the powerful

# A Paradise Blown Out of the Storm

THOMAS DECREUS

Over the past few years, hundreds of thousands of young people all over the world have taken to the streets to demand more democracy and social justice. The movement is diffuse and has become known by various names: 'los indignados', 'occupy' or simply 'the 99 %'. According to philosopher Thomas Decreus, these movements symbolize the essential principle of every democracy: the constant resistance of the powerless against those in power, or of the 99 % against the 1 %.

**Decreus' critical discussion of dominant market thinking in our depoliticized society is clever and provocative.**

POLITIEK EN SAMENLEVING

With this bold claim, Decreus sets out to subject the current political establishment to fierce criticism. He unmasks representative democracy as in truth an aristocracy and points to the incompatibility of the democratic ideal with the premises of neoliberal policies and market thinking. Yet this essay is more than merely a critique. It is an attempt to distil out of today's storms a new politics of hope.



## AUTHOR



**Thomas Decreus** (b. 1984) studied history and philosophy at the KU Leuven, where he is working on a doctorate that will expose the conceptual links between political representation, hegemony and power, with a focus on authors including Pitkin, Laclau, Mouffe, Gramsci and Lefort. He helped to organize the SHAME demonstration in November 2011 to protest at the paralysis of attempts to form a government. He has a strong focus on philosophy and literature.

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**ORIGINAL TITLE** Een paradijs waait uit de storm. Over markt, democratie en verzet (2013, EPO, 160 pp.)

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