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DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

+

BUREAUCRACY

=

END OF SOCIALISM?

The question of ways out of the dead ends

CONTENT

Introduction	1
'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' (DdP) in Marx and Engels	15
<i>Lenin</i> fights for the DdP, against bureaucratism	25
Excursus: Do we need a new ethic?	47
Stalin (1879-1953): the end of bureaucracy and dictatorship of the proletariat?	48

From 1953: "structural continuity" despite de-Stalinization? DdP, party and state bureaucracy in and outside the USSR	62
a) in the USSR	62
Excursus: Putin's "bureaucratic authoritarianism"	68
b) outside the USSR (or Russia)	71
On the development in the post-Stalin era	71
Socialist alternatives	101
1. The Yugoslav Workers' Self-Administration (WSA).....	101
2. The <i>Prague Spring</i> 1968	109
3. Eurocommunism	111
4. The French <i>Projet Socialiste</i> 1980-1983	115
Conclusions	117
To the questions asked in the introduction:	
1. Has socialism finally failed due to DdP and bureaucracy?	117
2. How can - in relation to DdP and bureaucracy - be explained the connections between the ideas, theories and practices of the (pseudo) socialist protagonists?	119
3. How can the undesirable developments of socialism caused by bureaucracy and DdP be plausibly explained?	119
4. How do you deal with the new, current challenges posed by forced globalization, digitization ("surveillance capitalism"), the environmental and climate crisis, trans- and posthumanism, etc., especially when the DdP and bureaucracy have actually failed?	124
5. What are the implications for an alternative model of society?	141
On the ethical foundation of a democratic eco-socialism	145
Democratic eco-socialism	157
<i>Short-term and long-term goals of a democratic eco-socialism</i>	159
<i>And how can a democratic eco-socialism become a reality? On the teleo-logic of socialism in transition societies.....</i>	161
Bibliography	162
Register of persons	166

Introduction

The topic may initially suggest that massive reductionism is being pursued with it, the barely comprehensible complex of topics 'socialism' being reduced to two or three terms. Why this is *not* the case can be explained as follows: dictatorship of the proletariat (hereinafter also: 'DdP'), bureaucracy and bureaucratization are *key* terms through which new aspects, facts and connections of the questions about socialism can be opened up again and again, and not by means of construction and invention, but from the "thing itself", ie from the available historical facts and their evaluations, and therefore from values and events.

This opens up the question of why Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin explicitly criticized the bureaucracy but were unable to overcome it. How is the relationship between the Marxist program and political practice, for example in "real existing socialism"? How did Marxist revolutionary theories fail? Why did the Soviets fail during the October Revolution? Why did Mao Zedong refer to Leninism and Stalinism more than to Marx and Engels? Did the party and state bureaucracy in and

outside the USSR form a “New Class”? How are the socialist experiments in Hungary, Poland, the CSSR and Yugoslavia, but also in France, to be assessed? Questions upon questions! Structuring these and making them fruitful for possible future prospects is, among other things, the purpose and goal of the present work.

I cannot combine this with a general overview of totalitarianism. Fascism of all stripes is diametrically opposed to the lines and claims of tradition emanating from Marx and Engels. It is true that the *cohabitation of dictatorship and bureaucracy* can also be found in fascism, occasionally even with a “socialist” claim (see NS!), But never with a truly socialist perspective.

It is essential to note, however, a phenomenon that first appeared in the former GDR after the fall of the Wall in 1989/90: the *Ostalgie*, a term coined in 1992 by the Dresden cabaret artist *Uwe Steimle*, a "suitcase word", made up of 'east' resp. 'East Germany' and 'nostalgia', thus almost synonymous with 'GDR nostalgia'.^[1] Outwardly recognizable by the fact that earlier GDR products were suddenly offered for sale again, such as 'Rondo coffee', 'Club-Cola', 'Spreewald gherkins with glass' or blue T-shirts with the bold inscription 'GDR' above the national coat of arms with a hammer and compass in a wreath of ears on a red background, "confessing Eastern brands", for which new marketing strategies were specially invented. In addition, there was a “renaissance of films, comics, everyday objects and symbols of the GDR” (op. cit., p. 3). - Trabbis, GDR pioneer clothing, DEFA films, the GDR sandmen (including Pittiplatsch and Schnutterinchen) as well as Ost-Ampelmännchen and even "Ostalgie hostels" suddenly served as so-called "identity anchors" for Ostalgiker. How did it come about? Objective reasons are probably mainly to be found in the disappointment of numerous "Ossis" about the lack of improvements after the fall of the wall or about the deterioration in their living conditions. Unemployment rose rapidly, management positions were often taken away from East Germans and handed over to West Germans. The resulting bitterness often led to the glorification of the GDR past. People no longer spoke of the “Stasi state”, but of a “kind of social paradise” in which there was full employment (here = zero unemployment!), Low rents for secure housing and supposedly even “high standard of living”.^[2] And this "lost paradise" was even celebrated in so-called "Ostalgie-Parties", to which one appeared in typical GDR clothing or even in uniform, sang old pop songs and smacked songs and let occur persons occasionally doubling Erich Honecker.

¹ See Wikipedia: *Ostalgie*, www.de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostalgie, p. 1

^[2] Cf. Jakob Steiner: *Ostalgie - beautiful or dangerous?* (2019), in: www.unicross.uni-freiburg.de/2019/11/ostalgie-sch ..., p. 1

Something similar happened later in the former "Soviet" Russia. Famous is *Putin's* saying that the end of the USSR would be "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century".^[3] As the former Moscow correspondent *Jens Siegert* reports, this complaint about the loss of great power status was shared by almost all of his Russian interlocutors. Polls from 2016 showed that 56% of Russians regretted the collapse of the Soviet Union, while 64% would have voted to keep it - in stark contrast to the 1991 referendum. After the return to capitalism, many people complain of increasing social inequality (because “money rules”), sometimes bitter hardship and impoverishment that did not exist during the Soviet era. Siegert summarizes the statements of Russian Soviet nostalgics as follows: “In the Soviet Union there was almost no everyday crime. Apartments did not have to be locked, the apartment keys were placed under the doormat and the laundry could be safely hung in the yard without disappearing after a short time. ... You didn't need security guards at the entrance to the shops to prevent shoplifting. - The education was of course free and was one of the best in the world, if not the best at all. There was no unemployment and everyone got a job in their learned profession. There were free sports clubs for children everywhere, and in summer there were pioneer camps and sanatoriums. If someone came to the doctor sick, he or she was treated free of charge and, if necessary, sent to a fancy sanatorium for a cure at state expense, to the Crimea, the Baltic Sea or the Caucasus.”^[4] With further positive comments on Soviet police officers, high-quality cultural offerings, etc. ; so that the negative sides of the Communist Party regime - poor supply, corruption, restricted freedom, etc. - tended to take a back seat.

[3] Quoted by Jens Siegert: *Notes from Moscow ...* (2017),

in: <http://www.bpb.de/internationales/europa/russland/analysen/241501/notizen-aus-moskau-sehnsucht-nach-der-guten-alten-zeit-25-jahre-nach-dem-ende-the-soviet-union>, p. 1

[4] J. Siegert loc. Cit. (See footnote no. 3), p. 3

If you ask for explanations for the Ostalgie, you will find what you are looking for, albeit with regard to East Germans, for example from the historian *Beatrix Bouvier*, who states "that a positive assessment of the GDR era was only made possible because the GDR was almost seamlessly integrated into the Federal Republic of Germany. As a result, the East Germans would have experienced the benefits of the increasingly indebted and thus "on credit and at the expense of the future" social policy in the GDR, but not the resulting "actual bankruptcy" of socialism in the GDR."^[5] - *Jakob Steiner* judges less harshly when he writes: "Obviously, the view of the GDR is transfigured for quite a few. That's the nature of nostalgia. Past events are constantly being rearranged and evaluated. Since people strive for a life that is as meaningful and beautiful as possible, they tend to evaluate the past a little more positively from year to year so that their own biography lives up to this claim." (op. cit., p. 2 f.).

Since this applies *mutatis mutandis* to the entire former Eastern Bloc, it will be important to examine more closely the likely main causes of the decline, namely the *dictatorship of the proletariat and the bureaucracy*.

For which, of course, a large number of already existing works of different colors can be used. On the subject of the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' ('Diktatur des Proletariats': 'DdP'), for example, there are such a large number of them that I have to limit my selection to a manageable number of *exemplary* contributions. A first access to the DdP problem - though not to the contiguous with it: the bureaucracy - is enabled by the attachment of the renowned historian *Heinrich August Winkler* on *Marx and the consequences - thoughts on the change of the Revolution 1789-1989* in 2017^[6], which begins with a powerful bang: Winkler claims that Marx's idea of a definitive proletarian revolution did not come from Marx himself, but from the "*Manifesto of Equals*", a pamphlet of the "Conspiracy of Equals" around the radical Jacobins and socialists *Gracchus Babeuf* and *PM Buonarrotti*, published in 1796.

⁶ (Further footnotes: see below, at the very end.)

According to Winkler, the basic idea of this book was "the idea of the complete abolition of private ownership of the means of production and the establishment of a communist society, to be brought about by a minority determined to take a revolutionary act" (op. cit., p. 1). If this is the case, this idea already contains the almost complete revolutionary program that *Lenin* practiced from 1917, albeit with repeated reference not to Babeuf but to Marx, who, however, in his early writings, apparently often quotes from the above-mentioned pamphlet of the "Equals". For Marx and Engels, the French Revolution was only "the prelude to the actual, communist revolution" (ibid.).

What is more serious is that both Marx and Engels have made a problematic *analogy between bourgeois and proletarian revolution*: "The bourgeoisie will and must sink to the ground before the proletariat, just as the aristocracy and unrestricted kingship received the death blow from the middle class", explained Engels in 1847. And Winkler adds: "Just as the feudal production relations used to become the fetters of the capitalist productive forces, so now the capitalist production relations become the fetters of the modern productive forces." (op. cit., p. 2). - Which, however, I think is extremely important. Is the starting point of Marx's theory of revolution based on a simple but extremely serious mistake in thinking? After all, the class of nobility and clergy, overthrown by the French bourgeoisie after 1789, had long since become a collection of idlers and "apparent deads" ('Scheintoten') who could no longer lay claim to the exercise of political power. But this is exactly the case neither in Marx' nor in Lenin's time with the capitalist bourgeoisie which had come to power!

Winkler rightly concludes: "The inference from the bourgeois to the proletarian revolution, which Marx and Engels clung to all their lives, was a very daring construction from the start. In 1789 in France a ruling class, the feudal nobility, had become

functionless. The rising class, the "third estate", was deprived of power, which could claim with at least a relative right that it represented the entirety of the non-privileged society in this dispute and was capable of ruling in every respect. Neither during the lifetime of Marx and Engels nor later did the proletariat find itself in a comparably comfortable situation: Their historical analogy has proven to be a fallacy." (loc. cit., p. 4) - Nevertheless, Winkler draws a tradition line from Marx and Engels to Lenin and Stalin, over the "thaw"-Khrushchev and the partly neo-Stalinist Brezhnev to the "reformer" Gorbachev, whose overthrow initiated the final collapse of "real existing socialism". Winkler does not go into the alternative socialist experiments (Yugoslavia, France etc.) as well as Mao Zedong, Pol Pot, Castro and other communist dictators (for reasons of space?).

Main stations of the DdP line drawn by Winkler: In 1848 Marx and Engels considered the beginning of the "final revolution" to have come, but were bitterly disappointed and nevertheless reaffirmed the concept of a "class dictatorship of the proletariat as a necessary transit point for the abolition of class differences in general ". And Winkler adds - remarkably - that in 1852 Marx declared the concept "that the class struggle leads to the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'" "even the core area of his theory" - to which, however, Winkler only hints at Marx' "Letter to Joseph von Weydemeyer " of March 1852, *without mentioning that Marx never presented a fully developed theory of the DdP either there or anywhere else.*

Instead, Winkler claims that Marx interpreted the merging of the executive and legislative branches through the Paris Commune of 1871 as evidence of the "abolition of the 'bourgeois' constitutional state", although Marx *did not use at all* the term DdP in this context, ie in the paper on the *Civil war in France* , whereas 20 years later - as quoted by Winkler - Engels presented the Paris Commune as a prime example of a DdP (loc. cit. p. 4). In any case, this statement of Engels became the "key word for the most radical among the Russian socialists", especially since he had already recognized that "Russia made up for the lack of the developed West, the lack of a revolutionary situation, and thus triggered the revolution on an international scale". In this way, Engels had "mentally let the revolution wander from west to east". - Nonetheless, Winkler then admits that Engels, in his later days, even more so than Marx, argued "downright reformist" and set himself apart from earlier radicalism including DdP (op. cit. p. 4-5).

What *Lenin* made of the DdP, namely the decisive sign of recognition and indispensable *conditio sine qua non* of the Bolsheviks, Winkler outlines briefly and succinctly, but then, of the further falsifications of Marx's theory by Lenin, mentions only the fact that Lenin in 1917 saw fulfilled the conditions for a *socialist* revolution, although Marx had considered this possible only in highly industrialized bourgeois-capitalist states - and not in comparatively backward Russia.

So Winkler has no trouble locating *Stalin's* theory of "building socialism in *one* country" as a reaction to the failure of the revolution in the West, without even hinting at Stalin's further distortions of Marxism. Instead, he is content with an excursus on revisionism (Bernstein et al.) and references to the disastrous effects of the October Revolution on the European workers' movement and the rise of fascism, inter alia as a reaction to Bolshevism.

Winkler also cursory comments on the development of the USSR under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, in order to finally pay tribute to *Gorbachev* who did not dare to break with Leninism and did not see through "that democracy and the monopoly of power of a party were completely incompatible". Rather, Gorbachev wanted to be "Pope and Luther in one" (A. Brown), but in practice, through glasnost and perestroika, promoted the peaceful ("velvet") revolutions throughout the Eastern bloc, which ultimately contributed to his own failure (op. cit., p. 10).

Only briefly - and only at the very end - Winkler returns to the alleged origin of the entire undesirable development in Marx and Engels by stating: "If there has ever been a wrong analogy conclusion with consequences for world history, this was the case with the generalizing conclusion drawn by Marx and Engels from the French or, more generally speaking, from the bourgeois revolution." And the Bolsheviks ultimately failed because "the productive power of freedom had no place in their thinking ". What remained was not Marxism / socialism, but "the ideas of 1776 and 1789 ". And only on these - deeply *bourgeois* ideas - Western democracy would have to orient itself (op. cit. p. 12).

Critical appraisal

What Winkler is presenting here is, in my opinion, a swan song to the history of Marxism, the fall of which he considers sealed with the end of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. If Gorbachev has failed because of his own Leninism, he is only at the end of the fatal, catastrophic linkages that Marx allegedly caused through his "false historical conclusion by analogy". However, it is more than questionable whether this is actually the quintessence of Marxism or even the failure of the DdP. In any case, Marx's theory of revolution did not fail because of the "wrong conclusion by analogy", but because of certain developments in capitalism in the late 19th century that Marx did not foresee or see through. - Obviously, Winkler's assertion that the DdP was "at the center" of Marx's theory is inaccurate; for this would at least have required a *theory of the DdP* developed by Marx and Engels. Winkler's assumption that Engels considered the Paris Commune of 1871 to be a prime example of a DdP cannot be proven either. Rather, it can be assumed that Engels shared Marx's view of the Paris Commune as the "most humane and most rational" form of government in the sense of *council democracy based on free and general elections*. Furthermore, the fact that Marx approved the merging of the executive and legislative branches through the Paris Commune does not mean that he thus had overridden the *judiciary*. Although he criticizes the "civil constitutional state", he by no means had a broken relationship with the law as a normative force (see p. 45 below). Here Winkler is clearly wrong.

The same applies to the attempt to ultimately hold Marx responsible for the failure of "actually existing socialism". Too great are the differences between Marxian teaching and the rampage of dictators like Lenin and dictatorial terrorists like Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot (see below). Nor can Marxism be reduced to the undoubtedly easy to find undesirable developments. The complete works of Marx and Engels are, in my opinion, still a real treasure trove - also for ethics, social policy and economics; which in no way excludes criticism of certain parts of Marxian and Marxist theory.

Bernhard Mankwald comes to a result diametrically opposed to Winkler's conclusion in his book on *The dictatorship of secretaries'* with the subtitle: 'Marxism and bureaucratic rule', published in Norderstedt in 2006. As a result, "the original ideas of Marx and Engels have largely withstood the test" (op. cit. p. 208). The *bureaucratic socialism* of the Eastern Bloc could also be explained by means of these ideas, as could possible future perspectives of today's world society; whereby Mankwald, however, disregards the fatal ideas of the "conspiracy of equals" (see above), which had a lasting impact on Marx's concept of dictatorship. At least the author admits that in Marx and Engels one looks in vain for clear answers to "the core question of the further development perspectives of the capitalist economic system", so that one has to take up and further develop the corresponding theorems of Marx and Engels in order to be "understandable to find answers to the question of our economic and social future" (ibid.).

At first glance, it seemed to me as if Mankwald had already given clear answers to the core questions of my topic, those to the DdP in connection with the bureaucracy. For the time being, however, I was taught better through the review written by the political scientist *Natalie Wohlleben* (2007) stating: "In this popular scientific presentation, the author separates Marxism from Leninism in order to save the former's honor. In doing so, he draws an arc from the emergence of Marxist theory and the intentions associated with it, through the Russian Revolution and Lenin's policy, which he attests to a lack of analytical skills and a lack of honesty, to the fall of the GDR and the Soviet Union. The thematic compilation does not lack a certain logic, but is not justified further. The book manages with just a few footnotes and, overall, is more of an interpretation of the story, whereby the author, who studied psychology and philosophy and did his doctorate on "process analysis in intelligence test tasks", tends to underpin his personal political opinion. From a political science perspective, the book is unproductive."

☒ Whereby one misses a reason for the devastating judgment given in the last sentence and one wonders why the reviewer notes that Mankwald gets along with "a few footnotes" - after all, there are 218 at the end of the book with which the author also provides a bibliography replaced. The reviewer also misses an answer to the question of what the author actually has to say about the topics of bureaucracy and DdP announced by himself in the title.

Amazingly little! Namely a) on the bureaucracy: a chapter entitled 'Doctrinal and bureaucratic tendencies in Marx and Engels' (op. cit., p. 90 ff.), in which Mankwald only notes that Marx's "League of Communists" hardly can be labeled as "bureaucratic", and that Marx tended to take power in a bureaucratic manner, but always corrected this immediately. On the contrary, the author hardly mentions the fact that Marx and Engels as well as Lenin and Stalin repeatedly and fundamentally criticized the practiced bureaucracy. He completely ignores Marx in this regard, while he certifies Engels that he recognized in the bureaucracy a "class of its own", which was formed in Germany from nobles and (petty) bourgeoisie (op. cit., p. 24).

Mankwald devotes a little more attention to the "intellectual bureaucracy" that has arisen in the Eastern Bloc, which Leo Kofler (see below) had already described (op. cit., p. 147 f.), and also to the fact that the bureaucracy of the USSR has acquired more and more powers over time appropriated, so that Russia finally became a state bureaucratically administered capitalist country (p. 206). - It is clear that Mankwald - contrary to his subtitle "Marxism and bureaucratic rule" - does not do justice to the phenomenon of the communist state and party bureaucracy as a whole. Symptomatic of this: He quotes Ernest Mandel from his rather insignificant work on Gorbachev (p. 168 f.), but not Mandel's relevant treatise on *Die Bureaucratie* (1976) and in particular not its considerably expanded and intensified version in *Power and Money* (2000).

b) Mankwald also provides only sparse information on the DdP. Marx and Engels wanted to oppose the "bourgeois dictatorship" with a "dictatorship of the working class" and even considered themselves at times suitable to act as the corresponding "dictators" (p.62 f.). Mankwald comments on the Paris Commune in relative detail, but ignores important questions and problems, including the question of how Engels' assertion of 1891 is to be understood that the Commune of 1871 was a DdP. Essentially, as the reviewer N. Wohlleben correctly recognizes, Mankwald's book consists of a rather subjective interpretation of Marx's theory (almost 100 pages!) and its falsifications and distortions by Lenin and Stalin, as well as the decline of "actually existing socialism". With the rather unexpected result that Marxism is by no means a "ruin" today, but a "construction site" with a promising future (op. cit. p. 208).

In terms of content, Mankwald's book consistently lags behind the scientific study *'From Marx to Soviet ideology'* presented by Iring Fetscher, with, as the subtitle says: 'Representation, criticism and documentation of Soviet, Yugoslav and Chinese Marxism' (Frankfurt aM 1972, 286 pp.); in which Fetscher only briefly addresses the DdP and the bureaucracy only incidentally.

It is different with Fetscher's treatise on *Marxism and bureaucracy*^[8], which he gave in his inaugural lecture in Tübingen in 1959. He differentiates between three historical manifestations of bureaucracy:

1. the bureaucracy of absolutism, which was seen as a progressive instrument of leveling the class society and the elimination of corporations;
2. an "improper" bureaucracy subject to bourgeois rule - expressed in parliament - which strives in vain for self-power;
3. the *Bonapartist bureaucracy*, which, due to the weakness of bourgeois society or its strongest class, can once again make itself master of the state" (Fetscher 1967, p. 170).

The modern bureaucracy arose in the era of absolutism. It succeeded in replacing the reluctant, often divided power factors of the middle ages with a regulated, centralized *plan* of state power. - When the bourgeoisie came to power, it used the bureaucracy "to remove the fetters of feudal society and to enforce the society of free competition" (op. cit. p. 165). However, as a growing democracy movement emerged in the course of the 19th century, the bureaucracy increasingly felt its claim to power threatened and therefore fought against democracy. *This sparked Marx's criticism* (see p. 166).

A criticism that seems all the more legitimate as the bureaucracy, especially in France and Prussia, re-emerged after 1848 in the form of "Bonapartism". A special, bureaucratic "officer and official caste" exercised power, whereas the bourgeoisie proved incapable of opposing this power.

As a tried and tested antidote, Marx first praised the Paris Commune, which wanted to rule both the executive and the legislative by amalgamating them and thus wanted to keep the bureaucracy in check. What, as is well known, failed in 1871, but later served as a model for Lenin, albeit with very little success, because a newly formed bureaucracy exercised power in the new "Soviet" state, albeit under the supervision of a dictator: the Bolshevik-led party- and state bureaucracy, to which Fetscher comments: "The Soviet democracy was paralyzed by the party bureaucracy. Instead of overcoming the bureaucracy, there was a fight against bureaucracy - usually only verbal" (op. cit., p. 180 f.). Fetscher ended his inaugural lecture with the rather succinct statement: "The belief in the dispensability of a civil servant administration made up of experts contributed significantly to the development of totalitarian bureaucracy. The undifferentiated hostility to bureaucracy

was fatal to Bolshevism, together with Lenin's party theory, and so the dialectics of history proved itself to the dialecticians” (p. 181).

Now to *Power and Money - A Marxist Theory of Bureaucracy*, the work of *Ernest Mandel*, published posthumously in 2000, who among the Marxists was arguably the one who examined the phenomenon of bureaucracy most thoroughly. In an article by *Thomas G.* it says: “In >Power and Money<... Mandel tries the big hit by focusing on the sociology of the workers bureaucracies (that is, both their “fighting organizations” in capitalism and the bureaucracies in the post-capitalist Eastern Bloc countries). What he is politically about is clear: there is no alternative to the power of bureaucracies (as Robert Michels suggests), but can - and must therefore - be counteracted. A perspective that is also to be recommended to us on the left who are trying a new approach” ^[9]

But how did the bureaucracy work in the Eastern Bloc countries? Mandel takes a detailed position on this, after having previously clarified numerous fundamental questions, such as the relationship between bureaucracy and society, the “deformity of the market economy and bureaucratic despotism” and the “state goods -Fetishism”, in which he recognizes “the heart of the bureaucratic ideology” and for which he extensively quotes from Marx's *Criticism of Hegelian constitutional law*, according to which the bureaucracy, among other things, “counts itself as the ultimate purpose of the state” and the unqualified belief in authority is ultimately a “chasing higher posts” and mere careerism emerges.^[10]

According to Mandel, the main problem of the “workers bureaucracy” is that larger workers' organizations cannot do without an *apparatu*, which is, however, mainly occupied by “full-timers and petty-bourgeois intellectuals” (op. p. 63). It is by far not possible for the vast majority of workers to acquire the knowledge necessary to operate such an apparatus. From which Mandel concludes: “With the creation of an apparatus of professional functionaries whose specialist knowledge is necessary to close the gaps caused by the cultural underdevelopment of the modern proletariat, the risk arises that there is a split in workers' organizations between layers with different functions. Specialization can lead to a growing monopoly of knowledge, of centralized information. Knowledge is power, and a monopoly of knowledge leads to power over people. The tendency to bureaucratization can, if it is not controlled, lead to a real split between new rulers and the ruled masses.” (op. cit., p. 64).

With which the basic problem of the party and state bureaucracies of the Eastern bloc countries should already be mentioned. Nonetheless, Mandel also appreciates Lenin's futile struggle against the bureaucracy (pp. 129-135) and Stalin's “perfecting” of the Bolshevik party and state apparatus (Stalin 1927: “... the cadres decide everything”, op. cit. p. 73), with the bad consequences of privilege, political and bureaucratic arbitrariness and ideological rigidity. Mandel also concludes, as it were with regard to further “collateral damage” caused by the bureaucracy, “that bureaucratically organized regimes, not to mention bureaucratic dictatorships, set in motion a *process of negative selection* in which people with a lack of character, willpower and independent judgment and resilience or People who even show submission and conformism mixed with low motives inevitably come to the fore” (op. p. 141).

Mandel rounds the whole thing off with extensive chapters on bourgeois bureaucracies, including the theories of Max Weber and Schumpeter, as well as problems such as self-administration, economic and social rationality, “the institutional prerequisites for abundance”, “free enterprise”, the “withering away from the state”, “Habermas and the dilemma of radical reformism” and “survival through solidarity”.

Nevertheless, negative criticism of this mammoth work was inevitable. *Manuel Kellner* points out in his dissertation on Mandel (2005) that he failed with his attempt to explain the lack of socialist revolutions in the West and Lenin's revolutionary strategy and tactics, which deviated from Marx, as a “detour of history”.^[11] - Which, in my opinion, hardly matters, especially since Kellner's doctoral thesis comprises more than 400 pages, in which there is little criticism of Mandel.

Anyhow, it seems to me that you will find some basic and background information in *Mandel* and in the other secondary works referred to above, but no really satisfactory answers to the following questions:

1. Has socialism finally failed through DdP and bureaucracy or bureaucratism?
2. How can - in relation to DdP and bureaucracy - be explained the connections between the ideas, theories and practices of the (pseudo-)socialist protagonists?
3. How can the undesirable developments of socialism caused by bureaucracy and DdP be plausibly explained?
4. How do you deal with the new, current challenges posed by forced globalization, digitization (“surveillance state”), the environmental and climate crisis, transhumanism and posthumanism, etc., especially when the DdP and

bureaucracy have actually failed?

5. What are the implications for an alternative model of society?

My analyzes, considerations and conclusions in the following chapters revolve around these and similar questions.

'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' (DdP) in Marx and Engels

The term 'dictatorship of the proletariat' is said to be the first to use the socialist revolutionary *Auguste Blanqui* (1805-1881) in 1837, albeit without the context of an elaborated socialist theory.^[12] The latter is also missing from Marx and Engels, who verifiably used the term literally only 9 (!) times in their works.^[13] Nevertheless, Marx and Engels are considered to be those theorists who first gave the term political meaning; which, however, is not to be understood without reference a) to their revolutionary theory and b) to their complete works. Marx used the 'DdP' from 1850 onwards in return for what he called the "dictatorship of capital" (or of the bourgeoisie); a "class dictatorship of the proletariat" is necessary as a "transit point for the *abolition of class differences in general*".^[14] In the bourgeois state it is not possible to abolish the system of wage labor. Because every state that has existed to date is the "dictatorship of a class", ie "nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another".^[15]

These are theoretical components to which Marx and Engels gradually attach ever-increasing importance for the program of socialism / communism, namely as an answer to the core question of how the proletariat, the "wage-earning" of the people, can conquer power in the state. It should always be noted that "during the period of the struggle to overthrow the old society, the proletariat still acts on the basis of the old society and therefore also moves in political forms that more or less belong to it." Therefore, the DdP corresponds to a "political transition period" that forms "only the transition to the **abolition of all classes and a classless society**".^[16] as Marx puts it. In other words: the class struggle "necessarily leads to the **dictatorship of the proletariat**", but not as a permanent state, but only as a *transitional* phenomenon, as a temporarily necessary means to the end of the revolution.

Marx expresses himself similarly with regard to the Paris Commune of 1871 in his work *Civil War in France* (1871). Engels (1891) sums up the measures taken by the Commune at that time as follows: "Elimination of the old state machinery, abolition of the standing army, arming of the people, combination of legislative and executive branches, election and the possibility of voting out at any time of all administrators, judges, teachers; payment of all public servants according to wages, bound (imperative) mandate of all delegates elected in representative bodies."^[17] - Whereby it should be noted that Marx apparently changed his opinion on this in later years in a surprising way, to which *Klaus Hartmann* (1970) remarked: "Marx ... in 1881 drastically revised his positive assessment of the Paris Commune: it was an exceptional case, without the conditions for success - the economic and not just the political situation - being given; the majority had by no means and couldn't be a socialist one. In its origins, the commune did not correspond to the theory."^[18] - *Astrid von Borche* (1977) provides further information on this by declaring that Marx even reached "a kind of reformist, moderate position" in 1881, because now he accused the Paris Commune of wrongly realizing the balance of power at that time, because "with a small amount of common sense they could have achieved a compromise with Versailles that was useful for the whole mass of the people - that which was only attainable at that time" (op. cit. , p. 487); which of course also makes Marx's assessment of a DdP by the Paris Commune appear in a different light.

All the more astonishing is the fact that Engels another 10 years later, in 1891, in his foreword to a new edition of Marx's *Civil War in France*, claims that the Paris Commune achieved what Marx understood by the "dictatorship of the proletariat" - even though Marx never used the term DdP at any point in the work mentioned! It is also questionable whether Marx actually applied the revision claimed by K. Hartmann to all the contents of this work, in which it says, for example: "The commune does not eliminate the class struggle ... but it creates the rational intermediate stage in which this class struggle can go through its different phases in the most rational and humane way."^[19] Marx therefore understood the takeover of power by the commune as an *intermediate stage* and continuation of the class struggle "in the most rational and humane way"! There can be no doubt that the Paris Commune was not a DdP in the sense of a "dictatorship from above", but rather a *council democracy with universal voting rights*. And this corresponds exactly to what Marx and Engels have declared elsewhere on several occasions about the possibility of a peaceful transition to communism, for example Marx: "In England, for example, the way is open to the working class how it wants to develop its political power. An uprising would be stupid where one can achieve the purpose more quickly and safely through peaceful agitation."^[20] And Engels, albeit in his later days, says: "One can imagine that the old society could grow peacefully into the new one in countries where the people's

assembly concentrates all power, where one can constitutionally do what you want as soon as you have the majority of the people behind you: in democratic republics like France and America, in monarchies like in England, ... where this dynasty is powerless against the will of the people."^[21] - This must be taken into account if one wants to do justice to the views of Marx and Engels on the DdP.

However, one should not hide the fact that Marx tried to instrumentalize the term DdP also in daily politics, namely in the years 1871/72, when the 1st International Workers' Association (IWA) was about to boot out an opponent, the anarchist *Bakunin*. *On this occasion*, Marx insisted on defining the DdP as the "only correct" principle^[22], which led the IWA to split up and finally dissolve in 1876. - A bitter experience for Marx, which probably contributed to the fact that also in the last decade of his life he did not try to give a theoretical basis for the DdP. In any case, after the Paris Commune of 1871, Marx and Engels were not allowed to try out the DdP in a revolutionary situation.

Goal: "Withdrawal of the state", first of all bureaucratism, not: permanent dictatorship!

Marx and Engels give ample information about the nature of the state. Marx writes: "The ruling class (constitutes) their common rule of public authority, the state." And: " **State** forced bayonets, police, guns ... (are) far from being the foundation of society, only a consequence of their own structure ...". Economy and society form the basis of the state, not the other way around, as Marx explains: "The material life of individuals, which in no way depends on their mere will, their mode of production and the form of intercourse, which are mutually dependent, is and remains the real basis of the state. It does so at all levels at which the division of labor and private property are still necessary, quite independently of the **will** of the individual. These real conditions are by no means created by the state power, they are rather the power that creates them."^[23] In order to make a socialist upheaval possible, the first thing to do is to democratically shape the power relations between society and the state. Marx and Engels also consider this to be possible *through parliamentary channels* (see above), but only if the parliamentary representation of the working class is empowered to take appropriate decisions, eg also on the *state budget*.

Marx and Engels see a major obstacle to such a transformation in the, so to speak, octopus-like expansion of the *bureaucracy* in the capitalist state, for the emergence of which they find partly historical, partly practical reasons of necessity and expediency. Marx explains: "The bureaucracy regards itself as the ultimate end of the state. Since the bureaucracy makes its "formal" purposes its content, it comes into conflict with the "real" purposes everywhere. It is therefore compelled to output the formal for the content and the content for the formal. The government purposes turn into office purposes or the office purposes into government purposes. The bureaucracy is a circle that no one can jump out of. Its hierarchy is a *hierarchy of knowledge*. The top trusts the lower circles to see the details, whereas the lower circles trust the top to see the general, and so they deceive each other. ... The bureaucracy has the state, the spiritual essence of society in its possession, it is its *private property*. The general spirit of the bureaucracy is the *secret*, the mystery, preserved within itself by the hierarchy, outwardly as a closed corporation. The apparent state spirit, including the state disposition, therefore appears to the bureaucracy as a *betrayal* of its mystery. The *authority* is therefore the principle of their knowledge, and the deification of authority is its *attitude*. Within itself, however, spiritualism becomes a *crass materialism*, the materialism of passive obedience, belief in authority, the *mechanism* of fixed formal action, fixed principles, beliefs, traditions. As far as the individual bureaucrat is concerned, the purpose of the state becomes his private purpose, a *hunt for higher posts*, a *career-making*. ... While the bureaucracy is this crass materialism on the one hand, its crass spiritualism shows itself in the fact that it wants to do *everything*, that is, that it makes the *will* a causa prima, because it is merely *active* existence and receives its content from outside, so that it can prove its existence only by forming, restricting this content. The bureaucrat regards the world as a mere object of his treatment."^[24]

Marx, however, is not content with such criticism, but also mentions an antidote to the bureaucracy that seems to flow seamlessly into his revolutionary theory when, a little later, he demands: "The abolition of the bureaucracy can only be that the general interest *really* becomes a special interest, and not as with Hegel, only in thought, only *inabstractions*; which is possible only when the *special* interest really becomes a *general one*." (op. cit., p. 62).

Engels writes: "The bureaucracy was used to rule petty bourgeoisie and peasants. These classes, split up in small towns or villages, with interests that do not extend beyond the narrowest local circle, necessarily have a limited perspective corresponding to their limited living conditions. They cannot rule a large state, they cannot have an overview or knowledge enough to balance the various conflicting interests. And it is precisely at the level of civilization, in which the petty bourgeoisie flourishes, that the various interests are most intricately confused [...]. The petty bourgeoisie and peasants cannot do without a powerful and numerous bureaucracy. They have to allow themselves to be patronized in order to avoid the greatest confusion, in order not to be ruined by hundreds and thousands of processes."^[25] For peasants and petty bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy was an indispensable means of securing livelihoods, although it was always associated with oppression, restriction and loss of freedom. Negative aspects, which turned out to be "positive" for the ruling bourgeoisie, because the bureaucracy served, among other things, to assert one's own interests against those of the broad mass of the people. - In this capacity, Marx and Engels saw a legacy from the feudal period, a system that, in its "modern" version, arose "at the end of the French Revolution, in the years of the Napoleonic regime", as "a result of the retrograde movement of the bourgeois revolution"^[26], though not always in line with developments in emerging modern industries. Above all, some peculiar tendencies of the - largely civilized - bureaucracy, including not least that of independence - had an inhibiting effect up to the formation of a "state within the state". For example, Marx writes about the administrative officer that he believes "the question of whether his area is well located is the question of whether *he* is administering it. Whether the administrative maxims and institutions are good at all is a question that lies outside his sphere, because this can only be judged by *higher* authorities."^[27] The civil servant is satisfied when "he manages *himself* well" (ibid.). If he does not succeed in doing this, however, he does not look for the reasons for the errors in himself, but "*outside of the administration* ..., partly in nature, which is independent of man, partly in private life, which is independent of the administration, partly of coincidences, which dependent on nobody" (op. cit., p. 24 f.). - For such reasons, the bureaucracy is also not in a position to control its own systems on its own and, if necessary, to reform them. Instead, they try, often in an aggressive manner, to gain a foothold in *all* areas of society and to take command, constantly appealing to "authority" (p. 25). This has a particularly devastating effect on the finances, because "in a bureaucratic country [...] the expenditure for collecting the income increases to an amount that is disproportionate to the income itself" (ibid.). In other words: as it spreads, the bureaucracy becomes increasingly unprofitable, as Marx and Engels also illustrate using examples from the army and the church.

How such grievances can be remedied is made clear by Marx and Engels, referring to the Paris Commune as an example; The church and state were separated, all officials were determined by democratic elections, civil servants were not paid better than workers, the executive and legislative branches were merged, and so on due to the needs of the industry, especially its large-scale production. Here in particular, special, separate management bodies would be absolutely necessary. Ideally, *every* working person should be able to exercise such management functions; but this often proved to be impractical even in the Paris Commune. Added to this was the dilemma of securing the working class "against its own deputies and officials" (loc. cit. p. 29). How could one prevent "proletarian officials" from becoming *bureaucrats* again? Certainly not through personality cult à la Lassalle, not through even the most proletarian elite thinking and also not through "the belief in authority in science and politics" (ibid.).

But what this would mean for the practice of a society that is to be redesigned in a socialist manner, Marx and Engels were just as unable to test as the council democracy or the DdP.

Critical appraisal

At first glance it seems as if Marx and Engels failed not only with their interpretations of the DdP, but also with their associated revolutionary theory and consequently with the core of their entire oeuvre. After all, their contributions to the analysis of capital ("criticism of political economy" etc.) and to historical and dialectical materialism also serve to demonstrate the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and the necessity of the socialist-communist revolution. However, neither Marx nor Engels experienced this either. During their lifetime capitalism did not collapse, a proletarian revolution did not succeed. - Wouldn't it be time to put the thoughts on the DdP aside as well? Not when you consider the historical significance of this theorem *according to* Marx and Engels. In communist state doctrines - which some western nostalgics

continue to emulate - one has repeatedly invoked the DdP. The CPC is still doing it today, although it should be noted that it has perfected its party dictatorship towards the total conditioning and monitoring of its people of 1.4 billion people, including through artificial intelligence.

These are reasons enough to get to the bottom of the matter, ie to also critically appreciate the contributions of Marx and Engels to the interpretation of the DdP. Do they really conceive a "council democracy with universal voting rights" (see above) or nothing else than a communist party Dictatorship?

After all, according to *Klaus Hartmann*, the latter can even be assumed based on Marx's statements on the Paris Commune of 1871. Hartmann writes: "First of all, the commune presents itself as an example of Marx's class theorem. ... More concretely, for Marx, the revolutionary polity presents itself as a kind of council democracy with a "central committee" as the governing body. The Central Committee ... is formed from district councils who are elected by universal voting rights. That is, it is based on indirect choice."^[28] It is noticeable here that Hartmann initially puts the term "Central Committee" in quotation marks, but uses it in the next sentence without this "salvation", which, given the context, certainly did not happen by chance. Because the *Central Committee* (in German also: 'ZK') is not a neutral term, but rather an ideologically heavily loaded term, as it inevitably associates the communist state doctrine, in which the Central Committee is the actual center of the arbitrary exercise of power and violence. K. Hartmann argues contradictingly in two respects, because firstly he connects the term 'council democracy', which applies to the form of government of the Paris Commune, with the ominous, *inapplicable* "central committee", and secondly, this is not permissible if Marx actually, as Hartmann states, has previously "drastically revised the positive assessment of the Paris Commune" (see above). If the Commune "did not correspond to the theory according to its origins", Hartmann's label "Central Committee" cannot be permissible. Unfortunately, such manipulation corresponds entirely to the method and intentions with which K. Hartmann operates in his voluminous work *Die Marx'sche Theorie* (1970), where he tries again and again to present this theory as wrong and unsuitable, and even wants to refute Marx with Hegel, that is, to turn the latter from its feet upside down. With the final postulate to allow thinking "to come into its own" again, as if Marx and Engels had not been thinkers. ...

I cannot here determine all the details of Marx's recourse to the Paris Commune. Doubts, as Marx himself expressed much later, should be justified, for example about the (de)eligibility of all officials, which evidently collides with the requirements of professional qualification and possibly continuing education. Merging the legislative and executive branches seems to be inexpedient, if only because experience has shown that not all elected representatives are suitable for exercising government functions; quite apart from the shortcoming that the amalgamation eliminates the *control function of the legislature over the executive* .

The question that remains open, perhaps, is how it is to be understood when Engels claims in 1891 that the Paris Commune was "the dictatorship of the proletariat". I tend to think that Engels could *not* have meant this in the sense of a party dictatorship (or even an autocratic dictatorship). For he too - like Marx - adopted an increasingly skeptical attitude towards the problem of revolutionary violence in later years. From Marx comes the saying: "Revolutions are not made by one party, but by the whole people" (MEW 16, p. 16). And Engels is certified that he saw "especially in the later phase of his work ... in the evolutionary reform path a possibility of system change" and thereby set himself apart "from the earlier revolutionary and centralist positions".^[29] If that is so, which I do not doubt, Engels said when he spoke of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in 1891 in relation to the Paris Commune, *not party dictatorship but council democracy*. - More on this can also be found in *Iring Fetscher* (1960, pp. 379-392), who reports that after Marx's death Engels "distanced himself from Marx's glorification of direct commune democracy" (op. cit. P. 390), which Marx himself apparently had already done when he "drastically" revised his earlier views on the Paris Commune (see above). In any case, this also puts Engels' assignment of the DdP to the Paris Commune in perspective. However, this does not detract from my hypothesis on what Engels meant, especially since I - with this hypothesis and overarching it - consider larger contexts of the term DdP.

On the question of bureaucracy. What Marx and Engels wrote about this is still valid, in a more or less modified form. As before, autocratic administrators - not only in the civil service, but also in commerce, trade and industrial bureaucracy, among other things - try to "solve" problems at their own discretion, while hierarchical assignments fail within the bureaucratic apparatus, and problems are unnecessarily exaggerated, like that. For example, apparently also with the 1200-page Brexit deal of December 24th, 2020, which the daily newspaper 'Junge Welt' of December 28th, 2020 referred to as

"excess of bureaucracy".

Historically, the analyzes and premonitions that Marx and Engels uttered in their criticism of bureaucracy are of the greatest significance and explosiveness. It is no coincidence that Marx's criticism of bureaucracy fits seamlessly into his theory of revolution. Bureaucracy always means the domination of a few over others. Because the bureaucracy falsifies the state interest into a private interest, this possibility (this "benefice") has to be taken away from it for good. The general interest must not degenerate into a bureaucratic special interest alongside all the others. For this reason Marx wants the general interest to become a common good, that is, the *reality of every individual*, "so that the *special* interest really becomes the *general one*" (see above). In other words: the individual only achieves real freedom, really free self-determination and free development of personality, when *all* individuals are granted this freedom, which is not possible under capitalism. According to Marx's views, the bureaucracy - or the rule of people over people - will only finally disappear when the state dies.

Quite differently arises the question of how the complete works of Marx and Engels are to be assessed in our day and age. For obvious reasons, I can only go into this at the very end of this study.

Lenin fights for the DdP, against bureaucratism

To Marx and Engels

There is no doubt that Marx's theory of revolution failed because of certain historical developments that Marx had not foreseen.

The logical consequence of this failure is that his concept of DdP, which is connected to this revolutionary theory, has become obsolete. *Lenin*, however, does not come to see this consequence, for the following reasons: 1. He is firmly convinced that Marx's teaching is "all powerful because it is correct".^[30] A thesis that seems provocative and exaggerated, which at first glance seems to be easily refutable, namely with Marx himself; less easy if one learns immediately Lenin's reasoning, in which he adds: "It is self-contained and harmonious, it gives people a unified worldview that cannot be reconciled with any superstition, no reaction, no defense of bourgeois servitude. She is the rightful heir to the best that mankind created in the 19th century in the form of German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism." (op. cit., p. 67 f.). It is true that Lenin mixes analysis and evaluation here, but shows what his apparently boundless respect for Marx's theory is based on. - Why I consider the thesis to be refutable, I have to reserve for a later assessment (see below).

2. In his theory of imperialism, Lenin states that capitalism, organized internationally and in monopolies, in the colonialist great powers of Europe, ie in England, France, Germany and Russia, concerns about half of the globe with immense reserves of raw materials on which *Iring Fetscher* remarked: "The additional monopoly profits enable the capitalist class to "bribe" their domestic proletariat - or at least a "labor aristocrat" - with particularly high wages. The working class bribed in this way thinks opportunistically and nationally-chauvinist; it is alienated from its revolutionary and especially its international role." ^[31] - But this is exactly what prevented the collapse of capitalism prophesied by Marx in the economically most highly developed countries. Lenin hides this reason for the failure of Marx's theory of revolution (including the DdP!) and claims that Marx and Engels never experienced "the imperialist epoch of world capitalism ... which only began in the years 1898-1900" - a strange assertion, especially since the imperialist expansion of the colonial powers already began during Marx and Engels' lifetime.

3. Lenin declares the DdP to be the decisive criterion and "trademark" of Marxism, although Marx and Engels never called for it. The Lenin quote, which I already presented in abbreviated form in the introduction, reads in more detail: "To limit Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means to trim Marxism, to reduce it to what is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. A Marxist is only someone who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is the deepest difference between the Marxist and the average small (and also big) bourgeoisie. That must be the touchstone for a *real* understanding and recognition of Marxism."^[32] - Lenin, on the other hand, hides the fact that Marx and Engels hardly dealt with the DdP in their later days and never gave it a theoretical foundation, but in certain cases they thought peaceful, parliamentary transitions to socialism were possible. In addition, there is an ultimately irrelevant, domestic political reason for Lenin's emphasis on the DdP, especially in relation to the term 'class struggle'. Since the class struggle had become more and more *international* as early as the 19th century, it would not have been possible for Lenin to justify the October Revolution as "starting at the weakest link in the chain of imperialist states", a revolution in which Lenin

enforced a DdP limited to a *single* country. The latter again in contrast to Marx and Engels, who had prophesied or advocated an *international* proletarian upheaval for the elimination of capitalism.

All of this explains the basic tendency of Lenin's reception of the DdP concept by Marx and Engels. Lenin prefers to rely on the early creative period of the two "predecessors", which was still strongly influenced by *Jacobinism*, whereas he simply disregards the significant corrections and revisions that both made in their later period. What can be seen at the beginning of the second chapter of *State and Revolution* (1917/19), where Lenin reports on Marx's experiences with the failed revolution of 1848. In a letter from 1852, Marx had explained what his contribution to class theory had consisted of, namely "1. to show that the *existence of classes is only linked to certain phases of development of production*; 2. that the Class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3. that this dictatorship itself only forms the transition to the *abolition of all classes and to a classless society*".^[33] It is precisely on this that Lenin bases his equation of Marxism and DdP, which I have mentioned twice. The bourgeoisie knew what class struggle was long before Marx, whereas Lenin said that Marx' originality consisted in deriving the necessity of the DdP from the class struggle. Which may largely be true, but does not change the fact that Marx and Engels *did not* equate the quintessence of their teachings with the DdP! Whereas Lenin does admit that "the transition from capitalism to communism ... must of course produce an immense abundance and diversity of political forms", "but the essential thing" would "necessarily be *one thing: the dictatorship of the proletariat*" (op. cit. p. 374). - An undoubtedly *Jacobin* position which Lenin, probably rightly, also stated in early Marx; from which I conclude that it is now necessary to recall the principles of Jacobinism.

As *Astrid von Borche* (1977) points out, Western European revolutionaries liked to follow up on the American and French revolutions (1776 and 1789) as models, in which the *use of force* was just as common as the transfiguration and exaggeration of events. This is the case with *Robespierre*, who saw the revolution as a natural process, ie as an inevitable *transition* from evil to good ("le passage du mal au bien").^[34] However, the Jacobins were not yet socialists. Only social revolutionaries like *Auguste Blanqui* (1808-81) pushed in this direction, under whose influence Marx declared around 1850 that "the bourgeoisie itself invented the name *Blanqui*" for "revolutionary socialism, communism".^[35] A. v. Borche even claims that it was only through direct contact with Blanquists that Marx "came up with the idea of dictatorship" (op. cit., p. 24). I consider the author's point all the more remarkable that in Western Europe the Jacobin tradition "soon came to an end" (ibid.) After the fall of the Paris Commune in 1871, in favor of a decisive turn to parliamentarism - a development that yes can also be demonstrated in Marx and Engels. -

But not in Russia! Where the beginning of Jacobinism as *apolitically* relevant trend is dated to the year 1862, while Lenin first made contact with the so-called Russian "Jacobin Blanquists" after 1890 and from around 1903 advocated a DdP as a synthesis of Jacobinism and revolutionary socialism.^[36] It should be noted that Lenin did not only become a revolutionary through his conversion to Marxism (from approx. 1893), for which A. v. Borche remarks: "... Lenin did not become a revolutionary because his reading of *Capital* in 1893 had made him a Marxist; he was already a revolutionary and looked in Marxism for justification and guidance for the struggle that had already been decided" (op. p. 490).

Nonetheless, Lenin tried again and again to explain his synthesis of Jacobinism and Marxism - "as a guide to action" in the direction of the DdP - not only to justify Bolshevik violence in a meticulous and sometimes verbose manner. For example, on the basis of the question already raised by Marx, how a new state could function as a revolutionary DdP in the transition from capitalism to communism, and then how democracy and DdP can be reconciled with one another. According to Lenin, certainly not by resorting to bourgeois "democracy for the minority, only for the possessing classes, only for the rich".^[37] What the capitalists understand under *freedom* in connection with this is hardly anything other than the ancient "freedom for the slave owners", while capitalist exploitation in the proletariat is not only disenchantment with politics, but also the exclusion of the "majority of the population from participating in the public and political life" (ibid.). Lenin's conclusion: "Democracy for a vanishing minority, democracy for the rich - this is what the democratism of capitalist society looks like" (op. cit. p. 379). Marx had already recognized this, among other things in his analyzes of the Paris Commune: "Marx captured this essence of capitalist democracy brilliantly when he said in his analysis of the experiences of the Paris Commune: The oppressed will be allowed to admit once in several years to decide which representative of the oppressive class they should represent and crush in parliament!" (ibid.).

Which leads *Lenin* to much more far-reaching conclusions; so when he flatly rejected the bourgeois rule of law and derived directly from it the right of the Bolsheviks to enforce the DdP by *force in order* to achieve: "democracy for the vast majority of the people and violent suppression of the exploiters, the oppressors of the people, ie their exclusion of democracy - democracy experiences this modification during the *transition* from capitalism to communism. "(Op. Cit. P. 380). Note Lenin's emphasis on "*transition*" - an indication that Lenin is here (in July 1917!) still confirming the view of Marx and Engels that the DdP should only be considered a *transition* phenomenon, especially since "only communism ... is capable" to offer "a truly complete democracy," - with the most remarkable addition: "and the more complete it will be, the faster it will become dispensable, it will wither by itself" (op. cit. p. 381). So Lenin wants, in the Marxian sense, that the state created by the DdP should not continue in the long term, but should "wither". This addition is of course extremely important because it stands in sharp contrast to the development of the Russian DdP since the October Revolution. Hence the first question:

But how did Lenin implement his ideas of the dictatorship of the proletariat in political practice?

In his work *State and Revolution*, in July 1917, Lenin interpreted Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune in his own special way. Particularly revealing: He concealed the basic tendency of these analyzes, which did not lead to a party dictatorship, but to the "most humane" council democracy. Equally illuminating: Lenin responded to Engels' foreword to his new edition of Marx's *Civil War in France* without mentioning the fact that in this foreword Engels identified the Paris Commune as a prototype of a DdP in the sense of a *council democracy*. Instead, Lenin highlighted those passages in which Marx had pleaded for violent solutions.

In the Paris Commune - and in "every real people's revolution" in general - it was, according to Marx, a matter of "breaking" the "bureaucratic-military machinery" of the bourgeois-capitalist state.^[38] *Lenin* even considered the latter to be a basic prerequisite for any popular revolution, namely "in the interests of both the workers and the peasants" (op. cit., p. 65); which later apparently prompted Lenin to want to make the peasants into agents of the DdP as well, which he failed, however.

The degree to which Lenin radicalized his views of the DdP in the course of the October Revolution emerges from a definition that he published in October 1918, ie exactly one year after the outbreak of the revolution. In it he explains: "The dictatorship is a power based directly on violence that is not bound by any laws. - The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is a power that was conquered and is maintained by the violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, a power that is not bound by any laws."^[39]

Which makes it clear that Lenin, in his revolutionary zeal, no longer feels bound by any law, let alone ethics and morals. With serious consequences, such as the fact that during Lenin's reign, more precisely in the years 1917 to 1922, tens of thousands of people were executed, with numerous completely not-involved, completely innocent victims of the Red Terror.^[40] In view of such misdeeds, Lenin's further discussions of the term DdP seem rather insignificant, if not cynical. Nevertheless, the following should be mentioned: In April 1917, L. announced the slogan "All power to the Soviets". And in June of the same year he declared that the DdP was "a scientific term". In fact, however, he was working to prepare his own, rapidly growing party, that of the Bolsheviks, for the seizure and exercise of power; which also succeeded; whereas he did not reach another ambitious goal, ie at least to mobilize the proletarians of the great European powers, in order to pull them into his revolution.

This meant that Lenin's variant of the DdP, sometimes with the most brutal terror, was *only introduced in Russia*, where Lenin rose more and more to become the sole ruler, ie the actual dictator in the DdP. In 1920 he frankly admitted that the DdP had in fact become a *dictatorship of the party*, literally: "... that by the dictatorship of the proletariat we essentially understand the dictatorship of its organized and conscious minority." ^[41] . Which perhaps explains why Lenin never presented a consistent theory of the DdP and, according to his own statements, did not strive for absolute autocracy, but "the gentle direction of the conductor", although he always claimed for himself the "baton" to keep in hand (ibid.), specifically: to exercise unrestricted power and violence in the state, based on the unconditionally devoted Bolsheviks to whom he finally granted all important leadership positions in the so-called "Soviet" state. - Everything else is largely known history of the revolution, to be read, among others, from v. Borche 1977, p. 519 ff. and Schmeitzner 2017, p. 41 ff. However, the following must be added:

Lenin, the bureaucracy and the consequences for the DdP

"We took over the old state apparatus, and that was our misfortune." "... But also civil servants who have been taken over from civil society who work partly consciously, partly unconsciously against us." (Lenin 1922 ^[42]) - In statements of this kind, not only does Lenin's attitude towards bureaucracy reveal itself, but also the "secret" of what finally became of the concept of the DdP under Lenin. With his slogan "All power to the Soviets", hence the "councils", Lenin propagated an idea that had already been practiced in Russia during the uprising of 1905: that of workers' and soldiers' councils. Lenin found approaches to a theoretical foundation of this concept in Marx's analysis of the Paris Commune (see above). At the same time, however, he declared that the "main lesson" of Marxism was the smashing of the bourgeois-capitalist state apparatus, literally: "The Marxian thought consists in that the working class must **smash and break** 'the finished state machine' and not simply limit itself to taking possession of it." ^[43] Lenin's emphasis on "**smash**" and "**break**" deserves special attention. Which means, of course, not discrediting his equating Marxism and DdP, on the contrary. So that it seems all the more striking that the Bolsheviks - and not the Soviets! - did *not* smash the old state apparatus in the October Revolution, but *took it over*, which undoubtedly contradicts Marx's intention.

How could this happen? Lenin claims that it was "completely impossible" to transform the old state apparatus "in such a short time, especially during the war, the famine, etc." ^[44] Further reasons are to be sought elsewhere, namely in the development of the relationship between the Bolsheviks and the Soviets, ie between party dictatorship and council democracy. *Oskar Anweiler* (1958, p. 303) writes on this: "The workers' and soldiers' councils in 1917 formed the springboard for the Bolsheviks to conquer power, which they were determined to keep regardless of a possible change in the political mood of the masses. They suppressed a non-Bolshevik majority in the Soviets by banning the other socialist parties. The Bolshevik Party could have ruled alone and without the Soviets since the summer of 1918. On the eve of the October Revolution, Lenin had written that the 240,000 members of the Bolshevik Party were able to govern Russia, just as 130,000 landowners had done before. But Lenin did not eliminate the Soviets, even though they were "a foreign body in the Bolshevik party theory from the beginning". ^[45] - The previous Bolshevik agitation under the slogan "All power to the councils" had linked the idea of the Soviets with Bolshevism too strongly, while the need for those in power to democratically legitimize their rule by the Soviets was too great. But through the victory of Bolshevism the idea of councils was fundamentally transformed: from organs of proletarian self-government and bearers of a radical democracy the councils in Russia became organs of mass leadership by the Elite of the party. The party as the "guiding force" and the soviets as the "transmissions" are something completely different from the idea of the self-rule of the masses with its elimination of the contradiction between "above" and "below", as it was theoretically described by Lenin in 1917, proclaimed agitatively, but never applied in the practice of the Soviet state. - To understand all of this better, it is necessary to look back at the history of both the Russian Soviets and the Bolsheviks.

On the history of the Soviets

Allegedly, the Soviets did not tie in with historical models, but rather emerged from the Russian labor movement of the 19th century, so to speak, "naturally". Although the Russian industrial proletariat was numerically limited - around 3 million at the beginning of the 20th century - it was able to organize *strikes* again and again in the 19th century, primarily to improve working conditions and wages. *The strike committees are considered to be the real nucleus of the Soviets.* Partly they were also politically radicalized by the fact that the entrepreneurs responded on the strikes by increasing reprisals, such as layoffs and police persecution. *Anweiler* remarks: "The frequent dismissals and arrests of the selected delegates caused ... that the

temperate and experienced workers shied away from appearing as deputies, and younger, more radical workers came to the fore instead. The lack of any right to form a coalition, the prohibition to make collective demands and the penalties for a strike formed the best breeding ground for revolutionizing the Russian working class."^[46] A breeding ground that contributed to further radicalization and politicization of the Soviets during the failed Russian Revolution of 1905/06, although the politicization only spread slowly. In any case, the *workers' strike movement*, which was growing rapidly at the time, is considered the "strongest dynamic force" and the actual birthplace of the Soviets.^[47] Some of these groups already called themselves "Councils of Workers' Deputies", which, however, could not prevent the committees of the strikers (workers' committees = Soviets) from disbanding at the end of a strike; and the Soviet movement as a whole almost came to a standstill after the failure of the 1905/06 revolution.

The reawakening of the movement in the revolutionary year 1917 was all the more violent, although theoretical questions such as the relationship between the Soviets and the Communist Party initially played no role. On this Anweiler (op. cit., P. 136 f.): "The emergence of the Soviets after the February Revolution of 1917 is an outspoken mass phenomenon. The movement was spontaneous in the sense that, independently of one another and without any theoretical preparation, out of the practical needs of the revolutionary moment, soviets sprang up everywhere. ... The workers in the industrial cities and the soldiers in the garrisons and at the front instinctively felt the need for an independent organization that corresponded to their numerical strength and was able to express their revolutionary energy. The opposition of the workers against the civil servants, the employers and the bourgeoisie as such, as well as the mistrust of the masses of soldiers against the old officers created the socio-psychological conditions for the unique expansion of the Soviets."

Their *strength* lay in this spread, this anchoring of the Soviets in the proletarian and soldier masses. It was *council democratic*, almost like in the Paris Commune. In the factories and barracks, the deputies were elected frequently and with universal voting rights, and they could be recalled democratically at any time; with a considerable widespread effect, at least up to the "peasant councils", the Soviets of agricultural workers. There was even a merger at a higher, national level, namely in the "1. All-Russian Conference of Workers 'and Soldiers' Councils from March 29 to April 3, 1917 ", at which a supreme Soviet organ for all of Russia was elected, the " All-Russian Central Executive Committee "(VCIK). - However, this committee, the "ZEK", did not succeed in conquering power in the state during the October Revolution, the reasons for which can be found in certain structural and organizational deficiencies. The Soviets were unable to *politically* organize the masses on which they relied. Anweiler notes that this deficiency was the *real weakness* of the Soviets: "The radicalization of the masses in the revolution inevitably resulted in a radicalization of the Soviets. If, with the help and in the name of these radical masses, a group gained leadership in the Soviets which in its real aims were hostile to the democratic character of the Soviets, then it would have to end with the decline of the Soviets altogether. This case occurred with the victory of the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution. The Russian council movement, which began as a democratic movement, turned into a pioneer of the Bolshevik dictatorship."^[48] For this reason alone it is necessary to at least roughly visualize the development of the Russian Communist Party since the beginning of the 20th century.

On the history of the Bolsheviks

"At the beginning of the 20th century, the scattered socialist groups and circles in Russia gradually came together to form a unified party, which, following the tried and tested German model, described itself as "social democratic ". At its second congress in 1903, however, the party split. The cause were the organizational ideas of Lenin: while his opponents advocated a more open form of membership, he insisted that only those persons should be considered as members of the party who actively worked in one of its branches and submitted to its discipline. Lenin's supporters had a slim majority at this congress; the terms Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, majority and minority members, derived from this, became common for the two factions. At the price of the split, Lenin was able to enforce his ideas of the organization of the 'professional revolutionaries'." This is how *Bernhard Mankwald* (2006, p. 113) describes the emergence of the Bolshevik Party. It seems to me that the role *Lenin* played in it must be explained more precisely. His ideas are already clearly recognizable in his programmatic writing *What to do? Burning questions of our movement* from 1902. Already here Lenin conducts a theoretical discussion with the so-called "economists", a group of Russian Marxists who claimed that a revolutionary organization or party of the proletariat would develop by itself, that is, inevitably in the course of the capitalist development. Lenin firmly rejected such an automatism. On their own, the workers could never reach a higher level of organization than the *trade unions*. *Politically*, however, this could never be sufficient, especially since in Russia it is not just about the interests of wage workers, but about the *revolutionary struggle against tsarism* for society as a whole. The class consciousness required for

this can only be imparted to the workers "from outside". The necessary *dictatorship of the proletariat* can only be victorious if the wage earners realize that "the basic economic interests of the proletariat can only be satisfied through a political revolution".^[49] Helping the workers to gain this insight is the urgent task of the Russian party comrades, according to Lenin: "... one goes into the working class. In order to teach the workers political knowledge, the Social Democrats must go to all classes of the population, must send troops from their army to all sides."^[50]

Militant as this may sound, Lenin was by no means satisfied with it. In order to achieve the revolutionary goals it is not enough to be an active member of the Bolshevik Party. Rather, what is necessary is the formation of a combat-ready core force of *professional revolutionaries*, which Lenin justifies as follows: "A reasonably talented and 'hopeful' agitator from the working class is *not allowed to work 11 hours in the factory*. We have to ensure that he is supported by Party funds, that he is able to go into illegality in good time, that he often changes his place of work, because otherwise he will not gain much experience, will not broaden his horizons, will not be able to fight the gendarmes for at least a few years."^[51] With which Lenin declares the professionally working agitator to be the model for all revolutionary party work in pre-revolutionary times. In relation to the party as a whole, this means that its work should be "opaque", that is, opaque, as far as possible withdrawn from police access, ie without revealing its own goals. To this end, it must be strictly organized and strictly disciplined internally and externally via the necessary means of political agitation and propaganda. As early as 1902 in *What to do?* Lenin worked out the guidelines for this, which he later sought to implement in the journal *Iskra* ("The Spark"), which he founded. > *Iskra* <: "An illegal all-Russian newspaper that spread the Marxist doctrine and thus united various social democratic currents in Russia."^[52] In reality, of course, it was the underground newspaper of the Bolshevik Party, as an "organization of *revolutionaries*" that "should not necessarily be very extensive and as conspiratorial as possible"; this in contrast to the purely *trade union* organizations of the workers. While the demand for conspiracy by the party, later characterized by Lenin as "communist", is to be understood as an understandable response to the activities of the tsarist secret police.

In order to take such conditions into account, Lenin advocated *strictly centralized leadership and organization of the party*. He considered intra-party democracy to be an illusion; he saw chances of success only if all party members subordinated themselves to the strictly centralized leadership, that is, always followed *directives from above*. To ensure this, Lenin set up a second instance, the *Central Committee* (ZK), in addition to the *Iskra*, the "ideological leader of the party", designed as "*direct practical leadership*" to direct, coordinate and manage all party affairs to control, true to Lenin's motto, according to which control is better than any trust, no matter how great. ("Trust is good, control is better.") Of course, only a small circle of closest confidants of Lenin could meet such a claim, a central group with consistently practical tasks such as obtaining literature and leaflets, personnel management, "entrusting people and groups leading special ventures, preparing all-Russian demonstrations and uprisings, etc."^[53] In addition, Lenin soon afterwards set up the "Political Bureau" (= "Politburo"), an even smaller circle of followers with special management tasks; which later undoubtedly also served to consolidate the Communist Party dictatorship under Lenin's sole direction.

In addition to the years 1902 and 1903, the revolutionary years 1905 and 1917 are of the greatest importance for the development of the Russian Communist Party. Lenin sees Janus in the failed revolution of 1905/06 in the fact that "according to its social content it was a bourgeois-democratic one, but a proletarian one according to its weapons."^[54] The proletariat had set itself at the forefront of the uprising movement to fight under the slogan "eight-hour day and guns!" For very specific objectives, the Bolsheviks could not claim leadership yet, especially since Soviet *workers' councils* were the fought in the forefront; which Lenin apparently never properly appreciated. Especially since the failure of the revolution at the beginning of 1906 was a severe setback for Lenin and the Bolsheviks, not least with regard to all hopes for a pan-European expansion of the insurrection movement.

Completely new developments arose in Russia during the First World War from 1914 to 1917. Lenin, who fled into exile in Switzerland, relied on the "defeat of his own government", that of the tsar, at an early stage. The corresponding slogan was only durable and meaningful if it was linked to the will for revolution in one's own country, ie a real future perspective for the time after the planned overthrow of the Tsarist regime. But what happened when the tsar was actually overthrown by the February revolution of 1917? *Rosenberg* writes (op. cit., p. 87): "When the new revolution overthrew the tsar in February 1917, it turned out that the great majority of the Russian people, including the Russian workers, still followed the Narodniki and the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks, although they now had free propaganda opportunities in Russia, remained in the minority. Only the momentous changes in the course of 1917 did Lenin lead the Russian people."

To trace these changes in detail cannot be the task of this study of mine. Hence only this: In his "April Theses" of 1917, Lenin still calls for a revolution in the state by the *Soviets* ("All power to the councils!"), That is, by no means a return to parliamentary democracy, but " a republic of the whole country Soviets of Workers', Agricultural Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, built up from top to bottom"; in addition: "expropriation of large estates", nationalization of all banks under the supervision of the "councils", "control of capitalism by the working people", but not yet: the "introduction of socialism"! ^[55]

From October 1917: DdP = bureaucracy. The "hostile takeover" by the Bolsheviks

The final decision to bring his own party to power, not the Soviets, was made by Lenin in September 1917. The main reason for this was the failure of the Bolshevik attempted coup in July 1917, for which Lenin made responsible the *Workers' Councils* (!) largely still dominated by Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. In order to realize the program of the Communist Party, only an "armed uprising" could make possible " ... the transfer of power to the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry". Which then actually succeeded from the end of October 1917. But at what price? In the meantime, the Bolsheviks had won a majority in the capital's workers' councils in particular, so that Lenin now posed the question of power in their favor, that is, in favor of the armed uprising, which the Central Committee did not obey until October 10, 1917.

After the successful October Revolution, DdP in Russia means the *dictatorship of the Communist Party* or the sole ruler Lenin. The main reason why this dictatorship did not function smoothly is that the Bolsheviks were excellently trained politically, but were unable to bring the entire state apparatus under their control. Their government, the *Sovnarkom*, the "Council of People's Commissars", took the place of the "Council Congress", the supreme Soviet organ, which had proven largely incapable of acting and governing. The curiosity: structurally, ie in the division of departments, this cabinet hardly differed from its tsarist or bourgeois predecessors.

In the beginning, however, this government met with fierce resistance, particularly from the civil service, for example in the form of strikes. Which is probably one reason for the fact that the Bolsheviks also occupied the leading positions in the state bureaucracy, but retained most of the civil servants and employees. (What Lenin saw as the main reason for the numerous undesirable developments that began after October! ^[56]) And this, although Lenin repeatedly warned against the bureaucratism about which he had already written in 1904: "The word bureaucratism can be translated into Russian with the word: ranking dispute. Bureaucratism means: subordinate the interests of the cause to the interests of the career, be after the job and leave work behind, scramble for co-optation instead of fighting for the idea." ^[57] That this (epidemic?) bad habit was rampant not only in the USSR, but also in almost all other communist-ruled states, cannot be doubted. No wonder that Lenin sometimes even complained that a "bureaucratic utopia" had been created.

It seems astonishing that the bureaucratic hybrid structure created by the Bolsheviks of socialist and bourgeois-capitalist elements survived all crises during Lenin's lifetime, including those of the civil war, the famine, war communism, and finally the red terror, and also the big return NEP, the readjustment of the Bolshevik economic policy in 1921. It is also astonishing that Lenin then frankly admits that not only a "bureaucratic utopia", but also a *state capitalist* system - and not socialism - had been created, for which in the the year 1922 he writes: "Our state capitalism differs fundamentally from the state capitalism of the countries that have a bourgeois government, precisely because in our country the state is not represented by the bourgeoisie, but by the proletariat, which has managed to win the full confidence of the peasants." To Lenin's mind, *Communism* could be possible only after an international proletarian revolution! ^[58] He was able to choose the term "state capitalism" because the most important means of production, such as banks, industry and means of transport, were still in state hands despite the NEP. ^[59]

Accordingly, *Iring Fetscher* sums up with full right: "The attempt to build up genuinely democratic self-government supported by broad sections of the population was made at the beginning of the revolution in the spontaneously formed soviets (village soviets, factory soviets, soldiers soviets , etc.), and suffered but soon complete shipwreck - probably partly because of the incompetence of the backward simple population, partly also because of the competition between the newly emerging state and the new party bureaucracy. In place of the democratic and federal structure, there was *bureaucratic* "centralism", which wrongly still called itself democratic. The new political order arose from an uncritical generalization of the structural principles of the Leninist (conspiratorial) cadre party. In his last writings and letters to the party congress, the terminally ill Lenin repeatedly sought ways to fight the growing bureaucratic deformation of political life in the Soviet Union. The increase in the number of members of the Central Committee, the introduction of workers' and peasants' control, etc., were intended to serve this purpose, but were cleverly bent by Stalin in order to consolidate his power as general secretary of the party. In a letter to the later Trotskyist Krschianowski, Lenin once said that the introduction of an all-Soviet economic plan would lead to a "bureaucratic utopia". This statement should prove to be prophetic." ^[60]

Critical appraisal

If someone, following Marx and Engels, wants to introduce socialism somewhere, then fails in this attempt and ends up in "state capitalism" or "bureaucratic utopia", one can rightly compare this person's journey with the wanderings of Odysseus. Whereby one difference immediately catches the eye: Odysseus arrived at home sometime and -how, Lenin never, because his last refuge was the "bureaucratic utopia", synonymous with: arrival on the sidelines (Absurdistan?) of totalitarian alienation.

What was the point of such a trip? Why did it even take place in this form? The how? Of this odyssey has now been thoroughly researched, the why? Is apparently still controversial. And: Was Lenin's journey really nothing more than an odyssey? Wasn't Lenin also the esteemed founder of the Soviet Empire, the admired theoretician of Marxism-Leninism? In any case, it would be absurd to blame all of the mistakes and errors of early Bolshevism on Lenin's relentlessly harsh, vengeful and sometimes ruthlessly cruel character - or even just to blame his extensive reading of power fanatics like *Machiavelli* ("against stupidity", as he said) and *Nietzsche*^[61]. Especially since he was not only a rousing speaker and agitator, but also a highly intelligent, astute and well-read politician, who called Hegel's *Science of Logic* "the algebra of revolution", always demanded the "concrete analysis of the concrete situation" and a revolutionary situation then considered to be given when "the upper can no longer and the lower no longer want" to live as before; apart from the multitude of other relevant analyzes that he has carried out. The fact that the October Revolution nonetheless failed or ended in a new bureaucracy and "state capitalism" is due to numerous different, sometimes heterogeneous factors, including not least those of the historical characteristics of Russia.

But when Lenin repeatedly complains that the dictatorship of the proletariat and the bureaucracy became identical after the revolution, his definition of the DdP published in October 1918 as "not bound by any laws" sounds all the more strange. When the DdP turns into bureaucracy in the new "Soviet state", this is one of the worst undesirable developments of all; for how and why should Lenin ever have given a license to lawlessness to the bureaucracy he despised and heavily criticized? He himself concealed this contradiction or apparently did not recognize it, and the Soviet bureaucracy - which was inadequate from the outset because it was arbitrarily thrown together from Bolsheviks and anti-socialists - was not eliminated because Lenin had declared it a "utopia".

Lenin's definition of the DdP also sounds strange because it reminds us of the autocracy *obabsolutist* autocratic rulers who believed themselves to be "legibus (ab)solutus", detached from the laws, standing above them. However, they respected a limit to their absolutism in the *moral law* or the "eternally divine law" (lex aeterna), which of course was completely out of the question for the staunch atheist Lenin. Nonetheless, one must ask what prompted Lenin not only to give his ominous definition of the year 1918, but also to justify it. The reason seems clear: Lenin was at all means to ensure the success of the revolution; for him the task of the proletariat (in reality: the Bolshevik "avant-garde") was to "smash" the tsarist or bourgeois state in order to "finally" end the class struggle and to bring about true justice and freedom for the first time through socialism. Had the Bolsheviks been bound by existing laws, they would not have been able to expropriate the capitalist owners of the means of production without further ado. This, too, is probably behind Lenin's formula about the lawless DdP.

But with what right without any respect for the right? *Hermann Klenner* makes plausible statements: "An October Revolution, the tasks of which were: to restore peace, to satisfy the peasants' hunger for land, to eliminate the arrogance of the banks and to solve the nationality question - this revolution would not have been possible without a violation of existing law. ... But when the civil war was over, at the end of 1920, today's observer must realize that Lenin was still of the opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a power that is not restricted by any laws. Another but: In the revolution and after the revolution, the normative character of the law was criminally neglected in its importance for the creation of democratic relationships worthy of human rights. The dissolution of the legal concept by temporarily defining the law as an instruction that calls the masses to act, ie denaturing the law to the level of a propaganda instrument. If one continues to pursue this, it means that one had not recognized the emancipatory, the democracy-securing, the human rights-safeguarding functions of law, did not see through them and did not use them as a function."^[62]

Not to recognize any laws, to disregard the normativity of the law up to the "dissolution of the legal concept" - Marx and Engels would never have gone that far, even if they were undoubtedly critical of the bourgeois "constitutional state", to which Klenner remarks: "Marx had a normative conception and no actuality conception of law. Unlike Lassalle, who defines the

constitution as an actual balance of power, Marx defined the constitution as a law for the legislative power. He defined the law as a restriction on government power, and he defined law as a yardstick, not as the arbitrariness of the ruling class, reflecting the social balance of power. But insofar as right is right, it has the function of a yardstick" (op. cit. p. 91). This basic position, from which Marx never deviated, can also be used to explain almost all the other differences that, with regard to the DdP, exist between Marx and Engels on the one hand and Lenin on the other. And all the more so with regard to the essential background of *ethics and morals*, which *Stephen Eric Bronner* analyzes as follows: "Lenin's ethics was based on the belief that the main interest of the party was the revolution and that all tactical measures were subordinate to this strategic goal. This resulted in a purely instrumental relationship with the questions of legality and illegality of means, of truth and lies, of violence or the renunciation of violence. In other words: morality became a variable of the class struggle - moral was what was in the interests of the party, immoral what was in their way. The fact that the choice of means also determines the results was never taken into account."^[63]

These were practices in which Lenin, as I said, could refer to power fanatics like Machiavelli and Nietzsche (see above, p. 43). This is exactly what *Rosa Luxemburg* criticized in her 1918 work *On the Russian Revolution* (Chapter IV) by stating: "Lenin ... takes off ... completely in the middle. Decree, dictatorial power of the factory supervisors, draconian punishments, reign of terror, these are all palliatives. The only way to rebirth is the school of public life itself, the most unrestricted broadest democracy, public *opinion*. Especially the reign of terror demoralizes." (In: www.org/deutsch/archiv/luxemburg/1918/russrev/index.htm)

The detachment from any legality can only propagate who confuses ethics with partiality and morality with a "variable of the class struggle". This is exactly what Marx and Engels have always avoided, since they not only recognized the normativity of law, eg in the *fight for human rights for all*, but also, at least implicitly, an "ethics of appropriate life, work and coexistence" (M. Möhring-Hesse).^[64] - Nor would it ever have occurred to Marx and Engels to consider their doctrine to be "omnipotent" because "correct", as Lenin did in retrospect (see above). Marx professed himself to the "*de omnibus dubitandum*", ie that basically everything is to be doubted, and to the following: "Our motto must therefore be: reform the consciousness not through dogmas, but through analysis of the mystical, self-unclear consciousness if now religiously or politically."^[65] How should such a comprehensive program be implemented without any general methodological doubt? Engels expressed himself even more skeptically when he wrote: "The most valuable result is likely to be to make us extremely suspicious of what we know today, since we are in all likelihood at the very beginning of human history, and the generations who will correct us, are probably much more numerous than those whose knowledge we - often enough with considerable disregard - should be corrected in the case." (MEW 20, p. 80).

Marx and Engels considered it possible that socialist goals could be achieved without bloodshed, that is, if necessary also by *parliamentary means*. Not so Lenin. Instead, he justified the most brutal terror at times - an irony of history probably being that in his new state exactly what he wanted to abolish was restored or retained: the bureaucracy. And this although he had previously, like Marx and Engels, viewed DdP and bureaucracy as transitional phenomena. But unfortunately were red tape and bureaucracy - especially in the time of Lenin - not a "Utopia", but often gruesome reality. And even when Lenin speaks of *proletarian* "state capitalism", the question must be asked whether he was actually using this term to correctly refer to the "Soviet state" of 1922. In capitalism, the means of production, such as industry, banks, means of transport, etc., are only partly owned by the state and only partly under its supervision, control and influence. On the other hand, all of this is fully true in Lenin's new state. It would therefore be better to see this state as a variant of "*bureaucratic collectivism*", as the Marxist *Bruno Rizzi* suggested in 1939.^[66] In any case, I consider a "proletarian state capitalism" to be absurd. To this day, the proletariat (or the wage earners) suffers from state-favored capitalism, which is simply *not* proletarian.

I do not see it as my task to list and evaluate the historical reasons for this in detail. In any case, such an assessment would only be possible on the basis of extensive historical research. These results are available, but they are not manageable and are beyond the scope of this study.

Excursus: Do we need a new ethic?

Certainly a brilliant title! Which I unfortunately can no longer use in retrospect. Has already been consumed elsewhere, albeit with a completely different, curiously more medical content....

By the way, in English my original title '*Ethik der Verhaltenssteuerung*' (2020) is: '*Ethics of behavior control*', which I think is entirely acceptable. On the other hand in French: *Ethique du contrôle du comportement* is probably too bumpy-limping; it

should mean: *Faut-il une nouvelle éthique?*

About the concept of information. Informations in the common sense often remains (stuck) on the surface; if consumed in excess or inadequately, they can cause a great deal of damage; Fake news, wrong information anyway, so that wrong judgments, wrong or unhappy consciousness or worse can result from it.

The philosophical connotation *in-formation*, the *setting in form*, is different. It is able to transform the known into the recognized ("Be-kanntes in Er-kanntes"). And why? Well, mainly because new knowledge and remembrance can arise from old, especially when the experiences, theories, beliefs, etc. stored in memory are helpful to the mentally possible and / or necessary practice, which is not always the case. The form is not always adequately set, connections not always sufficiently taken into account, the subject-object dialectic not always "functions" in the brain and in the mind. Which sounds brutal, because who wanted to reduce mental life to dialectics !? And: *What good would it do a person if he could win the whole world and still suffer damage to his soul?* In other words: information - which the universe is constantly re-producing^[67] - can become *in-formation*, appropriate form that carries its content, permeates it, suspends it, etc.

And one more thing: According to the unfinished entelechy of matter, strivings for meaningful association, signs of systematic (teleonomic) *control* are already evident on the subatomic level. And so in the whole of nature and history. But: As is well known, there is also entropy, opposing, antagonistic, senselessly destructive elements ("evil"). And yet - or precisely because of this - we want to know where the journey can go, we look - also and especially in the dark times of our present - for the light at the end of the tunnel, we look for *ways to meaning* and an *ethic of behavior control* (K. Robra 2015 and 2020).

Stalin (1879-1953): the end of the bureaucracy and dictatorship of the proletariat?

In 1936 Stalin officially declared the end of the DdP. Was it really? And in what form did it exist before in Stalin's theory and practice? With almost meticulous accuracy and diligence, Stalin received Lenin's views and commented on them – sometimes supplementing and exacerbating them. Comprehensive information on this was already available in 1924, ie in the fourth chapter of Stalin's 1924 treatise "On the Foundations of Leninism"^[68]. Under the heading "The dictatorship of the proletariat" there is - probably for the first time ever - a coherent (pseudo) Marxist theory of the DdP, even if it essentially consists of a summary of Lenin's thoughts. Stalin starts from three questions that relate to the DdP, namely a) "as an instrument of the proletarian revolution", b) as "rule of the party over the bourgeoisie" and c) as "the Soviet power as a form of government" of the DdP. Regarding a): For the (October) revolution, the DdP was "its organ, its most important base, brought into being firstly to suppress the resistance of the overthrown exploiters and anchor their own achievements, secondly to bring the proletarian revolution to an end, ie to lead the revolution to the complete victory of socialism" (op. cit. p. 1). The dictator proclaimed this "victory" several times afterwards, particularly clearly in 1936 (see above). Only through the DdP as a decisive "support" was such a success possible, especially since it was not just about defeating the bourgeoisie, but also "claiming victory", namely by finally overcoming any resistance that the bourgeoisie was still able to counter the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks. To b): Like Lenin, Stalin places the *question of power* at the center of all considerations on the revolution. Even after the Bolshevik seizure of power, the bourgeoisie was still *stronger* than the proletariat for an indefinite period of time - which is undoubtedly true of Russia at that time. Stalin's consequence: In order to secure the victory, 1. all resistance of the bourgeoisie (capitalists, landlords etc.) - if necessary by force - must be broken, 2. the proletariat must be organized in such a way that the class society can be eliminated, and 3. an "army of the revolution" to fight against external enemies, especially the imperialists.

At least goals 1) and 2) cannot be achieved in the short term. Rather, "a whole historical epoch" will be necessary for this, so that a "withering away of the state" is not to be expected for the time being, especially since the proletarian state is a "machine for suppressing the bourgeoisie"; an idea that Stalin easily connects with Lenin's definition of the DdP as *based on violence and not restricted by any law*. Therefore there could be no democracy in the traditional sense and no peaceful way of the proletarian seizure of power - although *Marx* had considered *the latter* possible under certain conditions. Stalin's reasoning: In *Marx's* time there was still no monopoly capitalism and fully developed imperialism, for example in Great Britain and the USA. What has changed completely since then - accompanied by increased "militarism and bureaucratism" - so that capitalism can no longer be overcome nonviolently anywhere (op. cit., p. 6). - A significant increase in the Bolsheviks' claim to violence, which Stalin even tries to justify with a quote from Lenin from 1917.

To c): Stalin calls "Soviet power" an effective means of violent destruction of the bourgeois state. Because only this form of organization of the proletariat would stand up for the interests of all oppressed and exploited. And like Lenin, Stalin still combined Soviet power and the DdP in 1924 by declaring Soviet power to be "a new form of state organization that differs fundamentally from the old, bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary form, a new type of state ... the dictatorship of the proletariat" (p. 8). In the "Soviets", almost like in the Paris Commune, the executive and legislative branches are supposed to be united in order to "really break and finally destroy the bourgeois civil servants and judicial apparatus in one fell swoop" (p. 9).

That would of course have been the end of the traditional, bourgeois *bureaucracy*. Instead, the Soviets were supposed to draw all working people "to permanent and unconditional participation in the administration of the state", bring about the end of bureaucratic rule over the proletariat and prepare for the "withering away from the state" (ibid.) .

But how should we classify the fact that in 1936 Stalin did not announce the end of the bureaucracy, but the end of the DdP? Whereas in 1924 he praised the DdP as a key instrument of rule not only for the victory of the revolution but also for the construction of the new "Soviet" state? Well, between 1924 and 1936 there are twelve years in which unheard-of and unprecedented things happened in the USSR. It is not possible for me here to even come close to doing justice to the multitude of historical-political developments, errors and wrong decisions that have occurred. As an example, however, I can outline the further development of the party and state bureaucracy in the USSR.

The end of the bureaucracy?

Like Lenin, Stalin repeatedly asserted his resolute opposition to bureaucracy and bureaucratism. Original sound from Stalin: "One of the most dangerous enemies of the progress of our cause is bureaucratism. It lives in each of our organizations. (...) The worst part is that they are not old bureaucrats. They are new bureaucrats who sympathize with the Soviet power, they are even bureaucrats in the ranks of the communists. The communist bureaucrat is the most dangerous type of bureaucrat. Why? Because it disguises its bureaucratism with party membership. "It is suffocated in a mess of paper and is eager to turn every new beginning of the party into a shallow and useless trifle. Second, bureaucratism is dangerous because it **does not tolerate any control of implementation** and tries to make the basic instructions of the leading organizations a blank wipe that has nothing in common with the pulsating life."^[69]

Shouldn't it be inferred from this that Stalin would pull out all the stops to fight bureaucracy and bureaucratism? Whether he ever seriously tried to do this could only be clarified on the basis of extensive research, which I cannot do here. In any case, it is certain that the actual development of the "Soviet" bureaucracy took a very different course from what Stalin's verbatim statements quoted above would suggest. Because these stand in stark contrast to the actual political practice of Stalin. This was clearly, briefly and succinctly expressed by the Yugoslav head of state *Tito*, probably at the beginning of the 1950s, in a speech quoted by *Leo Kofler* (1952). According to this, Stalin "attributes the party's role to the fact that it directs the state apparatus, which still bears the mark of class society. It is therefore no wonder that the party of the Soviet Union is becoming more and more bureaucratized and is growing together with its bureaucratic state apparatus into a unit, that is, identifying with it and becoming part of the bureaucratic apparatus itself, and in this way the connection to the people and to them loses everything that would actually be its task ... The role of the party can be traced back to the bureaucratic apparatus ... that is in contrast to Lenin's teaching on the role of the party in the first transitional phase, where it functions as *a leader and educator and not as a driver*."^[70] What *Tito* does *not* mention here is the monstrous terror regime in whose service Stalin placed the synthesis of party and state bureaucracy he had built up. Outstanding milestones: 1. the first five-year plan 1926-1932 with forced industrialization at the expense of the consumer sector, 2. from approx. 1929: the forced collectivization of agriculture, with the most brutal persecution of the Kulaks, 3. the "Great Purge" of 1936-38, 4. further terrorist actions in the following years. With terrible consequences, after all, this terrorism has verifiably claimed around 12 million deaths in the period from 1936 to 1950 alone, horribly supplemented by hardly fewer victims in the period from 1924 to 1936. "Stalin's biographer Dimitri Wolkogonow estimates ... that 1929 to 1953 19.5 to 22 million people died as a result of the so-called *purges*."^[71]

How could this happen? What actually happened can only be guessed at from *Tito's* analysis cited above. And historical-political reasons can only be made superficially responsible for the terror catastrophe. The *answer of the bureaucracy* to the rather moderate successes of Lenin's NEP was, of course at Stalin's behest: forced industrialization, initially by means of the first five-year plan (see above), forced collectivization of agriculture, not least of all in order to gain sufficient labor for industry and more export foreign currency for the unilaterally funded heavy industry; with the consequence of a terrible famine with millions of dead, exacerbated by the drought of 1931-33. Regardless of this, the party bureaucracy increasingly

suppressed the working class, for example by banning strikes and drastically restricting freedom of movement.^[72] So that at the beginning of the 1930s Stalin's "DdP" was not a dictatorship of *the* proletariat at all, but a cruel dictatorship *over* the proletariat, exercised by a *new class* of "Soviet" party and state bureaucrats.^[73]

From which it is clear, among other things, that it was not the planned economy that led to the centralist dictatorship with its all-pervasive bureaucratization, but the other way round: For the Stalinist "DdP" with its amalgamation of party and state bureaucracy, every means was right, including the planned economy. How far Stalin allowed himself to be carried by megalomaniac ambition becomes clear from the following statement, in which he demands: "We have lagged behind the advanced countries by 50 to 100 years. We have to cover this distance in 10 years." (loc. cit.). With the aforementioned terrible consequences.

Leo Kofler examines deeper reasons for the catastrophe in his treatise *The Nature and Role of the Stalinist Bureaucracy* (1952), by stating:

1. "... the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy is borne and justified by an ideological consciousness of great power and effect, so that this bureaucracy can feel right and have the imagination that it is an indispensable tool for progress and freedom. This consciousness is the ideological expression of what is called *bureaucratic limitation*, the essence of which is to be sought in a mode of representation that disfigures and distorts reality and the (Marxist) theory that interprets it." (op. cit., p. 24). - Kofler analyzes in detail what these distortions consist of. Keyword-like: mechanistic flattening of Marxism, for example by "transferring the scientific-mechanistic methodology to humanistic thinking" (p. 26). With which the qualitatively individual can just as little be grasped as the complicated interrelationships of social life. Bolshevik practice degenerates into "a more or less mechanically conceived arithmetic example, and the inevitable consequence of this is its failure to face the tasks and problems which the reality completely misunderstood by the "practitioners" gives it to solve", while Marxist theory goes to waste since it "becomes one empty gear of mechanistic logisms and constructions" (p. 27).
2. The Stalinist terror is at the same time, if *not only* a form of *autocracy* to which the bureaucracy submits unconditionally. Faithfulness to the line, not appropriateness, becomes the decisive criterion. "Formalism and technicalism" take the place of positive and constructive political orientation.
3. In connection with these undesirable developments, the bureaucracy - and especially bureaucratism - opens the door to all kinds of arbitrariness, including terror.
4. "Factual fetishism". One clings to "the facts", but gets stuck in the "surface shine". An overview of larger contexts or even "the whole" is neither expected nor made possible. The result is bureaucratic specialization instead of interdisciplinary teamwork.
5. The blame for the frequent failures of the bureaucracy is placed on "subversive and unruly elements" - with the well-known criminal consequences.
6. What Lenin called the "concrete analysis of the concrete situation" also falls by the wayside; a development which Kofler notes that it "achieves a consistency and a completion of bureaucratic tendencies which is unique in the modern history of Europe" (op. cit. p. 37).
7. "Intellectual bureaucracy". Kofler also calls it "the Inquisition of Stalinism" and explains: "The Stalinist intellectual bureaucracy followed in the footsteps of the Inquisition. It is just as dogmatic and just as limited. She sees her task in either forcing the accused to "self-criticize" in the "discussion" or to convict him as an "agent". In contrast to the Inquisition, it does not pass an express judgment, but it condemns and prepares the ground for the interference of state power, which "liquidates" the delinquent. It is the mainstay of the domination of the people by the Stalinist bureaucracy and ultimately also of state terror" (p. 51). - Another consequence is the complete stagnation of the humanities. Mindless practicalism takes the place of the fruitful, dialectical arguments about alternatives and opposing positions, which can only be found outside the USSR. Finally, even the *theory as such* falls into disrepute (cf. *ibid.*).
8. *Consequences of the rule of the intellectual bureaucracy in the field of art.* Numerous artists, not only in the USSR, felt that their hopes and ambitions were confirmed and inspired by the October Revolution. They enjoyed a great deal of freedom in the USSR until the early 1930s, and they succeeded in an upswing in art that "kept the world in suspense", especially in the fields of fine arts, film, theater and literature.^[74] "But very soon, and then increasingly, the state bureaucracy began to interfere. The attempts, gradually taking hold of Russian art, to artistically shape the wealth of experiences, contradictions and struggles of the human soul wrapped up in a complex social problem, appeared to it not just as a superfluous gimmick with emotional elements that it simply did not understand, but also as one danger, a tendency to disintegrate the unambiguous and clear "proletarian" and "socialist" rise of the new society." (Kofler *ibid.*) State bureaucracy especially attacked the progressive artists that had newly discovered and

further developed "the great traditions of bourgeois realism" (ibid.). The *Meyerhold case* is an example of this. The world-famous theater director WE Meierhold (1874-1940), an avant-garde supporter of the October Revolution and head of the entire theater business in the USSR in 1920, was accused of "formalism" in the late 1920s and even imprisoned in 1939. He was accused of having cared more about the originality of the form than the content of the pieces. What Meyerhold firmly rejected and violently criticized the state-mandated counter-position, the "theater of socialist realism". According to Meyerhold, truly realistic art is radically and brutally prevented by this regulation. True realism penetrates fully to "*human problems*", captures the typical even in deep dimensions, without falling into naturalism or formalism. - All of this is completely far removed from the Stalinist bureaucracy and its one-sided "class standpoint". "Socialist optimism is supposed to help the bureaucracy to show, in addition to the inevitable difficulties of the initial period, the numerous inadequacies and problems that it is responsible for in a mild and harmless light; but it inevitably turns down into an empty romanticism." This, however, transfigured reality instead of working it up artistically. "An art that has surrendered to romanticism can make use of any great artistic form, it inevitably moves away from realism; it becomes empty and phrase-like." (op. p. 69). Frustration and boredom spread in the disappointed audience, caused by "romantic realism", pseudo-humanism and superficiality. Kofler: "If we take a closer look at "romantic realism", it turns out to be a peculiar mixture of flattest naturalism with a mechanistic character and sky-storming romanticism born of the bureaucratic need for the rose-colored transfiguration of one's own reality. Naturalism and romanticism combine here to form a strangely contradictory unity, with the former consisting in stopping at a superficial photographic descriptivism (mechanism and positivism) and the latter in the tendency towards a false "depth". Just like the mechanistic flatness there, so here the romantic mendacity and alienation prevail with their constructed pseudo-problematic, which is supposed to hide the meaningless superficiality of the naturalistic-mechanistic apprehension of being. Neither mechanistic descriptivism nor sentimental romanticism can understand life as it really is." (p. 70). - It is all the more strange when Stalin claims that writers are "the engineers of the human soul" (p. 71). And it is even more frightening that *Walter Ulbricht*, who did not consider de-Stalinization in the GDR necessary and whom Leo Kofler described as "one of the flattest and most vulgar heads of the Stalinist bureaucracy", degraded art to a "matter of planning 'that has to obey' the same laws as the five-year plan" (p. 72). - Obviously, the "socialist realism" ordered by the Stalinist bureaucracy was neither realistic nor socialist.

Critical appraisal

The former East Berlin "*Stalin-Allee*", which is now called "Unter den Linden" again, owes this name to the fact that the GDR was founded in 1949 at Stalin's orders, shortly after the FRG was founded. And the "*Stalin Prize*" for special achievements was not only awarded with pleasure and relatively often in the GDR. No less revealing historical reminiscences are the designation "Stalin organ" (for an extremely effective rocket launcher of the Red Army in World War II) and the place name *Stalingrad* (today: Volgograd.). The latter symbolizes the decisive turning point in the war against Hitler's Germany in the winter of 1942/43. Stalin's armies were victorious in the east and advanced as far as Berlin. The area of power and influence of the USSR has never been greater than under Stalin after World War II. What is understood by *Stalinism* has had an impact up to the present day, not least in today's People's Republic of China.

What follows from this? In my opinion, there is above all one danger to which every critic of Stalin and Stalinism is exposed: that of suspicion of fascism. Anyone who criticizes Stalin would therefore be a fascist or anti-communist or anti-Marxist. - This general suspicion is not tenable, however, mainly because there is a *Marxist* criticism of Stalin, of which I cite the following titles as examples: The anthology *Marxist Stalinism Criticism in the 20th Century*, edited by Christoph Jünke, was published 2017 in the new ISP publishing house in Karlsruhe; and the essay by Marcel van der Linden: *The Socialism That Wasn't: Marxist Criticisms of Soviet Society* (2009). ^[75] It is not possible for me to refer to the contents of these publications here. Instead, I quote this conclusion from the pen of *Rudolf Bahro*: "All in all, the Soviet state, with the party as its core, was not the representative of a working class overburdened with its independent exercise of power, but the extraordinary representative (not of course a placeholder!) of an exploiting class. "With the additional remark of Van der Linden: "This is not to say that Stalinism in all its aspects was historically inevitable, as Bahro has claimed. The dictatorship was not only terrorist, but also regularly behaved irrationally, for example with the chaotic collectivization of agriculture in the early 1930s, with the liquidation of the military leadership and the old Bolsheviks a few years later, or with the "doctors plot" in the 1950s. A significantly more humane and balanced policy would have been possible ... " (op. cit. p. 318 and 322). - From these publications and statements I conclude that Germans also undoubtedly have the right to criticize Stalin and Stalinism without falling into suspicion of fascism; which is even more true if the criticism is Marxist-based.

Nevertheless, some questions remain unanswered, such as the actual structure of "Soviet" society and the relationship between Stalin a) to Lenin and b) to Marx and Engels. Was the USSR a new *class* society? *Milovan Djilas* affirms this

question with sound arguments and admits: "That is not to say that the new party and the new class are identical. However, the party is the core of the class and its foundation. It is very difficult, perhaps impossible, to draw the boundaries of the new class and determine its members. One can say that the new class consists of people who enjoy privileges and material advantages because of the administrative monopoly they hold." (op. cit., P. 64). - *Ota Šik*, on the other hand, does not speak of class, but of *layer*: "The bureaucracy is the best organized and most uniform layer in terms of interests, with the communist party bureaucracy again playing the leading role. Even if the party bureaucracy necessarily needs the entire bureaucratic state apparatus to rule the people and agrees with it in its basic interests, it forms a power elite to which the state bureaucracy is in a subordinate position." answers this question with in the affirmative [\[76\]](#)

However, whether it is a "layer" or a "class" seems to be a more academic question. I see an acceptable compromise in the formula of "bureaucratic collectivism" first proposed by *Bruno Rizzi* (see above). *Marcel van der Linden* specifies by describing the "New Class" as a "*quasi-class*" and stating: "The bureaucratic character of society has led to its complete atomization. A fundamental contradiction arose between the individuals (the ruling elite as well as the workers) who pursued their own interests and the attempts of the elite as a collective to maintain social cohesion, if necessary by force." With devastating consequences for the workers who produced relatively slowly and poorly due to a lack of incentives, as well as in the ruling class of bureaucrats, where "management had an interest in incorrectly informing the planning authorities about the production capacities in order not to be exposed to too high targets" (loc. cit., p. 321). While "the whole" can only be understood against the background of the actual relationships of dependency. Van der Linden said: "The social structure of Soviet society was extraordinary. The working class was not an "ordinary" working class. On the one hand, it rented its labor for money and produced a social product over which it had no control (it was thus exploited in the strict sense). On the other hand, however, it was subject to a kind of duty to work and, due to the lack of consumer goods, could only use part of the money for the purchase of goods for self-reproduction. The elite had only partial power to determine the use of the social product and also only partial power over the labor force. The characterization of the elite as a quasi-class expresses this ambiguity quite well." (ibid.). The fact that the elite only had partial power is probably due to the fact that the state bureaucracy was subordinate to the party bureaucracy and the latter was completely subject to the dictates and arbitrariness of Stalin.

The question of how far Stalin moved from Lenin, and especially from Marx and Engels, has often been taken up by historians and theorists, so I can be content with the following essential point. The main difference between Lenin and Stalin lies in the fact that, although in theory the latter repeatedly invokes the former, in practice his ideas are changed, sharpened and distorted at will, that is, he uses them as he sees fit.

This applies in particular to Lenin's *lawless* DdP, which Stalin saw not only as a license for the unlimited use of force, but also for systematic terrorism, including mass murder, from which even convinced Bolshevik supporters and friends were ultimately not spared. And: The fact that Stalin had 20,000 capable military personnel murdered together with the army leadership during the "Great Purge" contributed to the military disaster in the summer of 1941, when the Supreme Commander Stalin initially assessed the situation completely wrongly.

But how are such mistakes, such crimes to be explained? There has been a lot of speculation, research and writing about this, and certainly also a lot of relevant information. For *not plausible*, I consider the following assumptions: debt was

1. above all "Stalin's Marxism" - as a form of *totalitarianism* allegedly conceived by Hegel and Marx.
Stalin's thoughts and actions were undoubtedly totalitarian. It should be remembered, however, that he and his intellectual bureaucrats have demonstrably flattened and falsified Marxism (see above),
2. the growing threat from Nazi Germany during the 1930s.
This is countered by the fact that Stalin's horrific terror began as early as the 1920s.
3. the fact that Stalin, who was an insane mass murderer, came to power through latent and open attitudes and uses of violence as early as the October Revolution.
Stalin can be described as a mass murderer, but not as "just insane", presumably schizophrenic. A schizophrenic madman, that is, seriously ill, would not have been able, like Stalin, to work largely according to the reality principle, to rule, to manipulate the masses and to appear as a statesman.

In contrast, I think the following diagnosis is probably correct: "A strong case can indeed be made for postulating that Stalin exhibited the classic symptoms of narcissism (morbid love of or self-absorbedness with oneself), with strong additional elements of sadism (deriving pleasure from the suffering of others) and paranoid tendencies (nursing unwarranted suspicions about the motives of others, and desiring revenge). The latter trait quite probably also concealed an element of

inferiority and personal cowardice." ^[77] In short: Stalin was a narcissist with strong sadistic impulses and violently paranoid tendencies (paranoia and vindictiveness) combined with inferiority complexes. To simply label him as "insane" would be short-circuited and inappropriate. Apparently Stalin *did not* suffer from hallucinations - a strong indicator of psychosis. From which follows: "It is therefore postulated that Stalin did not suffer from a psychosis (true insanity, with loss of contact with reality), but that he had a marked psychopathic personality." (loc. cit. 3 f.). After all: a psychopath who ruled the "Soviet" empire for almost 30 years!

I also noticed the following: Stalin *verbally* criticized all bureaucrats, but allowed Lenin's "DdP" to be completely absorbed in the party and state bureaucrats, and the intellectual bureaucrats to become his *inquisitors* to consolidate his personal power. That means: He could put *all* bureaucrats - and not just these - under general suspicion and "drop" if he saw fit. Paranoid as he was, he constantly viewed his power as threatened. Everywhere he sensed deviation, conspiracy and rebellion. He wanted to nip any (actual or potential) questioning of his power or even rebellion against it in the bud. So that everyone - even the closest friends - became potential enemies, on whom "examples should be made" if necessary. With which he increased Lenin's *power fanaticism* to the immeasurable, absolutely criminal.

In the face of such horrors, other differences between Stalin and Lenin are far less relevant. It should only be mentioned that Stalin did not, like Lenin, speak of "state capitalism" and "bureaucratic utopia", but of "socialism in one country", the realization of which he officially announced in 1936 as a preliminary stage to communism, while the DdP, its end on the same occasion he proclaimed that long before that - along with socialism - had perished in the great Bolshevik uniformity of party and state bureaucracy (see above).

There is no need to show that Stalin was even further removed from Marx and Engels, the accomplished critics of the bureaucracy and advocates of council democracy, than from Lenin. Kofler writes: "But socialism is much more than just a planned economy. Socialism is humanism with all its diverse and far-reaching problems that revolve around that goal which Marx called the self-realization of man." (op. cit., p. 73). Not only as a result of what *Trotsky called* "the betrayed revolution", but also through his betrayal of democracy, humanism, ethics, law and emancipation, Stalin distorted the substance of the teachings of Marx and Engels and brought it into disrepute worldwide. Kofler's answer to this: "Only through a serious reunification of Marxism and humanism will that conceptual basis be created from which a serious fight against the Stalinist bureaucracy, which invokes Marxism, becomes possible. Only such a return to original and genuine Marxism will pave the way for democratic socialism to the hearts and minds of those millions who suffer from the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy, but who also do not want to betray socialism" (op. p. 74). That is to say: It was not just since 1952, when Kofler wrote this, that socialism and democracy belong together absolutely and inseparably!

From 1953: "structural continuity" despite de-Stalinization? DdP, party and state bureaucracy in and outside the USSR

c) in the USSR

"Putin's secret role model: 66 years after his death, Russia's cruelest dictator is celebrating an amazing comeback." This is what *Alexandra Hilpert* wrote in an article in September 2019 about an astonishing "return" of Stalin in Russia. Accordingly, at the time "according to a survey ... 70 percent of Russians perceived the former Soviet dictator as positive." ^[78] For Putin himself, sympathies for Stalin are not without risk, for example in terms of foreign policy. Alexandra Hilpert asks how it is possible that sympathy for the mass murderer Stalin is shown again in today's Russia. The Eastern European historian *Rudolf A. Mark* replies that in today's Russia there is "a completely different picture of rule and state", especially since there, unlike in Germany, a "democracy movement" never took place. Stalin still embodies the victory of the Russians in World War II; he made their homeland "from an agricultural to an industrialized country" and "advanced the Bolshevik project towards communism, which has made him a great leader in the eyes of many Russians to this day. Stalin is seen as the one in history under whom the country became great, powerful, even a superpower, which was on a par with the industrialized countries of the West." (op. cit., p. 3). This may be true except for the assertion that Stalin's reputation as a "state leader" is based on the continuation of Bolshevism "towards communism". Because that would mean that Stalin was right when he proclaimed the "victory of socialism" in the USSR in 1936 as a precursor to communism. I have shown why this is absurd (see p. 58 f).

De-Stalinization: only half-heartedly?

Almost incomprehensible, a Stalin-Renaissance in Russia, considering what a Stalin-criticism has started there after his death. As a representative for this I quote first from *Khrushchev's* secret speech on the XX. CPSU party congress of 1956, in which it was said that it was "inadmissible and contrary to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism ... to highlight a person and make him a superman who possesses god-like, supernatural qualities, a person who supposedly knows everything, sees everything, thinks for everyone, can do everything and is infallible in all his behavior." Such a belief, namely in Stalin, was "cultivated for many years" in the USSR ^[79] - They were sentences with an unbelievable effect, but still without resonance; because the party congress delegates initially looked "petrified, hardly dare to breathe, there is dead silence in the hall", as Khrushchev continued: "Stalin did not bother to convince people, to enlighten them and to work patiently with them, but he forced others his views and demanded absolute submission to his opinion. Anyone who opposed his conception or to represent his own point of view, tried to prove the correctness of his own position, was inevitably expelled from the leadership collective and then destroyed both morally and physically." (ibid.). For the first time, a Soviet head of government described Stalin in a speech, even if only to party comrades, as what he really was: a paranoid, criminal despot. Nevertheless, Khrushchev was guilty of half-measures: *he only addressed Stalin's attacks on party comrades, not those on the entire Soviet people*. And this despite the fact that Khrushchev himself was a henchman of Stalin, personally responsible for numerous "purges" or executions.

What follows Khrushchev's speech is ambivalent: on the one hand, de-Stalinization, what the writer *Ilya Ehrenburg* describes with the title of the novel "Thaw"; on the other hand, especially in the Brezhnev era (1964-82), clear symptoms of increasing *neo-Stalinism* (even if some sociologists, according to *Werner Hofmann*, denied this term because there had also been de-Stalinization under Brezhnev confirmed by the development.)

The "thaw" particularly benefited the cultural workers, who were now allowed to criticize the "so-called" production and kolkhoz literature "with its stereotypical heroes, the clichés and the conflict-free atmosphere".^[80] Letters now called for "truthfulness and sincerity" instead of a blind belief in progress. Nevertheless, the Kremlin leadership continued to be meticulous to ensure that such criticism did not become "too strong" and harassed some progressive minds like *Boris Pasternak* again.

The greatest upheavals were found in the economy, for example in the blatant shortage of consumer goods as a result of forced industrialization and the violent collectivization of agriculture. Far-reaching reforms failed here because of persistent priorities, for example in favor of heavy industry, not least in the area of armaments and space travel. It was also not possible to "reform basic planned economy deficits" (loc. cit. p. 4). Some judicial reforms, which for example led to the release of millions of prisoners and forced laborers from the GULags, were more successful. - Although Khrushchev again called for de-Stalinization at a party congress in 1961, he could not stop its (provisional?) end, especially after his disempowerment in 1964.

Neostalinism

In the Brezhnev era, this change of course was called "normalization", this relapse behind Khrushchev's reform efforts. From 1965 Stalin was partially rehabilitated, for example because of his victory in World War II. His crimes were hardly mentioned any more. "The change of course in the massive restriction of freedom of expression became even clearer. Among other things, the two dissident writers Andrei Sinjowski and Juli Daniel were arrested and Alexander Solzhenitsyn's house was searched. At the end of January 1966, the central party newspaper Pravda wrote that a number of mistakes had been made in the course of de-Stalinization, the exposure of the personality cult had gone too far and the term "period of the personality cult" was generally un-Marxist and wrong: It was also claimed that the struggle against the Stalinist personality cult would have led to nihilism and cosmopolitanism as well as other anti-Leninist ideas and movements."^[81] - Khrushchev's efforts to reform domestic politics and economics, especially agriculture, were ostracized. Instead, Brezhnev tried again and again, in some ways similar to Stalin, to strengthen his own power and that of the Communist Party, for example by intensifying censorship and persecuting dissidents, while prison conditions in the prison camps deteriorated again.

On the other hand, the term Stalinism as *apolitical catchphrase* made a career - up to the present day. "For example, Vladimir Putin's political system of "guided democracy" - Putinism - is interpreted as a neo-Stalinist." (op. cit. p. 3). - For the time being, the neo-Stalinist activities were only ended in 1985 by *Mikhail Gorbachev*, who described the Brezhnev system as "a Stalinism without repression, but with absolute control of everything and everyone" (loc. cit. p. 2).

"Structural Continuity" - Bureaucratic Rule Without End?

That the DdP considered by Marx and Engels would ever be transformed into a bureaucratic party and state dictatorship

could not be foreseen and was certainly neither wanted nor considered by Marx and Engels. And yet this monstrous, historically unique dictatorship was not only continued for the most part in the USSR, even after Stalin's death, but was also introduced in other countries (see below).

However, it cannot be overlooked that some significant, if not structural changes, in particular due to Khrushchev, but also still occurred in the Brezhnev era. The historian *Vadim Rogovin* said in a lecture given in 1996: "After Stalin's death, the ruling bureaucracy, which had lost important levers of totalitarian rule, was forced to make certain concessions to the egalitarian aspirations of the masses. Immediately after Stalin's death, social reforms and social programs were carried out that were aimed at improving the living conditions of low-paid and poorly-wealthy sections of the population. As a result, the standard of living of these classes rose, while the situation of the ruling bureaucracy and the privileged intelligentsia deteriorated proportionally. The hidden conflict between the higher strata of the intelligentsia and the bureaucracy became apparent in the 1960s and 1970s, on the one hand in the dissident movement and on the other in emigration. This conflict was not only connected with the fact that the intelligentsia was striving for more intellectual freedom and seeking access to power. It also arose out of a painful reaction to the loss of the material privileges that this class enjoyed under Stalin. As for the bureaucracy, however, it responded to the loss of its privileges with a hitherto unknown rise in corruption."
[\[82\]](#)

Does this mean that the party and state bureaucracy has lost its real power in the "real existing socialism"? This is not only countered by Gorbachev's statement that the bureaucratic one-party state is an "administrative and command system" that has renounced systematic terror, but not totalitarian control (see above). *Wolfgang Leonhard* explains just as clearly as early as 1967: "After Stalin's death in March 1953, the third period in the development of the state security organs began - a period that is characterized by both internal contradictions and the "half-heartedness" of the resolutions. In 1953/58 the state security organs were disempowered and subordinated to the party. Denouncing was reprimanded, the competence of the terrorist apparatus curtailed drastically in order to give the party and state bureaucracy a relative security. These changes also correspond to the realization that industrial workers, technicians, scientists in a modernizing society can only fulfill their tasks if they are granted a certain freedom of choice. Terror was no longer the basis of the system, as it was under Stalin, but its regulatory element.

On the other hand, there are narrow limits to this development. As before, the party leadership wants to direct and control all questions of society - but with this the endeavor returns again and again to want to solve newly emerging, difficult problems with "administrative" methods and coercion. "The administration of justice is still an instrument of state policy, the judges pronounce their rights according to the instructions of the party organs. The uncontrolled mass terror of Stalin is a thing of the past, but the transition from the arbitrary methods of Stalin to the rule of law has not materialized."
[\[83\]](#) The party and state bureaucracy is only apparently losing its actual position of power. One renounces systematic terror, but not the bureaucracy as such, on the contrary: under the sign of a "cautious" de-Stalinization, the extensive renunciation of terrorism is classified as an achievement "in order to give the party and state bureaucracy a relative security", but continues to exercise administrative pressure in the event of difficult problems.

Stefan Plaggenborg rightly comes to the conclusion that after Stalin there was not only a "structural continuity" in the exercise of power, but also that every attempt to change this structure thoroughly failed even up to 1990: "... so we can say that the permanent task from 1954 to 1990 was to change the Stalinist structural continuity, which, as is well known, never succeeded".
[\[84\]](#)

The astonishing thing is that at that time it was nevertheless possible at times to introduce *anew social policy* and improve the standard of living of the masses, even if this happened because the regime was trying to "buy loyalty from the population" (op. cit., p. 19)). But with too little success, especially as the new social policy in the long run proved *not to be financed*. After all, one can justifiably claim that the USSR also developed into an industrial and educational society at that time. Whereby Plaggenborg, unlike Gorbachev, comes to the conclusion that "a society through and through public and controlled by the regime" could not be talked about, especially since an "increasing privatization of the Soviet people" had taken place since the late 1950s (loc. cit p. 22). Plaggenborg substantiates these theses by referring to new "mini-societies" that emerged from work collectives in the companies that "only had a low degree of social networking" (ibid.). - Unfortunately, it is not possible for me to check these theses in detail. However, in my opinion, these theses do not change anything in Plaggenborg's basic thesis of the *structural continuity* of the *party and state bureaucracy*, as Gorbachev also rightly complained about. Apart from that: It is unlikely that any regime anywhere in the world has succeeded in constantly monitoring *everything!*

Excursus: Putin's "bureaucratic authoritarianism"

Even Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Putin obviously could not do without the bureaucracy, apparently in mutual interest. This is without prejudice to the fact that none of the three heads of state has expressly committed to the DdP. Both Gorbachev and Yeltsin at least expressed their will to curtail the power of the bureaucrats, but followed up with no or only inadequate action.

Putin, too, occasionally criticizes the bureaucracy, blaming it for grievances and failures. Putin does not want to be a bureaucrat or a dictator, but promotes what *Lilia Shevtsova* (2006) calls "bureaucratic authoritarianism". "State bureaucratic capitalism" is the basis of this new type of Russian bureaucracy, which Putin established through a series of power-political measures. These include "the establishment of presidential representatives in the regions, the immobilization of the oligarchs and regional barons, the liquidation of independent mass media, the transition to an appointment of governors, the establishment of a "party of power" (" United Russia ") devoted to the Kremlin, the tightened control of social non-governmental organizations - all of this became the foundation of the new power regime."^[85] Although Putin does not seem to shy away from breaking the constitution, for example when he asserted the right to the approval of the constitutional court. But not the law, but "acting" as you see fit "and not according to the law has received its formal legitimation". In doing so, Putin does not primarily rely on the use of force, but rather establishes "clientelistic relationships based on protection" (op. cit., p. 2).

All of these leads to the strengthening of the bureaucratic-authoritarian class of society, while the economy is expanding, albeit partly in a one-sided manner, namely towards a "petro-state", to which L. Shevtsova writes: "During Putin's reign a layer of oligarchic Apparachiks has been formed who control property without owning it and without being responsible for it. It has developed into a parasitic class of "reindeer". Under the slogan of the "energy-political superpower", the ruling class has tried to produce global ambitions and to reconcile them with self-reproduction through the exploitation of raw material reserves. The evolution of the Russian state in the direction of a "petro-state" could end with Russia becoming a raw material appendage for the world community. With no small risks, because attempts are being made to reconcile "petro-state" and nuclear power. In order to avoid such risks in terms of consciousness, the power elite is trying again to play the card of *nationalism*. It is no coincidence that Putin's party calls itself "United Russia"; it stimulates "the Russian idea" in connection with anti-Western sentiment among other things. But L. Shevtsova sees little chance of lasting success for such populist tendencies, for the following reason: "The hopes of a section of the elite to reconstruct the empire have little chance. Russia felt the need for the national at the moment when the world was experiencing the crisis of the nation-state paradigm, which only makes the Russian development seem even more hopeless." (Globalization has indeed created a "crisis of the nation-state paradigm", but at the same time, as a reaction to this crisis, a renewed flare-up of nationalism worldwide!) - It remains to be seen whether Shevtsova's pessimism will prove to be true in the long run. In any case, the claim that Putin has an interest in reviving the Stalin cult (see above) seems to put into perspective. There is no doubt, however, that critical escalations - as in the *case of Navalny* in 2021 - are not signs of a prosperous development.

Little surprising, however, is the *structural continuity of the bureaucracy*. The (state) bureaucracy apparently survives every crisis in ever new forms. A worldwide phenomenon, the effects of which are hardly foreseeable and in any case should not be taken lightly. There is probably no prospect of radical democratization - in Russia and elsewhere - as long as the "giant bureaucracies" prevent any significant structural change, not least by exercising "a kind of inner solidarity among themselves" ^[86]

b) outside the USSR (or Russia)

On developments in the post-Stalin era

I consider it out of the question to describe *all* manifestations of Bolshevik rule all over the world in the context of this work. A consistently reliable overview is provided by *Das Schwarzbuch Kommunismus* (1998, see bibliography), even if it does not always seem to be devoid of detail and black and white painting. - In the following I give a number of examples that I think are particularly relevant.

In almost all countries of the so-called Eastern Bloc, from 1953 onwards there were mass movements and uprisings against the Communist Party regime. Mention should be made in particular of June 17, 1953 in the GDR, the Poznan workers' uprising in 1956, the Hungarian people's uprising in the same year, the "Prague Spring" of 1968, the Polish Solidarnosc

movement from 1980 and the political mass movements that at the end of the 1980s contributed - often decisively - to the collapse of the rule of the "communist" party and state bureaucracies throughout the entire Eastern Bloc.

GDR: June 17, 1953 and after

In the spring of 1953 a serious food crisis broke out in the GDR, caused primarily by wrong decisions by the SED leadership, which, following the Stalinist example, unilaterally favored heavy industry, so that - reinforced by errors in the planned economy - there was such a serious shortage of food that, among other things, rationing through food cards had to be introduced. - The June uprising was triggered by a *decision to drastically increase labor standards*, through which the SED leadership wanted to overcome the economic crisis. How the population reacted to this in large parts can be guessed at if one reads the following description: "Before the unrest in the cities, there were resistance actions in many villages as early as June 12th. In more than 300 communities with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants, there were spontaneous protests in which, for example, flags were burned and the mayors and other SED officials were deposed, beaten and, in individual cases, thrown into cesspools. Farmers also organized protests in various district towns such as Jessen and Mühlhausen and took part in the demonstrations in the centers, including in Berlin. The Ministry of State Security later noted that the "fascist attempted coup on June 17, 1953 [showed] that the class opponent was concentrating his forces on the country." ^[87] The SED leadership blamed the "class enemy" for its own failure. Strangely, however, a realistic assessment of the events can be found in a leading article by the *socialist* theorist *Edvard Kardelj*, which appeared on June 28, 1953 in the Yugoslav party newspaper *Borba*. It says: "The driving force of these events is basically not the national moment; it is not just a problem for the Germans against a foreign occupation. No, this is primarily about the class protest of the German worker against state capitalist conditions, which the occupation forced on him as 'socialist' and 'proletarian' in the name of a 'socialist messianism', but which he did not recognize as 'proletarian' and 'socialist'. And precisely therein lies the historical significance of these events" (op. cit., p. 11). With this, Kardelj exposes - on the basis of a Marxist analysis - the SED rule as neither socialist nor proletarian, but *state capitalist*. A devastating judgment that implicitly affects the hectic reactions of the SED to combat the short and long-term effects of the uprising that was crushed by Soviet tanks. Because in the long term, the SED also failed to accelerate the "expansion of the oppressive apparatus that ultimately encompassed almost the entire population". (loc. cit. p. 12).

On the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in the GDR

Since the DdP was defined as the "political rule of the working class" in the transition from capitalism to communism, the SED leadership could refer to it in all its decisions, even if at times only in a covert or indirect form. Especially when it came to providing wage earners with certain concessions, for example in the allocation of apartments, but also in terms of remuneration, so that it was not uncommon for "unskilled workers ... to earn as much as, for example, senior doctors or engineers". ^[88] However, the SED only succeeded in justifying this with the DdP using seemingly adventurous arguments such as the following: Since the "working class" (often instead of "proletariat"!) is numerically the largest, their interests are at the same time "state goals", so that the DdP is actually a "*socialist democracy*" which - unlike the capitalist-bourgeois parliamentary one - is "truly democratic".... But: The reality in "real existing socialism" looked different! A comment in the *GDR lexicon* said: "This argumentation was certainly partially comprehensible or understandable for every citizen, but the result - the implementation - was often inadequate. Ultimately, the "birth defects" of the GDR from the time of Stalinism predominated, and actually existed the contradiction between democracy and dictatorship, which according to SED doctrine only appeared to outsiders (synonymous *lack of class consciousness*),." (op. cit., p. 1 f.). Because, as is well known, there was actually *dictatorial*, ie *undemocratic*, repression in the GDR, supposedly "necessary measures", for example in the form of coercive measures by the Stasi against regime critics. - Until "in the autumn of 1989 the mood in the factories changed from waiting tolerance (and acceptance of social privileges) to open rejection of the SED leadership", which "accelerated the disintegration of the Politburo considerably" (op. cit., p. 2).

The workers' uprising in Poznan, Poland in 1956 and its consequences

The reasons for the outbreak of this uprising at the end of June 1956 were similar to those for June 17, 1953 in the GDR: poor working conditions, poor wages, low standard of living for the workers, largely at the subsistence level or below; hope for de-Stalinization and liberation from oppression by the party and state bureaucracy. Even in comparison with before the war, the situation of wage earners had deteriorated dramatically. Direct triggers of the uprising were "the inaccuracies in the wage calculation, unreal production and productivity growth indicators as well as very bad working conditions in the factories". ^[89] The conflict escalated militarily when officials of the State Security Service shot at demonstrators on the morning of June 28. 57 people fell victim to the fierce fighting that ensued. - The Polish CP put the blame for the events on

“imperialist”, especially US and West German secret services, for which, however, no evidence whatsoever was provided. In reality it was a spontaneous resistance movement with broad popular support. And then? The source stated: “For the next 25 years, the communist authorities blocked all information about the bloody events. The historians were prevented from researching the sources, the censorship successfully suppressed all mentions of June '56. The most active participants in these events were harassed for many years.” (op. cit., p. 5).

Nonetheless, the uprising, like a similar one in 1970, is considered a milestone on Poland's path to liberation from Communist Party rule and complete national independence in 1989. Not less significant are the activities of the

Solidarnosc Union.

The union, which was founded in 1980, consciously built on the earlier insurrection and protest movements, but used other means to prevent government intervention. At the beginning: “In 1980 Poland was in an economic crisis. The living conditions of many Poles are getting worse and worse. When the government announced drastic increases in food prices in the summer, workers took to the streets. On August 15, 1980, the workers from Gdansk joined and occupied their shipyard. The electrician Lech Walesa becomes the leader. In addition to higher wages, the shipyard workers are also demanding that Anna should get her job back.”^[90] Anna refers to a crane operator who was dismissed for apparently trivial reasons.

After violent strikes and disputes, for example in the form of factory occupations by workers, an agreement was initially reached with the government at the end of August 1980 and an independent trade union was approved for the first time in the Eastern Bloc. Solidarnosc is getting more and more members, after all almost 10 million.

However, under pressure from the USSR, *martial law* was proclaimed in Poland and Solidarnosc was banned just a year later. Nevertheless, the government did not manage to end the protests. Although Solidarnosc was not officially approved again until April 1989, the union negotiated with the government from the middle of the year onwards towards the *system change*, which finally took place in 1990 when Lech Walesa was elected president.

Even Walesa could not prevent the later loss of importance and political disintegration of his movement, for the following reasons: “In the following years Solidarnosc lost political influence, as it was made responsible for the economic and social consequences of the change. In the parliamentary elections in 1993, it lost participation in the government. In 1996 the electoral alliance AWS (*Akcja Wyborcza "Solidarnosc"*) was formed, which was once again involved in a coalition government from 1997 to 2000. After the election defeat in 2001, AWS disintegrated. - The Solidarnosc trade union no longer plays a party political role. Nevertheless, it continues to exist as a strong and independent union.”^[91] The astonishing thing about the events is probably the fact that it was possible for the first time to found a union workers' organization with political weight outside of the Communist Party formations. It is rightly noted that Solidarnosc “decisively advanced the system change”, that is, initiated the beginning of the end of the Communist Party regime in Poland as early as 1980.

On the Hungarian uprising of 1956

Since 1949 Hungary was considered a “workers and peasants state”, in which the separation of powers was abolished and a Communist Party “presidential council” under the Stalinist *Rákosi* practically held all power, while the country was still occupied by Soviet troops.^[92] There were terror and show trials on the Stalinist model. Politically and economically, the country was under complete control by the USSR. But after Khrushchev's “secret speech” of February 1956, this led to protest movements, initially mainly from the student side. The protesters demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the abolition of the personality cult, civil liberties, free elections, parliamentarism and national independence; Demands that were emphasized in a mass demonstration on October 23, 1956, which led to widespread solidarity and ultimately the formation of revolutionary committees and the armed uprising. *Workers' councils* called for participation in power, a general right to strike and freedom of religion.

Already on October 24th Soviet troops began to suppress the uprising. The subsequent “wave of purges” killed more than 350 people who were executed, including numerous prominent politicians such as *Imre Nagy*. His successor *Kádár*, who was loyal to Moscow, initially returned to Stalinist methods, but later carried out domestic political reforms, which also went down in the history books as “goulash communism”. After 1989, “communism” also fell in Hungary, and the demands of the protesters of 1956 were largely met.

"Special cases"

a) China

Also called "People's Republic", although in it all power does not come from the people, but from the omnipresent CPC, and that up to the present day. This is in clear contrast to the Communist Parties of the Eastern Bloc, which were disempowered without exception from 1989 onwards. Just like the "PR" of China, since its foundation by Mao Zedong in 1949, has always sought and found its own way. This is not least due to the decades-long autocracy of Mao, who - initially according to the "tried and tested" Leninist-Stalinist model - relied on the party and state bureaucracy. And at first rather casually on the doctrine of the DdP. Wikipedia says: "In Maoism, the Marxian idea of a dictatorship of the proletariat initially played no role, since in Mao Zedong's revolutionary theory the transition to socialism was brought about not by one, but by four classes: in addition to the workers, also by the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the "national bourgeoisie". The government they formed works, as Mao explained in a speech in 1949, as "a democracy for the people and a dictatorship over the reactionaries".^[93] Mao expresses himself in detail in the treatise *On the question of the correct solution of contradictions in the people* (1957), where he writes: "Our state is a state of the dictatorship of the people's democracy under the leadership of the working class, based on the alliance of workers and peasants. What is the purpose of this dictatorship? The first function of the dictatorship is to suppress reactionary classes and elements and those exploiters within the country who oppose the socialist revolution, as well as those who disrupt socialist construction; this is done to resolve the contradictions between us and our enemies in the country. The dictatorship includes, for example, the arrest of certain counter-revolutionaries and their conviction, as well as the temporary deprivation of the right to vote and freedom of speech for landowners and bureaucratic capitalists. In order to protect the socialist order and secure the interests of the people, the exercise of dictatorship is also necessary against thieves, fraudsters, murderers, arsonists, gangs of drifters and all negative elements that seriously undermine the social order. - The second function of the dictatorship is to protect the country from subversive activity and possible aggression from foreign enemies. When these circumstances arise, the task of the dictatorship externally is to resolve the contradictions between us and our enemies. - The purpose of the dictatorship is to protect the whole people so that they can work in peace and build China into a socialist state with modern industry, modern agriculture, and modern science and culture. The measures of the dictatorship are not applied within the people. The people themselves cannot exercise dictatorship against themselves, nor can one part of the people oppress another part of the people. ... Democratic centralism is applied within the people. ..." ^[94]

Mao blurs the difference between democracy and dictatorship here, among other things, by describing his state as that of the "dictatorship of people's democracy" - where "people's democracy" is a pleonasm, because in "democracy" the term "people" is already present. Obviously, Mao wants to justify all repressive measures against opponents of the regime from the outset. He gives the "people's democratic" dictatorship legal powers against criminals as well, but contradicts himself a little later when he emphasizes that the "measures of the dictatorship ... do not apply within the people" and on top of that declares that "within the people democratic centralism to apply" (op. cit. p. 82). This means nothing other than the official authorization of one's own party to take action against members of the opposition, "if necessary" with force. So Mao builds up new contradictions, although on the other hand - as in the cited article and in an earlier *On the Contradictions* (1937) - he allegedly offers tried and tested means of resolving such contradictions.

Regardless of this, he propagates, in addition to DdP and "democratic centralism", a "panacea" *practice*. Although this must cooperate with the corresponding theories, it always has an unconditional priority over them. So that one's own, often arbitrary, practice of exercising power has absolute priority, in the name of the DdP, equated with "democratic centralism".

Which probably explains the devastating consequences of the ever new, often terrorist, political and propaganda campaigns launched by Mao himself. "The total number of victims under Mao's regime from 1949 to 1976 is estimated at 35 to 80 million."^[95] So that in a program broadcast by Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk in 2020 it was rightly stated that Mao was the man "who liberated China and plunged it into misery".^[96] In fact, the "Great Leap Forward" of the late 1950s caused a terrible famine in which around 30 million Chinese died of starvation. And this only because Mao believed that the farmers he knew on his side could also produce steel in small, self-made "blast furnaces" in order to make up for China's lag in industrialization. With the result that inferior, mostly unusable steel was produced and the farmers did not or only insufficiently fulfill their actual tasks.

Something similar happened a few years later (1966-1976) as a result of the "Cultural Revolution"; where it was neither about culture nor about revolution, but primarily about Mao's personal need to settle accounts with domestic, "pragmatic" opponents. To do this, he mainly used young people, the so-called "Red Guards", who were supposed to take action against

the "Four Olds" - ideas, culture, customs, habits - with the result: "In the collective madness, students and pupils hunt down everyone mercilessly suspicious items. Children denounce their parents, friends extradite each other, teachers are tortured to death by schoolgirls. The exact number of victims is still unknown. Estimates range from a few hundred thousand to ten million." (loc. cit. p. 4).

The fact that Mao and the devoted CCP remained in power despite such catastrophes is apparently mainly due to what *Josef Mondl* (2014) calls *China's dual bureaucracy*^[97], a phenomenon that stands in stark contradiction to the fact that Mao himself initially - like Lenin and Stalin - criticized the bureaucracy, especially the bourgeois one, but had to take it over for better or for worse, otherwise the administration would have collapsed due to a lack of staff.

"Dual bureaucracy" means that the authorities and companies at all levels have to submit their employees to the complete control of party committees. So that the party officials who watch over "everything" make all the important decisions, which they then leave to the state bureaucracy to carry out. Up to tribunals, which are often carried out in public, especially since the bureaucracy has more information in judicial matters than the party, but which they are always willing to provide. "Rule of law" in China still means that "the administration of China functions according to guidelines and norms which are determined and implemented by the party" (op. cit., p. 3).

The extent to which the bureaucracy has spread within the CCP is evident from an interview that *Peter Symonds* conducted in China in 2020 with a young Chinese person belonging to the CCP, whose name was not given for security reasons. According to this, the party bureaucracy under Mao relied on "nationalized property relations", but later, in the Deng era, found new ways of exercising power and influencing.^[98] Deng himself justified these new forms of dictatorship by declaring: "*Historical experience has shown that our political power can only be consolidated with dictatorship. Actually, we should let our people enjoy democracy. But in order to be superior to our enemies, we must practice dictatorship - the democratic dictatorship of the people*".^[99] (What Mao had already expressed similarly, see above!) Accordingly, the attempts of *Mikhail Gorbachev* to reform the USSR through glasnost and perestroika were criticized harshly. Gorbachev failed because he had politically disempowered himself, so that he was not able to solve the economic problems of the USSR. (See Tofall *ibid.*, footnote no.99). Nonetheless, one must ask:

How did China's opening to a market economy come about from around 1983?

Amazingly, neither the CCP nor its leadership nor the party and state bureaucracy actually succeeded in doing this, but rather the social class to which Mao owed his rise - not least in the "people's war" against the bourgeois nationalist Kuomintang: the *peasants*. However, this was preceded by a people's congress in 1978, at which their *increase in labor productivity* was made a program, essentially at the instigation of *Deng*. *Uwe Behrens* (2021, p. 85) writes about this: "With the reform initiated by Deng Xiaoping and the opening of Chinese society, a rapid economic upswing began, which within a few decades made China, next to the USA, the strongest economic power in the world. The approach was pragmatic, not ideological. "No matter what the cat looks like, black or white, the main thing is that it catches mice," Deng explained ... "The reforms were initially tested in the countryside, in some villages, with the re-approval of *family production*. With the result that some of the suddenly newly motivated farmers were able to increase their yields "by eighteen times" (!) (loc. cit. p. 86): "They met the state taxes, were able to feed themselves adequately and on top of that also on the free market sell 'free tips', from which others now also benefit. The example caught on and finally reached Beijing. Deng welcomed this model and recommended it to be used everywhere. Under three conditions: *First*: Land remains the property of the municipality. *Second*: Only families receive usage rights. *Third*: The profits are only privatized after the state taxes have been serviced. But there is no upper limit." (*ibid.*)

The final breakthrough came in 1983 and was immediately celebrated by the CCP as a form of "socialist collective economy" and "further development of the Marxist agricultural theory".^[100] In any case, the farmers had achieved their goal of "*family economy based on land reform*" and at the same time paved the way from a planned economy to a market economy for the whole of the People's Republic of China. Specifically: "The introduction of the family economy brought record harvests at the beginning of the 80s. The CP also believed that they had found a new development strategy for agriculture. In this way, after the defeat of Marxism, the party converted the victory of the peasantry into a new theory" (Pam *ibid.*).

Which in fact did not mean the end of one-party rule, but the opposite: The CCP not least benefited from the so-called "meritocracy", a selection system that only allows those cadres to rise to management positions who meet the strictest selection criteria. (Cf. Behrens op. cit., p. 103 ff.) - In fact, the Communist Party rule was so strengthened that in 1989 it

could even afford to act with bloody terror against the democratic insurrection movement on Tienanmen Square.

The "social credit system": total surveillance?

In China, "socialist market economy" means a hybrid structure of the market and total control by the CCP under its current ruler Xi Jinping, who officially invokes the tradition "from Marx to Mao" and at the same time claims to strengthen the conventional family and finally security wanting to guarantee in the country. Why a special kind of surveillance system has been devised in which state-of-the-art media, big data and artificial intelligence are used. The latter, the AI, allegedly already makes it possible to identify every single person within 1 second by facial recognition, and this with a population of approx. 1.4 billion! In addition, a so-called "social credit system" is currently being introduced, whereby "credit" means not only financial but also *general* "trust". According to this, every person appears either on a red or a black list, as stated in an interview in 'Cicero online': "The red lists contain citizens or companies that have distinguished themselves through particularly social behavior according to the standards of the Chinese government, having done, for example, volunteer services or donated money. The black lists include citizens or companies who, according to government standards, have attracted attention through particularly unsocial or illegal behavior. " [\[101\]](#)

In reality it is a system of total control and surveillance, a kind of modern *1984*, which, however, surprisingly, does not seem to be perceived as such by most Chinese. According to surveys, around 80% of the Chinese surveyed even rate the new system as positive. Reason for this: Many people expect the system to offer discounts that have been denied to them so far, eg train and plane tickets, cash credits, etc. The catch: You can find out your own score at regular intervals, but not the reasons why you get more or fewer points allocated. All the more astonishing is the high level of acceptance for this highly efficient system of the Transparent Man (see footnote no. 101!).

I see the only advantage of this system in the fact that the *artificial intelligence* is apparently kept under control in it; this in contrast to the wild fantasies of super intelligence, "singularity" and immortality, which are associated with AI in Silicon Valley, for example.

But neither here nor in China is an "ethics of behavior control" [\[102\]](#) to recognize according to what the physicist and brain researcher *Christoph von der Malsburg* demanded in view of the threats posed by AI. One could assume that the Communist Party of China is concerned with the complete implementation of the "general legislation" sought by *Kant*. Which is not the case, however. Because obviously the main concern of the CPC is to cement its *legislative omnipotence*; and not, as with Kant, about guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of the person on the basis of general legislation. On the contrary: freedom and dignity of the person fall by the wayside. The fact that the Chinese law professor *Feng Xiang* has recently allegedly announced that AI will "usher in the end of capitalism" and enable a "digital planned economy" does not change that. [\[103\]](#)

Contradictions in environmental policy

Additionally, there are other notable facts and factors in the latest development. So also with regard to environmental policy, and perhaps even with regard to the theory of *democratic eco-socialism*. [\[104\]](#) But: With regard to the environmental policy of the CPC, we have received contradicting reports. On the one hand, China - in contrast to the USA of Trump - is sticking to the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 and accordingly promotes the use of renewable energies, but on the other hand it is pushing still (ie in 2020) - and even worldwide! - coal consumption and thus CO2 emissions, which will only be significantly reduced after 2030. A *taz* article from January 23, 2019 states: "No country in the world invests as much money in renewable energies as China. In 2017, around 200 billion US dollars flowed globally into new solar cells, wind farms, hydropower plants and biomass plants - 45 percent of them in China.

But that's only half the story. A new report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) shows that China is also making significant contributions to the global expansion of coal-fired power plants. [\[105\]](#) It should be noted that China is currently responsible for around a third of global consumption with around 10 billion tons of coal annually. This in strange contradiction to the environmental successes that China has to show, for example in the fight against smog in the metropolitan areas, the massive expansion of electric mobility, the ban on garbage imports, etc. The dependency on coal-fired power plants was expected to be reduced from 64% in 2015 to 58% in 2020; but this is relatively little in view of Xi Jinping's announcement that they want to forego the previous growth targets in favor of "*sustainable development*".

At this point the question can be asked to what extent the above facts and figures can be transferred to western and especially German conditions. A few examples: There have never been smog problems to the same extent as in China,

because coal-burning has existed in this country as well, but never as in China. And: How should one be able to accomplish the complete phase-out of coal in China by around 2038, as it should take place in Germany?

It should also be borne in mind that environmental policy in China is completely controlled by the Communist Party - a circumstance that would probably never meet with majority approval in our society. Especially since the very different political and ideological framework has to be taken into account, in which China tries to achieve the difficult balancing act between ecology and economy. - A new synthesis of ecology and socialism - especially as the theory of democratic eco-socialism - cannot be derived from this, especially since the numerous reasons mentioned above speak against it.

In spite of this: "the greatest modernization project in human history"?

It cannot be concealed that there are authors who create a different, "rosier" image of China than the one I have traced. For example, the aforementioned *Uwe Behrens*, a manager and management consultant from the GDR who lived and worked in China for almost 30 years. In his book *Feindbild China - Everything we don't know about the People's Republic* (2021), he claims that "the greatest modernization project in human history" has been taking place in China since 1980, or more precisely: "The Chinese dream, as they call it themselves, is that of building a society with modest prosperity, creating a rich, strong, democratic, civilized and modern country with a satisfied population. China relies on harmony instead of hegemony. It does not regard any state as an enemy." (loc. cit. p. 7 and 9). The social credit system (see above) - Behrens also calls it the "social point system" - is primarily a reaction to the collapse of the market economy, which forced the Chinese government to solve two basic problems as quickly as possible: a) to establish rules for the market economy and b) to considerably raise the level of culture and education of the population. In order to standardize all existing regulations, a new evaluation system should be introduced, precisely the social credit system, which, as Behrens claims, should not primarily serve the control and monitoring, but the development of a modern civil society. Behrens' conclusion: "Such a discussion about the Chinese social credit system, as it is being carried out in Germany or the USA, is not known in China. Not because it is suppressed, but because they don't have any problems with it. A society with over 1.4 billion people with their special historical background must be organized and controlled differently than a comparatively small state in Europe. The Chinese leadership has the trust of its citizens; the government is seen as a partner, not a guardian. Therefore, one also leaves the personal data to them so that they can work with it and do what they deem necessary." (op. cit. p. 74 f.). And for the problems of data security, a solution will allegedly be found through a new data protection law based on the EU and US models.

In addition, it is important to properly appreciate the differences between Chinese and Western traditions and value systems, especially with regard to the relationship between the individual and society. Behrens writes: "In Chinese society, the collective has priority. This primacy emphasizes the duties of the individual towards the family, society and ultimately towards the state. A society fixated on the collective regards the receding of individual interests behind those of society and for their benefit as a natural virtue. With this self-image, even measures by the state that restrict personal freedoms and rights are accepted. In the interests of the *harmony of society*, the individual fits into the collective. The state is understood as the protector of the individual - it guarantees internal and external security, the prosperity and well-being of the individual as well as all other people. This makes "the state" responsible and forces it to act sensibly every day. Otherwise the state would lose its credibility and thus its legitimacy." (op. cit., p. 79 f.). The broad approval of the population for "democratic centralism" should also be understood in this context. This seems even quite democratic because the CCP has provided "consultation mechanisms" through which one can do justice to the different interests of different social groups, whereby the legitimation of this system is based on the fact that it guarantees order and "prosperity". In the West this is unfortunately always misunderstood as "totalitarianism".

In addition, Behrens deals with a variety of other topics, such as the market economy, the fight against poverty, property relations, meritocracy, the indisputable ecological progress ("Green China") and the New Silk Road, but also sensitive problems such as the Uyghur question, Tibet and Hong Kong, subjects that I don't have to go into here.

The subtitle: "What was the recipe for success?" is very promising. However, it does not keep its promises, because Behrens mainly only refers to facts such as the expansion of the infrastructure, new industrial projects and the new "cities, railway lines, highways, ports, airports and, above all, industrial zones" built in record time (p. 96). Rather casually, Behrens also mentions undesirable developments such as rampant corruption and new inequalities due to the large number of new millionaires and billionaires.

Unlike some Western economists, Behrens does not describe the new Chinese economic system as a "socialist, even communist centrally-managed planned economy", but as neither genuinely socialist nor capitalist, namely as a "socialist with

a Chinese character, a hybrid" (op. cit. p. 93). - However, I dare to doubt whether Behrens uses the attribute "socialist" correctly here. Because there can be no real socialism without real democracy in a *realm of freedom*. I would rather describe today's Chinese economic system as a *market economy controlled by party and state bureaucracy*.

It also seems questionable to me how Behrens' overall extremely positive assessment of "PR" China is to be classified. Nobody will be able to decide *ad hoc* whether he is right, especially since things are in flux and "the last word in history" (if there can be such a thing at all) has not yet been spoken. - Some documents and analyzes not mentioned by Behrens, which I will use "finally", speak against the possibility of largely agreeing with Behrens' positive assessment.

The 1982 Chinese Constitution

In accordance with this, all power in Red China belongs to the people, including that of the state. Nonetheless, the main principles of Chinese politics are a) that the CCP is still "the only ruling party in China" and "leader of the Chinese people," and b) that a "people's democratic dictatorship" is exercised which is "its essence ..., according to the dictatorship of the proletariat", with the peasantry being "allies" of the proletariat, ie the working class, which is also the "leading class of the state".^[106] This corresponds to the statement: "The People's Republic of China is a socialist state under the democratic dictatorship of the people, which is led by the working class and is based on the alliance of workers and peasants" (ibid.). The "socialist" system, which is considered to be "fundamental", is based on this alliance, from which it follows: "Every organization and every individual who sabotages the socialist system is an enemy of the state and the people" (ibid.). After it was previously emphasized that the "PR" of China was founded by the CCP and thus owes its *raison d'être*, its actual basis of existence to it. Turned positively: The basic task and goal of the state is the building of a modern socialism "with Chinese characteristics", under the leadership of the CP, whereby formally apply the guidelines of Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of Mao Zedong, but actually those of the "Deng Xiaoping Theory" of reform, opening up and modernization. Accordingly, the "socialist institutions" should be perfected, the "socialist market economy" developed, the "socialist democracy" expanded and "the socialist legal order" perfected. All of this with the aim of "modernizing industry, agriculture, national defense and science and technology step by step and building China into a strong socialist state with highly developed democracy and civilization" (loc. cit., p. 2). Whereby the "organizational principle of the state organs ... " is the "democratic centralism" - and thus the inviolable rule of the CCP (ibid.).

What does it all mean?

1. The state power of the people is to be exercised through the National People's Congress and local people's congresses, but with the informative addition: "The people administer state affairs, economic, cultural and social affairs through various channels and in various forms." (ibid.). Which "channels and ... forms" are meant can easily be deduced from the next section, in which it says that the "united front" is "under the leadership of the Communist Party of China".
2. Socialism is equated with one-party dictatorship, which at the same time makes the determination of what is to be understood by socialism completely at the discretion of the CCP.
3. The democratic representation of the people is absorbed in the "democratic dictatorship", ie again in the sole rule of the CCP, which supposedly exercises the "dictatorship of the proletariat".
4. These reductions are legitimized by the national goal of modernizing the country and, as a result, securing the livelihood of every individual. For the sake of their own well-being, the individual has to submit to the CCP's claim to leadership.

It follows:

1. The CCP alone determines what socialism and democracy are according to their nature and their specifically Chinese forms. Socialism - originally conceived as a *community* - is reduced to the rule of a single party, the CCP and degenerates into a Dominion instrument. The Marxian goal of socialism to end the rule of people over people and, if necessary, to allow an "administration of things", is moving into an apparently unattainable distant future.
2. In fact, the CCP rules both people and things, not least with the latest technologies such as artificial intelligence. "The matter itself" - for *Hegel* the substance of history striving towards the subject - becomes a party-political matter, identical to the hegemony of the CCP.
3. The CCP defines democracy as the "democratic dictatorship of the people" = DdP = rule not of the whole people, but only one of its parts, the CP. An obvious reversal of the original meaning of democracy, namely to be the *rule of the people!* The rule of the CCP also means its exclusive power of disposal over the state's goals and their legitimation. What constitutes the well-being and modernization of the country and thus of all individuals is not

determined democratically or individually-democratically, but determined by the ruling party.

All these leads to the conclusion that the current constitution of the "PR" China is neither socialist nor democratic.

Current trends and developments

Nonetheless, it should be asked to what extent the everyday life of the Chinese is shaped by the ultimately undemocratic and non-socialist provisions and tendencies laid down in the constitution. The interview (from October 2020) between a young Chinese man and *Peter Symonds*, a journalist from the 'World Socialist Web Site', can help here. The young man, called 'Fu Hong' here, joined the CCP early for the sake of his professional future, but now calls it an "organization with a very high degree of bureaucratization", which is demonstrated by the fact that the CCP organized meetings at the workplace where almost always only the Communist Party functionaries had a say. "They convey to us the essence of the Party Center's political line and instructions from other leaders. Discussions among the participants do not take place. In principle, such topics are not discussed. Nobody ever asked a question. We never discuss political issues."^[107] Fu Hong paints the following picture of the current social situation in China: There is a new bourgeois, possessing class (of rich and millionaires), so that new class antagonisms have arisen. In league with the party and state bureaucracy, this new class oppresses "the working class and the masses". There is corruption within the bureaucracy. When President Xi pretends to fight them, he is masking the fact that he is actually on the side of the nouveau rich capitalists, whose efforts to streamline administration are undermined by corruption. In addition, some nouveau rich profit from the corruption, ally themselves with parts of the bureaucracy and thereby even could threaten the position of power of Xi.

That's why Control over freedom of speech has been tightened. The broad mass of the population is not allowed to have a political say. Fu Hong said: "In general, most people have not yet experienced a political awakening. In China you rarely get any political education. People probably don't even know how to discuss and describe political phenomena. They may not even be able to understand political issues inside and outside the country. Large sections of the population are dissatisfied with the current situation, but they do not know how to express it." (op. cit., p. 4). - Fu Hong is also dissatisfied with the present, but not without hope for the future. Whereby he explicitly refers to *socialist* traditions, mainly based on those of "Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky". It is precisely for this reason that he criticizes the undesirable developments that have occurred since Marx's time, including (misused) patriotism and nationalism and the contempt for theory. Xi has "completely thrown overboard the fundamental principles of Marxism" (op. cit., p. 6). Fu Hong is all the more hoping for a new socialist awakening, even a "new revolution" in China, which, however, "must be led by a real party of the working class" (op. cit., p. 7). According to Fu, the chances would increase drastically if there were socialist revolutions in the capitalist countries. And: "The masses in China are radicalizing. Their thinking is becoming more and more radical. The order in which the revolutions will break out and the form they will take is therefore difficult to predict at the moment. As far as China is concerned, it is certain that the masses are radicalizing." (ibid. ; Which, however, I consider to be a contradiction, because shortly before that, Fu Hong had claimed that most Chinese "had not yet experienced a political awakening".)

Therefore, I have to leave it open for the time being to what extent the young man's view is realistic and justified. Some dubious tendencies speak against them, as discussed in an astute article on *State capitalism in China*^[108] from 2018 . As a result of Deng's opening, China has now risen to become the world's second-strongest economy, but this has not led to the disappearance of the "party dictatorship of the ruling bureaucratic class", on the contrary: This new class has shamelessly enriched itself, it is almost like in the West, where capitalists have no resistance to fear from the population, especially since there are no free elections and real parliamentarism in China.

Anton Pam (2020) even sees the whole of China on the way back to capitalism. Above all, the *peasantry*, who since Mao has always been the pillar of the regime, could fall victim to this development. However, the further development of the market economy will "destroy the natural family economy and drive hundreds of millions of farmers off the clod".^[109] Pam's conclusion: "100 million farmers are already moving across the country in search of work. After joining the WTO, farmers also have to fear foreign competition in the long term. The liberalization of the economy threatens the existence of the remaining state workers and the peasant family. With this, the CP threatens to pull the rug out from under its own feet. - Whether it will be possible to transform the Chinese agrarian society into a modern bourgeois society in 100 years without the country sinking into civil war and chaos depends above all on one thing: the still unsolved peasant question." (Pam, op. cit., p. 24).

My conclusion :

If the dangers Pam pointed out do exist, the CCP will do well to pave the way for truly democratic reforms and new

progressive, truly socialist movements. The fact that the CCP is still preventing chaos (ie, keeping "everything" under its control) is no guarantee for the future.

b) Cambodia under Pol Pot (1975-1979)

The following excerpt from a report on the Pol Pot Central Prison and Death Camp Tuol Sleng, "the center of a terror network ... that extends to every corner of the country, shows what horrific excesses a meticulous bureaucracy in the service of a tyrannical dictator can lead to extended". ^[110] : "The torture and murder in Tuol Sleng was accompanied by a unique bureaucratic pedantry. All prisoners who were brought in were photographed upon arrival, and all "interrogations" were recorded in writing: 17,000 torture records with precise instructions on the strength of the electric shocks and the number of lashes. Every order from the torturer, every question ("Does he know what happened to his wife?"), every answer from the tortured person ("Yes, I am an animal!") was recorded on tape or in handwriting during the torture. These records from the torture room were neatly copied after the interrogation and collected in files. If the victim was killed, his mutilated corpse was also photographed and the picture was attached to the file. Those who survived the "interrogation" were taken to the killing fields in Choeng Ek, where they were beaten to death with iron bars and clubs. None of the 17,000 inmates in Tuol Sleng survived." ^[111] The total number of victims of the Pol Pot regime is estimated at around 2 million.

Berthold Seewald rightly calls the crimes Pol Pot and his henchmen carried out in the name of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as "professionally conducted administrative mass murder" in the "bureaucratically organized prison system" (op. cit., p. 2) . If you ask about the (background) reasons, you first come across the megalomaniacal, radical ideas of Pol Pot, who has stayed in China several times since the 1950s, where he met Mao Zedong and other high-ranking politicians personally and had undergone extensive ideological indoctrination, especially through the "theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat". To present his ideas in detail would lead too far here. In any case, his goal was "the establishment of a communist-Maoist peasant state that would be largely independent of other countries (autarky)". ^[112] What consequences can be seen from the measures introduced by the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot:

1. *Isolation of the land.* The borders of Cambodia were closed and all communications with foreign countries were cut.
2. *Isolation of people from one another.* The townspeople were driven to rural areas, the villages isolated from one another, and family members separated from one another. There were forced marriages initiated by the Khmer Rouge. Children had to monitor their own parents and, if necessary, denounce them. All political gatherings except those of the Khmer Rouge were banned.
3. *Abolition of all classes and differences between people.* "All Cambodians had to wear the same haircut and clothes" (ibid.). Any practice of religion was forbidden. Without exception, children went to community kindergartens and then to special political schools. The adults were "trained" politically every evening. All intellectuals were murdered, later also all "Cambodians of Chinese or Vietnamese descent" (ibid.). Food was only allowed in communal kitchens. Expressions of emotion such as laughing and crying were only allowed to "cheer for party measures". Personal property was banned without exception. Instead of the usual personal forms of address such as "Mama", "Papa", Uncle ", Aunt", the word "Comrade" always had to be used.
4. *Development of the peasant state.* After the townspeople were driven to the countryside, markets, money and bartering were abolished everywhere. All technical equipment except for military use was destroyed; likewise the hospitals and their medical devices. Irrigation channels and clearing of the jungle had to be created manually without a plan and without technical equipment. Rice cultivation was standardized radically and without regard to technological requirements.
5. *Unification of the "judicial system".* "Except for the death penalty, all other penalties have been abolished. The death penalty was initially carried out by shooting, later to save ammunition by putting a plastic bag over the head and sealing it or by killing it with a field hoe. The corpses were placed in the fields as fertilizers. -... In addition, prisons such as Tuol Sleng were set up, in which prisoners who were hoped for information were systematically tortured to death "(op. cit. p. 11, on Tuol Sleng see above).

Lutz Götze, among others, attempts to find out deeper reasons for this actually incomprehensible in his treatise *Why Dictatorship and Genocide? Finding out the Pol Pot regime* (2010) and cites around ten different assumptions about possible explanations, including, for example, Pol Pot's need to take revenge on his own class of origin, "the contamination by Mao's criminal ideas", or even hatred on Vietnam, Buddhist monks or the USA or imperialism in general. But not all of these assumptions, but only a single thought, according to Götze, hit the essential: Pol Pot wanted to create: "a new, pure

community of collective elements instead of people with him at the top” or “an ethnically and racially 'pure' one Khmer people ... on a peasant basis and without class differences ”.^[113] All measures and "cleansing" had to serve this goal, including the strictly centralized leadership and the "eradication of all individuality" (ibid.).

Amazingly, Götze does not see an isolated case in any of this, but instead draws from the Pol Pot peculiarities something general that he considers to be “paradigmatic” in the “chain of genocides of the 20th century”, based on total conformity and collective surveillance organization. so that Orwell's *1984* became a reality. Götze's bold final conclusion is: “The Pol Pot case can repeat itself at any time, and it does repeat itself. The only means against it are education and enlightenment.” (op. cit. p. 6).

But what speaks against this is what *Jean-Louis Margolin* explains in the *Black Book of Communism* as the *incomprehensibility* of the Pol Pot crimes and adds: "Indeed, when it comes to terror, Cambodian communism surpasses all others - and deviates from them." (loc. cit. p. 643). Consequently, Pol Pot's “variety” of bureaucratic-systematic state terror *cannot be generalized!* Especially since nothing comparable is known from the period after 1979. And against such terror - or the temptation to do so - nothing can be done with "education and enlightenment" alone, especially since politics is not mainly based on education and enlightenment, but on tangible *interests*. Continuous discussion and clarification is required about this, but it can only become relevant and effective if it takes place within the framework of continuous *political* debate, daily struggle and permanent, reliable commitment.

And that's not all. When the *temptation Pol Pot* is - not only, but also - a late, horrific spawn of what *Kant* calls the 'peccatum originis', the 'original sin' of man, the *ethical and legal* dimensions become visible again, which must measure all political activity and action. Only in the dialectic of facts and values or value attitudes can politics find a reliable orientation and justification that really serves the *common good* and not just the arbitrary, chaotic-opportunistic satisfaction of particular wishes and (group) egoistic goals.^[114]

c) Cuba

In 2018, *Raúl Castro*, the successor to his brother *Fidel*, who had died in 2016, complained about the insufficient success of the economic reforms that had been decided a few years earlier. Most of these failed because of the “communist bureaucracy”. The head of state and government firmly refuses to use methods of neoliberalism to counter this.^[115] Before him, *Che Guevara* and brother *Fidel* had occasionally criticized the bureaucracy. *Che* denounced the “evil of bureaucratism”, *Fidel* “saw in his own ranks the danger of a 'parasitic layer' that strives to accumulate power and obtain material privileges and that could lead the revolution into stagnation and disintegration”.^[116] In an intimate conversation, *Fidel Castro* is said to have even claimed that the party leaders of the Eastern Bloc were all “bureaucrats and people of the apparatus”. A statement that strangely contrasts with the fact that *Fidel* committed himself to the *dictatorship of the proletariat* in the “Soviet” sense as early as 1961, when Cuba was officially declared a “Socialist Republic on the basis of Marxism-Leninism”. (Probably also in order to seal Cuba's alliance with the USSR in view of the economic embargo imposed by the USA, which continues to this day.)

For *Castro's* guerrilla movement was initially neither socialist nor Marxist-Leninist. Rather, the goal of the revolution in 1959 was only “transformation, independence, justice and dignity of the Cuban nation”, formulated by the Cuban poet and folk hero *José Martí*, who had also called for a “radical measure of social equality”.^[117] What was meant were above all social reforms, in particular a redistribution of the land in favor of the poor peasants, democracy and constitutional order.

Castro's political practice was different, however, not least because of the stubborn imitation of Stalinist behavior. Most of the industrial companies were nationalized, by the end of 1960 it was already 80%. However: “Only the intransigence of US imperialism - with the US-backed invasion in April 1961 as its climax - together with the fact that the working masses of Cuba were mobilized and partially armed, drove the *Castro* leadership into the arms of the Soviet bureaucracy. As the government gradually expropriated US and Cuban capital, the Cuban bourgeoisie and their agents fled en masse to Miami.”^[118] Politically, a new *Bonapartism*, tailored entirely to *Castro*, developed, whereby *Castro* knew very well how to always keep the strings of the state, party and military *bureaucracies* in his hand, and this for almost 50 years (1959- 2008)! The extent to which this power alliance exercised terror and repression against sections of the population seems controversial. The article in the '*Trend online newspaper*' (2010, p. 4) states: “In Cuba, compared to the rest of the “ socialist bloc ”, there was never much repression against the population - there were never tanks on the streets to put down a popular uprising, as

in Czechoslovakia in 1968 or in Poland in 1981, and there was never a pronounced gulag system as in Stalin's Soviet Union. Compared to other Stalinist leaderships, the Castro brothers enjoy legitimacy in large sections of the population because of their role in the struggle for independence."

A completely different picture emerges, however, from analyzes that are documented in the *Black Book of Communism* (1998, pp. 727, 729): "In 1980 a wave of discontent and unrest swept across the island and warehouses were set on fire. The State Security Department immediately arrested 500 "opposition members" in less than 62 hours. The security forces then cracked down on the free farmers' markets in the countryside, and finally the island was hit with a widespread campaign against black marketeers. - Law No. 32, passed in March 1971, prohibited staying away from work. In 1978 the law on "Dangerousness before a crime has been committed" was promulgated. In other words, a Cuban could in future be arrested on whatever pretext if the authorities considered him a threat to state security, even if he had not done anything to that effect. In reality, this law establishes as a crime the expression of any thinking that is inconsistent with the regime's canon, and even more: everyone becomes a potential suspect. 15,000 to 17,000 people were shot. "No bread without freedom, no freedom without bread", proclaimed the young lawyer Fidel Castro in 1959. But, as a dissident stated before the beginning of the "special regime" (the end of Soviet support after 1991): >Even a prison with food is still a prison<. – In 1994, Castro, a tyrant seemingly fallen out of time, commented on the the failure of his regime and all the difficulties in Cuba that he would rather die than give up the revolution. What price do Cubans still have to pay to satisfy his pride ?"

Fortunately, this was not the last word in history. In 2018, a new constitution was introduced in Cuba, with partially completely new requirements for the economy, society and politics: "The first article of the new constitution defines Cuba as a 'democratic, independent and sovereign state based on the rule of law'. The preamble adopted by the Cubans states that "only in socialism and communism" can be "attained full dignity". Article 5 lays down the building of socialism and the progress towards a communist society as a state goal. In addition, the new constitution contains the right to work and affordable housing, the state's obligation to protect the environment and combat climate change, as well as the prohibition of racist and discriminatory acts. Article 16 prohibits interference in the internal affairs of other states and condemns imperialism, fascism, colonialism and neocolonialism. Armed aggression is considered a crime and a violation of international law. The development, stationing or storage of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction are also prohibited." [\[119\]](#)

Private property is allowed; In the meantime there are around 600,000 small owners again - of bars, restaurants, guest houses, handicraft businesses, etc. However, the opposition continues to be denied basic democratic rights, and the CP retains its leading role in the state economy. Nevertheless, one is looking for new syntheses of socialism and *market economy*, for which a Cuba expert explains: "We look to China and Vietnam, but we do not want the inequality that now exists in both countries." [\[120\]](#) Whether this balancing act will succeed remains to be seen. I consider *Klaus Ehringfeld's* assessment to be *premature*, according to which Cuba is making a "quantum leap from Cuban communism into capitalism" with the market economy. [\[121\]](#) Whereby is striking the probably unreflected use of the term "communism". It is also doubtful that the government and people of Cuba will (or want to) simply return to capitalism. It is essential to take into account the historical-political background and underground in front of which the system change is taking place. This peculiarity is perhaps already recognizable if one looks at the following analysis from 2010, but still valid, which states: "Cuba was never a socialist society in which the working class managed the means of production democratically. Cuba has never had any kind of proletarian democracy: no kind of workers 'and peasants' councils, with elected and elected delegates, as in the Soviet system established by the October Revolution in Russia and later by the Stalinist counter-revolution in the 1920s / 30s was destroyed. The Cuban bureaucracy did not need to carry out a political counterrevolution to destroy organs of proletarian democracy, since such organs simply did not exist: from the beginning they relied on the (bourgeois) Bonapartist state apparatus that was established before the expropriation of the bourgeoisie began." [\[122\]](#)

In my opinion, this cannot mean that all roads to democratization up to and including a new *democratic socialism* worthy of the name are blocked for Cuba. On the contrary: If economy, society and politics consolidate through a transitional model like in China and Vietnam, it should be possible in the long term to establish participatory or parliamentary democracy, full legal statehood, social equality and justice and ideological pluralism, albeit under constant control through the community, in the sense of a new *democratic socialism*. In addition, it seems possible that a *democratic eco-socialism* will even be built in Cuba; because the "protection of the environment" and the "fight against climate change" are set as national goals in the new constitution. DdP and bureaucratism would then also be overcome.

Socialist alternatives

1. The Yugoslav Workers' Self-Administration (WSA)

“As it often happens in theory and in life, we saw in the other, in Soviet bureaucratism, what could become of ourselves. So we learned about ourselves by studying the behavior of our opponents. Those who have had this experience will never again accept any kind of authoritarianism and bureaucracy, including the bureaucracy of the ruling elite in our own society.”

^[123] - This is how philosophy professor *Mihajlo Marković* describes the attitude of the members of his *Praxis*’ group towards all forms of authoritarianism, party and state bureaucracy. For his philosophers’ association, founded in 1964, the focus is on people as “a being of practice” (op. cit. p. 1). As such, that is, by no means only in the sense of conventional philosophical anthropology, man should be rediscovered for socialism in his (co-)humanity; as a result, conflicts with the Communist Party bureaucracy ruling Yugoslavia were inevitable, so to speak; which in 1966 led to a temporary ban on the magazine 'Praxis' and then to reprisals against members of the Praxis group (op.cit., p. 2). And this despite the fact that under *Tito* a clear turning away from Stalinism had been made since 1949. The first Yugoslav *workers' councils* were founded in 1949 - among other things at *Tito's* behest - with the intention of developing *new forms of socialist democracy and socialist workers' self-government*. The immediate reason for this was a severe economic crisis as a result of the rift between *Tito* and *Stalin*.

Walter Pöppel writes that on June 1st, 1950, one year after the establishment of the first workers' council, “the institution of workers' self-government was anchored in law by parliament”. And: “The economy, which had previously been centrally managed by the state, was largely decentralized, and the individual republics (there are six in the country), the districts and, above all, the municipalities were given greater independence. - At first, workers' self-government comprised only industry and agricultural collectives, but the system was soon extended to include large state-owned enterprises such as the post office, railways and seafaring. The self-administration of the workers in the factories was supplemented in 1953 by the legal anchoring of social self-administration. This meant the extent of self-government to all the institutions and organizations of the administration and the social and cultural institutions, such as homes, hospitals, schools, libraries, etc. The purpose was also to subject all these institutions to a greater public scrutiny and *to prevent the bureaucracy from becoming independent*”

^[124] - This already shows the extent of the ambitious reform. The KP renounces plan and command economy, but without giving up certain control rights. Nevertheless, completely new structures of worker co-determination and self-management are emerging in the companies, which, although still in social ownership, are now under the supervision of as many working people as possible, who are supposed to be “jointly producers, administrators and distributors of the fruits of their labor”, and with the “same status in all areas”.^[125] And with decision-making powers within the framework of a) the workforce (or works assembly), b) the *workers' council* and c) in relation to the works director. Workers' councils must be elected in all companies with more than 30 employees. The workers' council, which also elects the *administrative committee*, is also “the highest control body in the company”. The “management committee, together with the director, forms the actual management, it consists of five people. It is responsible for the economic, business and technical management and is accountable to the workers' council. It also has the right to remove or replace members of the Board of Directors, and he can also demand the resignation of the Director. - In addition to the workers' councils in the factories and the local self-government bodies, there is a control commission made up of equal numbers of representatives of the workers' councils and the communal administrations, which acts as a kind of supervisory body vis -à-vis the workers' councils, but also an arbitration body for disputes within the company self-government or between the social bodies and the factories should be operated. This control commission also makes the proposals for the election of directors, whose positions must be advertised publicly beforehand. The directors are not elected by the workers' councils, but by the local authorities on the basis of proposals from the control commission. However, they are accountable to the workers' councils and they can apply to the control commission and the municipal administration to be dismissed at any time. The term of office is four years. After this time, the director positions must be advertised again, whereby the previous director can also apply again.” (Pöppel op. cit. p. 714). The workforce (works assembly) and the workers' council have decisive administrative control and co-determination competencies, ie in the works assembly they have the “basics of the self-administration agreement, development and investment plan ...” and in the workers' council primarily about “production planning, organization of production, financial planning, income distribution, establishment and termination of employment relationships ..., vocational training, occupational safety”; whereby the municipalities are also granted certain rights of co-determination and decision-making (cf. Mladenovic, op.cit. p. 55).

And the material success that came after these socio-political acts of liberation was downright astonishing. *Zoran Gajic* (2021) comments on this: “Until the early 1960s, many of the communists considered the socialist project of Yugoslavia to be complete. *In just a decade, the country was electrified, industrialized and modernized. Between 1954 and 1964, for*

example, real gross national product grew by an average of 8.6% a year, real incomes by 5.25%, and industrial production by as much as 12.25%. In this branch, Yugoslavia was even ahead of the economic power of Japan. By 1965, industrial production had increased more than sixfold (...). Prosperity and consumption improved steadily from the 1960s onwards, the savings rate was around 30%, the inflation rate was a meager 1.5% (...). There seemed to be no end to economic growth."^[126] To what *Walter Roesler* notes that to these achievements had contributed "credit support of the West, remittances of Yugoslav migrant workers abroad and the growing tourism in the Adriatic country".^[127]

What *Bolsheviks* understood by DdP also undergoes significant transformations in Yugoslavia from 1949 onwards, although the one-party system is fundamentally retained and the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" is even used in the 1974 constitution. After all, from 1952 the state party no longer calls itself the "KP", but rather the "League of Communists", a not insignificant change, because at the same time this league is no longer entrusted with the entire state power, but only with the *ideological* leadership of the population. *Tito* even claimed that one could no longer "speak of one-party rule". (in: Pöppel, p. 102, footnote no. 124, op. cit. p. 715).

Critical appraisal

"We have certain people who want self-government to be liquidated. Who are these people and what exactly do they want? First and foremost, these are *bureaucrats and technocrats* who wish the [immediate] producer to transform himself into a wage worker again ... whose fate small groups would have to decide. ... In some companies almost all power is concentrated in a limited circle of executives, professionals and employees who act like a managerial team [menadžerska ekipa]. In those companies that neglect their obligations and accountability to work collectives and self-governing bodies, it is this narrow circle of people, who often do not consult the workers for their opinion, that decides on the income [of the workers]. This practice of worker self-management leads to formalism. - In the workers' councils of enterprises the number of workers from direct production is remarkably reduced; but their places are increasingly taken by people from leading positions or from administration."^[128] This was explained by *Tito* in a speech given in Sarajevo on November 30, 1969, in which he obviously sharply criticized "bureaucrats" in the management of companies, whom he even accused of behavior that was hostile to workers.

How did the wrong developments come about? *Walter Rösler* explains it primarily from the "subalternity of the propertyless, a tradition passed down for generations", which has led to the initial enthusiasm for the new freedoms, but afterwards gradually has given way to increasing adaptation of the working people in production to new, bureaucratic management initiated regulations and tutelage. Rösler explains: "The transfer of existing and new businesses to workers' self-management was enthusiastically welcomed in 1950. The workforce realized that they could move on to appropriating work and perhaps soon be able to credit themselves with rising incomes. Although there were numerous peasant sons who were supposed to help out their extended families financially as soon as possible, the understanding prevailed among the workers that one must first invest heavily in order to earn more for oneself. Hence, at the beginning there was a real 'investment mania', to such a storm surge of investment orders that the industry was not up to it. *Around 45 percent of all workers are said to have also learned about business studies in order to be able to participate in an informed manner.* There was also a lot of zeal for work, although hard and monotonous work is tiring and demotivating, so that often a little too "calm ball" was pushed and from the 1970s on, especially in non-productive areas, came up also a lot of "nerad" (non-work). However, the employees were always very interested in the election of directors and in employee decisions on profit sharing, wages, salaries and investments. - *But the larger and more modern a company is, the more employees are supposed to take part in its management, the more difficult it becomes for them to take control of the company mentally and practically and to perceive their ownership responsibility permanently and with sufficient competence. ... Because a first and actually the most serious problem for the workers and employees was and is their lack of scientific qualifications for mastering modern production as well as their inadequate business and economic education for the management of companies. ... As a result ... in Yugoslavia ... the subalternity of the propertyless, a tradition passed down for generations, which is also based on the continuing separation of managerial and executive as well as intellectual and physical work, could of course not be overcome immediately. ... Spontaneously ... numerous workers in many factories gradually left the whole regiment, including the exercise of their own rights and duties, to the directors and managers elected by them, who sometimes complained about this increase in duty, but were not at all reluctant to accept it. ... Yugoslav managers ... also developed some procedural tricks in order to let the inexperienced workforce make precisely those operational decisions that they had anticipated and that were most advantageous for themselves. But when it comes to employee decisions on wages and salaries for directors and managers, there was no trickery. So, for example, an additional project orientation was devised:*

definable tasks that should actually belong to the normal work of the management staff were defined and declared as projects, the completion of which would have to be paid extra."^[129]

Such problems were repeatedly exacerbated by structural weaknesses in the Yugoslav economy, which manifested itself in high unemployment, relatively low productivity and, in some cases, a lack of competitiveness on the world market. A direct, causal connection between the system of workers' self-management and high unemployment could apparently not be scientifically proven; although it was occasionally rumored that many workers were not motivated enough because they could not be dismissed. A study by *Dorde Tomić & Stefan Pavleski* published in 2015 states: "While some of the early staunch opponents and critics of Yugoslav socialism *unceremoniously* declared workers' self-management to be the main cause of the high and rising unemployment rates, further scientific studies provided the essentially trivial insight that it was a combination of numerous factors that was responsible for the unfavorable situation on the Yugoslav labor market. Depending on the analytical focus of the individual studies, various factors were worked out: the economic policy priorities in the course of industrialization, regional and foreign policy, the preference for unskilled workers or the high regional wage differences. Individually, they all had little or nothing to do with the principle of self-government. The connection was indirect and concerned the effects of workers' self-management on general economic development, which in turn determined the development of unemployment."^[130]

One of the fatal consequences that contributed to the fall of Yugoslavia after 1990 was the high national debt (of around 20 billion dollars in 1980). Nevertheless, *Bruno Kuster* states: "The Yugoslav model, which achieves a happy balance between the inevitable state intervention (especially as the most important investor) and the entrepreneurial group initiative, has the advantage that, firstly, it is at least partially due to the lack of political rights due to industrial democracy compensated, and secondly, the doors opened wide to the outside world. This gives dynamic social forces new leeway and offers a certain guarantee against doctrinal rigidity, which, as experience shows, takes an excessively high toll in blood and privation."^[131] - But this, too, is of course no longer current reality, but a reminder of times long past. Nonetheless, it seems to me that the following conclusion is "over time", which *Peter Mladenovic* compared to the end of his study on *Self-administration in Yugoslavia and co-determination in Germany*, published in 1980 by the Munich-based GRIN Verlag: "The experiences in Yugoslavia have shown that self-management is not a miracle in itself, but just a common way of thinking, acting and making decisions of all those involved in a work process, a community or an organization. - *There is nothing special to see* when people, where they spend their days, where performance is required of them, ie at work, are allowed to speak and decide for themselves about the interrelationships of work. The purpose of the joint decisions is above all the exchange of experiences, informative and personal feedback and discussion as a new, intellectual form of conflict resolution, whereby the future unsuitable scheme of command and obedience makes itself superfluous. - *Such kind of democracy in the workplace* is not only more humane and stable, but also more peaceful. Workers are also more productive than they are under today's circumstances, because conflict resolution is organized around cooperation rather than mutual oppression and hatred. - *Through the exchange of ideas* people become more intelligent, freer and more conscious - not only because they are allowed to say more, but because they can develop their intelligence and because their feelings of inferiority are gradually reduced, which challenges the full development of intelligence. - The right to self-determination, which is anchored in all constitutions, remains ineffective and implausible as long as people do not have the opportunity to participate independently in shaping their employment relationships. Self-government would not only eliminate fears, feelings of powerlessness and other unworthiness of people, but people who are allowed to determine their own wishes and claims would never decide to go to war, because in the end the people have to bear the consequences, not the commanders."^[132] - An extremely wise statement, which from today's perspective unfortunately sounds like a bad premonition - of what sealed the sad demise of Yugoslavia and its workers' self-government in the chaotic civil war of the 1990s.

My only consolation: The Yugoslav model contains invaluable, forward-looking values: that of a functioning Third Way between communism and capitalism - a *socialist alternative*.

2. The Prague Spring 1968

lasted only from April to August of that year, but had actually started earlier, namely at the beginning of the 1960s, when the CPC, the CP of Czechoslovakia, decided to implement a comprehensive economic reform in response to a severe economic crisis, the aim of which was, after all, "building a socialist market economy"^[133] In addition, writers protested against state "censorship and socialist writing standards" (ibid.), To which the Communist Party regime reacted with repression (arrests,

etc.).

It was a violent conflicts that ultimately contributed to the handover of power to the Slovak reformer *Alexander Dubček* in early 1968. He had in mind to introduce a new kind of "socialism with a human face" in his country, ie finally to tackle the reforms that have been called for for a long time. In fact, in April 1968, the KPC passed a corresponding reform program that practically affected all areas of economy, society and politics. For the economy, the renowned economist *Ota Šik* formulated radical measures in the direction of a market economy and employee participation. If these plans had been implemented, they would have set in motion far more *market economy mechanisms* than was the case with the example of Yugoslavia. Allegedly, Šik even propagated the complete renunciation of socialism, a goal to which the population would not have agreed, because according to a survey from July 1968 almost 90% of those questioned were in favor of *maintaining socialism*, ie for *socialism with a human face and socialist market economy*. The newly called humanity consisted, among other things, in creating a socialism "without self-appointed leaders [...], without gray workplaces and *without callous bureaucracy*", in which the "human being should be worth above all values", specifically according to the particular circumstances of the country and no longer dependent on Moscow. ^[134]

All areas of life should be liberalized. "After the previous censorship had been abolished, further basic civil rights should be guaranteed. In addition to freedom of speech and assembly, this also included freedom of science, art, culture and the media. Many banned parties and associations were allowed to resume their work. - Another part of the action program concerned the economy: political influence on the economy should be restricted and the right to have a say in companies should be expanded. The planned federalization of the state into a Czech and a Slovak republic was also important. - Although the plan was to strengthen the position of Parliament, the supremacy of the KPC should not be affected. Of particular importance was the fact that victims of Stalinism were rehabilitated." ^[135]

Politically, a move away from centralism was planned, for example to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of a few party functionaries in the future. In fact, there were already signs of such a departure with the lifting of press censorship in February 1968, which led to a real "information explosion", so that it was no longer the CP, but the people themselves that largely determined public opinion.

It was precisely these developments that unfortunately five Warsaw Pact states under the leadership of the USSR took as an opportunity to use force of arms against the new *socialist* experiment and to abruptly and brutally end the *Prague Spring* in August 1968. - The reformers of the time were not rehabilitated until the "Velvet Revolution" of autumn 1989, through which the first *free elections* were fought a year later, which, as is well known, brought about the end of Communist Party rule - as in the entire Eastern Bloc.

3. Eurocommunism

The dictatorship of the proletariat, bureaucracy and bureaucratism were the declared enemies, the "no-gos" of a reform movement of progressive European communists that emerged in the 1970s and that was also joined by some non-European CPs, such as those of Japan, Brazil, Mexico, India and Israel. ^[136] It included mainly the Communist parties of Spain, Italy, France and Yugoslavia, as well as numerous individual critics as pioneers and leaders, including Ernst Bloch, Georg Lukács, Robert Havemann, Rudolf Bahro, Roy Medvedev, the former general Grigorenko and the philosophers of the Yugoslav *practice* group. ^[137]

What did these people want? Wikipedia says: "The Eurocommunists denied the international leadership claim of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) over the other Communist parties (CPs) and, renouncing the slogan of the "dictatorship of the proletariat", proclaimed a democratic path to socialism within the pluralistic parliamentary systems of Western Europe." ^[138] - Anyone who would like to find out more and more details about this will find extensive information and discussion material in the presentation of Eurocommunism by *Wolfgang Leonhard* (1978), including the following "common objectives of the Eurocommunists":

"1.) *Autonomy and equality*". (loc. cit. p. 12). Self-determination instead of remote control through Moscow means for these comrades a) that they no longer recognize the CPSU as the center and "measure of all things" and b) that they understand "proletarian internationalism" anew, ie no longer in the sense of Moscow, but as the right of each individual CP to "independently determine and implement its own policy, based on the tradition of its own country, its own economic, political and cultural characteristics" (ibid.). Therefore they also like to replace the term "proletarian internationalism" with that of

“international solidarity”, which at the same time means an opening towards meeting members of non-communist organizations and groups, such as “socialists, social democrats and other progressive forces” such as Christians and Liberals (ibid.).

"2.) *Democratic path to socialism*". The Eurocommunists resolutely reject “DdP” in the Bolshevik sense and instead advocate a “democratic path to socialism that should be based on the majority of the population” (op. cit., p. 13). One-party rule is to be replaced by a new *pluralism* of political parties based on free, secret and general elections - a clear commitment to western-style parliamentarism. This, however, without following the line of the Social Democrats, who are still denied the will to radical social change in society. Democratic socialism cannot be achieved simply by trying to eliminate “excessive abuses of capitalism” (ibid.).

"3.) *Broad alliance policy without claim to a "leading role" of the CP.*" This is in contrast to what has always been practiced in Bolshevism. Instead, relations with other political organizations should be realigned, in a spirit of partnership and equal cooperation. So that the conventional Marxist concept of class and class struggle should also be revised. The Eurocommunists “advocate a precise analysis of the most varied of population groups and social forces that are to be included in a newly structured alliance system” (op. cit. p. 15).

"4.) *Opening of Marxism commitment to dialogue*". The prerequisite for the left's new ability to cooperate is the renunciation of the dogmas of Marxism-Leninism, especially in connection with the absolute claims formulated by Lenin and Stalin. That is why the term 'Marxism-Leninism' is replaced by that of '*scientific socialism*'- originally also used by Marx and Engels. “Ideological struggle” and binding atheism are considered obsolete and no longer up-to-date. Communists can and should also learn from other worldviews and convictions (p. 15 f.).

"5.) *Critical attitude to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*". The October Revolution is still appreciated, but not the claims of the Communist Party of the Eastern Bloc for absoluteness derived from it, in which the "centralization and bureaucratization of economic and political power" have prevailed so that true socialist legalism and democracy have been prevented. Criticism of the USSR must be possible without incurring the immediate general suspicion of "anti-communism". But this should by no means lead to a break with the SU, especially since there, as in the entire Eastern Bloc, are dissidents and reform forces who need further support. (See pp. 16-18.)

"6.) *Advocating a pluralistic, democratic model of socialism*". (See above or loc. cit. p. 18 f.).

7.) *Turning away from the Leninist party structure*. The CPs of the Eastern Bloc are not subject to a democratic but rather to a "bureaucratic centralism" organized hierarchically from top to bottom (p. 19). In order to achieve reforms here, the Eurocommunists demand, among other things, the opening of the CPs to non-members and those who think differently, free discussions in party press, events and congresses, with the express right to articulate opinions that differ from the party leadership; furthermore, the prohibition of party exclusions only on the basis of ideological or party political divergences (see p. 19 f.).

"8.) *Independent foreign policy*". Worldwide, the CPs should no longer be just an "extension of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact" (p. 20). A new relationship must be possible with China, but also with the West. Moscow's hegemony over the Eastern Bloc is no longer accepted, as is "the restoration of bureaucratic-dictatorial conditions in Czechoslovakia, which was carried out under the leadership of Husak with the misleading term "normalization" (p. 155), as it was after the crackdown of the *Prague Spring* after 1968 (see pp. 20-22 and pp. 154 f.).

Unfortunately, all these noble, justified objectives have not been able to prevent the decline of Eurocommunism after its heyday in the 1970s. In addition, it says on Wikipedia: “Political scientists rated Eurocommunism as the greatest political danger for the Eastern Bloc, as it seemed to be more successful than the imposed communism of the Soviet type. However, the decline of Eurocommunism did not begin with the disintegration of state socialism, but well before that. In particular, the failure of the “Historic Compromise”, a coalition government made up of Eurocommunists and Christian Democrats in Italy, was formative. It showed the limits of the eurocommunist approach of introducing a socialist transformation through elections and reform coalitions. The electoral successes of the Italian Communists, who at times received over thirty percent of the vote, could no longer be achieved after this failed experiment.” ^[139]

On the other hand, *Wolfgang Leonhard* assessed the merits of the Eurocommunists in 1978 much more positively. In the long term he even gives the movement the chance to organize itself in a new, pan-European “Left Party”(!) “Which differs from both the Soviet-style communists and the Social Democrats” (op. cit. p. 384). According to the objectives of

Eurocommunism analyzed by Leonhard, the new Left Party will be able to promote positive social change, based on high "elasticity" and the "willingness to concessions and agreements with other forces"; this to an extent that has rarely been seen in the left-wing political spectrum (ibid.).

Unfortunately, Leonhard was not right with this optimistic forecast. A pan-European left party does not yet exist. Nevertheless, new, individual left-wing parties have emerged everywhere - also as a replacement for dissolved CPs - which should be able to take on the highly significant, forward-looking legacy of Eurocommunism and perhaps even to unite in a new *Euro-socialism*; whereby I think that this term is better because "communism" is largely discredited, even as a partial term. Unfortunately, the fact that the prefix "Euro" is now also used as "EURO" (€) speaks against the term "Eurosocialism". In addition, of course, socialism should not be restricted to Europe, so my compromise proposal for the European variant is: *European socialism*.

4. The French *Projet Socialiste* 1980-1983^[140]

Since 1980, in addition to the 'Prague Spring' of 1968, the French *Projet socialiste*, which was also published as a book under this title, has been for me a model of a humane socialism, a *socialism with a human face*. This socialist attempt was really humane because it was not based on violence, oppression and the terror of opinion, but on social, liberal and democratic principles. One finally wanted to replace the capitalist exploitation system, frozen in arrogant domination, with a new humanity in freedom, equality and solidarity: brotherhood / sisterhood.

The socialists and communists who, with these lofty goals, formed a new government in 1981, headed by *François Mitterrand* (1916-1996), were not putschists or revolutionaries, but freely elected representatives of the French people who of course followed the rules of the parliamentary democracy and the rule of law and were therefore not fixed on or even "subscribed" to the exercising of power that cannot be opted out. Their failure - at the latest in the parliamentary elections in 1986 - is tragic; because their specific goals were:

- 1.) The gradual elimination of social injustices and inequalities.
- 2.) Co-determination and participation of the working people instead of exploitation and oppression.
- 3.) Direct social control ("nationalization": "Vergesellschaftung"; not "étatisation", not just "nationalization"!) of the means of production, especially of large companies in key industries and in the financial sector. In the large-scale companies, new supervisory bodies with a third-party representation should be formed, which should consist of a) delegates from the authorities, b) the company's workforce and c) the company's customers and suppliers.

To 1.) From 1981 to 1983 the minimum wage was raised by approx. 38%, the "state wages, pensions and unemployment benefits ... by 10 to 25 percent"^[141], child and housing benefit by 25 and 50%; the normal working hours were reduced from 40 to 39 hours with full wages.

To 3.) "The state now controlled 95 percent of the credit and banking system, most of the heavy industry and also 75 percent of the textile industry. 200,000 jobs were created in the state sector ... In addition, the pension was enforced at the age of 60, a major program for the renewal of social housing was launched, the death penalty was abolished and a ministry for equality for women was established ." (Guest contribution ibid.)

Negative consequences:

Exorbitant increase in national debt, among other things as a result of the high compensation payments to the nationalized companies, rise in the trade deficit to almost 100 billion francs, massive capital flight = massive decline in investments, decline in the exchange rate of the franc, etc.

An increasingly catastrophic development that led to the termination of the socialist experiment and a radical change in policy as early as 1983: in austerity programs ('austérité'), freezing of wages and salaries, etc.

What lessons can be learned from this debacle? 1. Socialism is apparently not enforceable against the concentrated resistance of big business. 2. Without the mobilization of broad sections of the population, especially the working class, a socialist experiment cannot succeed. The following *conclusion* deserves the highest attention: "The reasons for the failure to mobilize the population are to be found in the socialists' understanding of politics. French socialism combined a radical rhetoric of, for example, the "break with capitalism" with the idea that socialist economic policy is the best way to protect the

interests of French entrepreneurs. But the entrepreneurs saw it differently. When the implementation of the program met stiff resistance from capital and the society polarized, the French socialists were not prepared for it. Within a short period of time, this led to the government adopting the entrepreneurial course." (Guest article loc. cit., p. 2)

These bitter experiences, this failure of a humane socialism, can certainly not be generalized, although they should be extremely instructive. The lessons that can actually be learned, however, depend entirely on the respective local and global circumstances. On top of that, almost 40 years after the French experiment, the situation has become considerably more complicated, mainly due to the globalization crisis, the environmental and climate crisis and the digital revolution.

Inferences

To the questions asked in the introduction:

1. Has socialism finally failed due to the DdP and bureaucracy?

In China, Vietnam and Cuba, among others, socialist practices and new experiments continue, albeit with varying degrees of success. *For this reason alone there can be no talk of a "final failure of socialism"* In addition, there is the fact that *neo-Marxism* still exists, also as an alternative to the official "Marxism-Leninism" of the Eastern style.

It is questionable *what* types of socialism (or pseudo-socialism) are practiced in the countries mentioned and what future prospects open up. In China, the DdP and bureaucracy continue to hold their own, the latter with often lamented excesses of arbitrariness, harassment and corruption. The dictatorship was "perfected" by the "social credit system" and an almost complete, AI-supported surveillance of the population. - Economically, the country is experiencing an unparalleled upswing due to the introduction of market economy elements. But is this hybrid structure of state (= party bureaucratic) control and free market economy a model of socialism for the future? Hardly likely. The differences to what Marx and Engels understood by communism and socialism are too great. *The realm of freedom, free association of free individuals, the withering away from the state, classless society* - none of this exists in China, at least from a societal perspective - not yet. But the opposite tendencies are likely: increasing lack of freedom, increasing state reinforcement and idolatry, new class antagonisms.

More cause for hope offers the development in *Cuba*, where under the most difficult conditions (US embargo, etc.) people not only struggle for survival, but also for new forms of social emancipation. Environmental protection and the fight against climate change have even become official state goals there. The democratic control over the means of production is in no way jeopardized. If it is possible to get the economy going again through a *market economy* - despite the US embargo - and to sustainably improve the standard of living of Cubans, these impulses will play a role again for all of Latin America, and also for the rest of the world.

The socialist experiments in Yugoslavia and France, which failed due to adverse historical circumstances, should also be remembered. *Workers' self-government* has not been an empty word since Yugoslavia showed how this form of socialism can be managed. Where else could and can the working people have a say in the workplace and help to decide how their companies should be run and production organized? Yugoslavia has undoubtedly followed a third path between communism and capitalism for decades.

Which was certainly the aim also of the French socialists and communists with their 'Projet Socialiste' in the years 1980-83. Democratically elected and without terror or other coercive measures, but governing under the rule of law and in conformity with the constitution, attempts were made to achieve a humane, contemporary socialism. In terms of economic policy, it was not just about nationalization ('étatisation'), but rather about socialization ('nationalization') of the key industries. - The failure of the experiment - essentially as a result of the boycott by big business - is all the more regrettable as the conditions for the success of a radical social upheaval in favor of the working class have meanwhile become much less favorable. If the development towards "surveillance capitalism" (S. Zuboff) cannot be stopped and ended, new ways of resistance and the organization of the working class have to be found, especially since otherwise the prospects of socialism - at least in the West - would in fact finally sink to zero.

2. How can - in relation to DdP and bureaucracy - be explained the connections between the ideas, theories and practices of the (pseudo) socialist protagonists?

3. How can the undesirable developments of socialism caused by bureaucracy and DdP be plausibly explained?

The two questions are obviously related. Wrong developments are caused by people, namely in concrete situations, ie under the influence of a multitude of historical factors. The mistakes of the "protagonists" can have devastating consequences not only for their own societies, but also for other countries; whereby the "protagonists" naturally mean Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Pol Pot, Castro, Tito and others.

HA Winkler sees the cardinal error, or even the beginning of the end of socialism, in Marx and Engels. Namely with their "analogy conclusion" from the French Revolution to the pending, supposedly last and final revolution that the proletariat has to fight against the capitalist bourgeoisie (see above, pp. 1-4). Indeed, from 1789 onwards, the French bourgeoisie (the Third Estate) eliminated the rule of the nobility and clergy, that is, a class of idlers and inepts. The socially useful work was done - as before - by the Third and Fourth Estate: the bourgeois leadership elites and the broad mass of the working people, mostly employed in agriculture.

The working class, which is oppressed by a bourgeois capitalist exploiting class and kept in (wage) dependency, finds itself in a completely different situation. The workers consistently lack the know-how, the specialist knowledge required to run the state, economy and society. If they chase the bourgeoisie out of their offices and leadership positions after a successful revolution, the state and the economy collapse. The question arises anyway, *with what right* the workers could undertake such a thing. As a whole, the working class cannot represent itself and revolt on its behalf. If it entrusts a certain ("left"?) Party with this power of disposal, it leaves its fate to fallible, possibly politically and ideologically misguided people or groups.

The story actually went something similar in Russia in 1917, although it is well known that the initiative did not come from the working class or from its democratically elected "councils", the Soviets, but from Lenin's Bolshevik Party. Lenin put the teachings of Marx and Engels in such a way that it suited his daily political stuff. Marx and Engels had undoubtedly preferred council democracy to the DdP. Lenin did the opposite; he disempowered the Soviets and established his own "no law bound" dictatorship. *This contempt for democracy and law was devastating.* Lenin considered the rejection of Machiavellianism to be "stupidity", so he did not recognize that the end only rarely "justifies" the means and that, conversely, unclean or even criminal means can devalue any end. So that, with *Ernst Bloch*, it is to be demanded that the long-term goals of socialism (realm of freedom, etc.) always resonate with the short-term goals of political practice and are taken into account. Which is not possible if, like Lenin, one has neither sustainable *ethics* nor a positive relationship with the *law*.

The bureaucracy, which Lenin verbally attacked hardly less vigorously than Marx and Engels, he could by no means eliminate, but had to watch how his party gained leadership over the bureaucracy, but at first came more and more into distress because the former tsarist and Bourgeois administrative cadres did not change their minds overnight, but sometimes carried out sabotage or violently rebelled. With the result that Lenin - after the turmoil of war communism, red terror, civil war, famine, NEP etc. - declared that one had landed in state capitalism and in a "bureaucratic utopia".

The difference to Marx's "conclusion by analogy" is that the Russian working class after 1917 could not completely take the place of the disempowered exploiters, but had to make pacts with them for the most part! Of course, Marx and Engels could not foresee this, it was not included in their calculations. In any case, Marx's theory of the revolution had historically failed not because of the "conclusion by analogy", but because of completely different, economic and socio-political factors (see above).

Lenin had warned before *Stalin's* "brutality". Indeed: the brutality and inhuman cruelty that Stalin achieved has hardly ever been exceeded, not even by Hitler or Pol Pot. What was still a temporary red terror for Lenin, grew into a means of power and rule that could be used at will with Stalin. Lenin's "lawless DdP" became the license for systematic state terror of the most brutal kind, for example with the forced collectivization of agriculture (kulak persecution) and especially with the "Great Purge" of 1936-38, the height of paranoid cynicism, Stalin had announced "the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat" and the conclusion of the "building of socialism in *one* country", thus declaring the USSR a "socialist state". All gross lies for propaganda purposes! The (pseudo) communist party and state bureaucracy has never been more "effective", more brutal and cruel than under Stalin, who nonetheless attached importance to occasionally criticizing bureaucracy and bureaucratism.

To attribute all of this solely to the paranoid character of Stalin would certainly be wrong, although Stalin's handwriting shines through all "main and state actions" and all party resolutions and actions of the former USSR. The decisive factor was the connection between Stalin's paranoia, vindictiveness and cruelty with the means of power that were available to him as a dictator through the DdP, party and state bureaucracy. A class opponent could no longer be defeated; a new "quasi-class" of party and state bureaucrats emerged who, at the behest of their supreme chief dictator, tyrannized the people at will ("the cadres determine everything", as Stalin put it). This ruling clique could put everyone under general suspicion, which mostly

ended up in the hell of gulags and firing squads.

It was Stalinism that almost completely discredited the basic ideas of socialism developed by Marx and Engels. What Stalin claimed to be the official "Marxism-Leninism" was in reality *ideology* in the Marxian sense, that is, the disguise of the catastrophic reality of a misguided conception, leadership and policy of the state that was decisive for the collapse of the "actually existing Eastern bloc socialism" after 1989.

This undesirable development would have meant the end of Marxism and socialism, if there had not been western *neo-Marxism* and new, emancipatory forms of socialist practice such as in Yugoslavia, the Czechoslovak Republic, Poland and France, and later also in China (after Mao), Vietnam and Cuba.

Mao Zedong initially largely adhered to his models Marx, Lenin and Stalin ideologically, but repeatedly sought and found his own ways in political practice, which ultimately led to a break with the USSR. The DdP hardly played a role in this - at least in public statements; Mao understood it as a "people's democratic dictatorship", which was supposed to serve primarily to combat opposition members, although he left no doubt that he was following a "democratic centralism", ie a one-man and one-party dictatorship according to Stalin's pattern.

Mao's "great deed" probably consisted in adapting Marx's theories to Chinese peculiarities. At first he even made pacts with the "national bourgeoisie" and the small bourgeoisie, but relied again and again on the broad mass of landless, small and medium-sized *peasants*, and less on the initially rather insignificant industrial proletariat.

The fact that Mao's regime caused the staggering number of 35 to 80 million deaths cannot be easily explained. It was probably also due to the fact that Mao developed abstruse personal ideas about social policy that cannot be found in any of his "role models", including Stalin, such as the "Great Leap Forward" and the "Cultural Revolution". In such tendencies Mao's special character was combined with the Chinese folk tradition, according to which the common good was always valued much higher than the interests of individuals. - In contrast, the fact that Mao - not unlike Lenin and Stalin - occasionally criticized the bureaucracy and yet pushed for the establishment of an omnipresent party and state bureaucracy (the "dual bureaucracy"), whose arbitrariness and sometimes incompetence often is still painfully felt today by the people.

The Cambodian *Pol Pot* confused socialism with terror and egalitarianism (= fanaticism of equality). During the time of his regime (1975-79) he pushed the *non-ideal* of absolute equality to extremes. What Marx would never have thought of, on the contrary: socialist is not the elimination of individuality, but its free development, fully achievable in a "free association of free individuals". In contrast, Pol Pot's egalitarianism seems like a bad nightmare in which around 2 million people lost their lives. Anyone who, like Pol Pot, has all intellectuals murdered is a case for the criminal justice system and for the psychiatrist. Without intellectuals, that is, without a trained mind and intellectual freedom, there can be no socialism.

It is astonishing that *Lutz Götze* was able to come up with around 10 hypotheses about Pol Pot's motives - from the "criminal Mao ideas" to personal reasons for origin and life story. To reduce these 10 theses to a single one - that of the *addiction to standardization and absolute equality* - seems daring, but understandable. - In retrospect, one must be grateful to the Vietnamese troops who put an end to the horrific Pol Pot nightmare in 1979. The damage to the just cause of socialism would have been immeasurable if Pol Pot had not been disempowered. -

Unfortunately, a more or less direct path leads from Lenin's "lawless DdP" via Stalin and Mao to Pol Pot. According to *HA Winkler*, the *socialist Babeuf* and his radical Jacobin "conspiracy of equals", who in 1796 launched the idea of a last, "avant-garde" revolution, would be responsible for this as well - undoubtedly an extremely short-circuited idea, since it would completely ignore the special historical-political and personal factors that determined the behavior of the *pseudo-socialist* dictators.

In any case, these fatal chains and entanglements - as unmistakable *warning signals and beacons* - must be taken into account in all considerations about possible future prospects for socialism. In any case, such considerations are pointless until there is some clarity about the stage in human history we are currently in. Hence now

4. How do you deal with the new, current challenges posed by forced globalization, digitization ("surveillance capitalism"), the environmental and climate crisis, transhumanism and posthumanism, etc., especially when the DdP and bureaucracy have actually failed?

In the 21st century, in the age of "surveillance capitalism" (S. Zuboff), mankind is confronted with difficulties that people like

Marx, Lenin or Mao could hardly know anything about. In the face of these challenges, not only a new ethics, but also a new theory of society and a new model of the future of socialism appear to be required; the elaboration of which is not possible without concrete analyzes of the concrete situations in the areas mentioned. This applies to a large extent to

Globalization,

a term to which an opposite term has recently caused a sensation: “deglobalization”, particularly popular with populists and right-wing extremists who believe that they can master today's problems with national solo efforts, ie the recipes of the day before yesterday. The globalization-critical organization *attac* counteracts this with the following arguments:

"... current globalization is one-sidedly oriented towards powerful economic interests. Politicians are promoting the liberalization of the markets in the interests of large corporations - a globalization of human rights and social, ecological and democratic standards, on the other hand, is not on the agenda. ...

The belief that the market can do better and should take as much as possible out of the hands of the state is now deeply anchored in people's minds. The financial crisis of 2007/2008, the severe economic crisis that followed and the billions in bank bailouts called the neoliberal ideology into question in the short term - but it still dominates politics, science and the economy. The following applies: Profits are there for (private) companies, costs should be borne by the general public.

As a consequence of this policy, social wealth is concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people - and is circulating around the world at an ever faster pace in the form of capital in the hunt for returns. The claims to assets on the financial markets have long since exceeded many times the goods and services that can be generated worldwide. The haves are looking more and more hectically in the financial markets for new investment opportunities. Governments that really want to get serious about environmental or social standards are openly threatened with massive capital flight. If the next financial bubble bursts, the bailout costs are passed on to the general public - and the game starts all over again.

Another consequence of neoliberal globalization is the accelerated hunt for raw materials, which rich industrial countries are increasingly deciding on military planning and military interventions to secure. In more and more countries this leads to political destabilization and terrorism, which in turn is used in industrialized countries to justify rearmament, militarization and the erosion of democratic rights. A downward spiral of destruction and de-democratization threatens."^[142]

From this I conclude that my statement on globalization from 2020 (¹⁴³) has lost nothing of its validity:

In history it is not uncommon for things to be rather unspiritual or “mindless”. Often cited were the “demons of National Socialism, ... of Bolshevism, ... of religious fanaticism” etc. If history is made not just by “great men” in major and state actions, but by people of all origins, stripes and nature, their entire activity - and not just their social work – is the “engine of history”. From which it follows that globalization, especially under the aspect of world history or even eternity (‘sub specie aeternitatis’), by no means makes up the whole of history. (Whereby I emphasize again that this ‘whole’ is not manageable.) So the question is which aspects of history can be meant when globalization is mentioned. According to the word: *the encompassing*, the inclusion of the entire globe in the historical horizons of mankind and in the possibilities of historical action.

Apparently everything begins “locally”, for example the history of each individual in the womb, but also political-geographical expansions such as that of the history of Rome and its empire. After which the mere local is given up in favor of a constant broadening of horizons, which is ultimately not limited to individual regions.

The answers to the questions about the meaning of globalization change in a striking way, often depending on the sometimes completely unpredictable vicissitudes of history. In 2003 I assumed more deterministically that globalization would also make so-called turbo-capitalism perpetuate. That has not been confirmed. *Harald Schumann* and *Christiane Grefe* cited the reasons for this as early as 2009 - and already under the impression of the terrible financial crash of 2008 – in the following: “The checkered economic history of the 20th century proves: The limitless expansion of capitalism is by no means predetermined. History may well take a different direction. It is a dialectical process. Wherever the mechanism of supply and demand, of return on investment and structural change overcomes boundaries, violates particular interests or threatens existing cultures, this process also generates counter-movements. And the consequences are open. It is by no means certain that the trend towards global integration will continue and not turn into the opposite again.”^[144]

In fact, there are diverse, sometimes dubious populist counter-movements against turbo-capitalist globalization, which I cannot describe here for reasons of space. In any case, still valid and necessary is the warning against playing down

catastrophic "side effects" of globalization, including the intensification of social differences and conflicts, creeping to acute climate and environmental catastrophe, increasingly unequal trade, increasing world market domination by some large corporations (the "global players"), with dire consequences such as the collapse of entire economies in Africa and elsewhere, which has led to wars, catastrophic refugee crises and humanitarian catastrophes, among other things. - Added to this is the banking and financial crash of 2008, with serious, unforeseeable consequences for the world economy and the course of globalization. And also the corona pandemic of 2020 ff. raises the *system question*, the question of which economic and social system is better suited to withstand life-threatening threats, such as the

Environmental and climate crisis.

This crisis is sometimes played down as a "cultural crisis". However, it is a special kind of cultural crisis because - in contrast to others - it not only harms or can harm the body of every person, for example as a result of stress, noise and environmental toxins. There is a mutual interdependence between people (as "individual systems") and the planetary ecosystem. In the words of Theodore Roszak: "The needs of the planet are also the needs of the individual ..., the rights of the individual are also the rights of the planet." (Quoted by F. Capra: *Wendezeit*, 1983, p. 447.)

But if there is a planetary crisis that has not only been caused by the global eco-crisis, but also by the globalization crisis of turbo-capitalism described above, it is advisable to look for connections between these crises. If such connections exist, the eco-crisis is not simply a cultural crisis, but part of a *planetary crisis of the person*.

The "state of things" ('die Sachlage' = the situation of all persons) is further complicated by the fact that apparently not all eco-crisis can be determined as an "eco-logical" crisis, because we do not know all the environmental problems in every corner of the earth and we cannot, with absolute certainty, eco-logically determine any obvious eco-problem (such as climate change). So I prefer the terms *environmental crisis* and *eco-crisis*.

But what is eco? From ancient Greek only 'oikos', the house. The house earth (the world) is in danger. If there is a (late) capitalist world and globalization crisis, then this affects both the "house" of ecology and that of the economy. It is not difficult to prove that this house has been badly damaged by both the capitalist-market economy and the "real socialist" planned economy overexploitation of nature and the environment.

Since there are still too many emissions (from vehicles, factories, private households, etc.) polluting our environment, the life-threatening greenhouse effect it causes and the resulting *climate change* seem to be largely homemade.

If, however – as authors like *Christoph Lauterburg* (1998) have clearly shown - the environmental pollution in urban areas is already beginning to destroy the fertility of man, not only the present but also the future of personhood is radically called into question. ^[145]

The fact that climate change is actually predominantly "homemade", that is, caused by humans, is currently hardly questioned. (One of the few exceptions: US President Donald Trump 2017!) *Andreas Lienkamp*, on the other hand, shows a sense of proportion and reason when he states: "What at first glance looks like a natural event, eg the melting of glaciers or the rise in sea levels, at second glance cannot be traced back to the actions of individual actors, but it can be traced back to dominant, climate-damaging production and consumption patterns, which are mainly practiced in industrialized and emerging countries, but also by the elites in developing countries." ^[146]

With which Lienkamp largely confirmed in 2009 what was already to be found four years earlier in the *Black Book on Climate Change*, whose authors carefully differentiated between a) what science thinks it knows, b) what it suspects, and c) "what is discussed and what follows from it". ^[147] Probably the most important key statements I will pick out a): "The carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere is today around a third higher than it has ever been in the last 400,000 years. The increase in carbon dioxide concentration is due to anthropogenic sources; ... " (ibid.). To b): "According to today's understanding of the climate system, the temperature changes observed in recent decades can only be explained if the influence of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions is taken into account." (p. 213 f.), And: "Climate change of the expected magnitude can have profound effects on water availability, food supply and health in some parts of the world. *The gap between rich and poor is widened by climate change, developing countries are more affected than industrialized countries.*" (p. 214, emphasis added). And finally to c): "In the longer term, abrupt climate changes, such as the collapse of the thermohaline circulation, cannot be ruled out as a result of anthropogenic climate change." (ibid.)

All the more appalling is the fact that responsible officials all over the world have for decades simply tried to ignore the problems caused by climate change, following the motto: "Talk globally - postpone nationally".^[148] *Harald Schumann* and *Christiane Grefe* call this in 2009 "the dark side of the previous global climate regime", which was completely inadequate (ibid. p. 324).

Far-reaching changes have only appeared in sight since 2015, ie since the "Paris Agreement", the "World Climate Agreement" concluded by 195 countries and the EU, which came into force in 2016. In this, the global community undertakes to "keep the warming well below two degrees compared to the end of the 19th century", to gradually reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, to constantly tighten the exhaust gas targets under constant control, "new types of energy supply and early warning systems for natural events" are to compensate for damage and losses and to support poorer countries with sufficient financial aid in their new measures to protect the environment.

Regardless of this, not all the demands of poorer countries that appear justified have been met, a shortcoming that *Axel Bojanowski*, the author of the report I am referring to here, on the world climate treaty, points out at the end of his article. Under the heading "Reference^[149] to mother earth" it says there: "Failed has ... the desperate struggle of the indigenous peoples. All the demonstrations for guaranteed rights in the climate treaty have been of little use. Their needs were only 'taken into account', an extremely non-binding formulation even for UN language. - Some South Americans, on the other hand, are happy. The protection of 'Mother Earth' is expressly appreciated in the preamble of the world climate treaty."^[150] It remains to be seen which deeds will follow such appraisals and contractual agreements.

Valuable, indispensable additions can be found in the following statements from 2019: "Because of its existential importance, climate change cannot be coordinated through a compromise between parties, between employers and trade unions. Rather, it must be politically decided and initiated on the basis of scientific knowledge. If a climate catastrophe is to be avoided, then - assuming human reasonableness - the most effective way must first of all be determined and implemented, initially regardless of the question of costs.

In essence, it is about nothing less than the fastest possible exit from the fossil path[Emphasis by me.] So what is meant is not a little exit, but a complete exit. Scientists can argue about the period in which the exit must take place and, for example, agree on a time corridor. The exit itself, however, is unlikely to be negotiable. ... "- It should be noted here that this phase-out could suddenly be accelerated, through the use of *clean nuclear power* which could be obtained through the *almost complete reprocessing of nuclear waste*. Without therefore reducing the relevance of the following statement, according to which

"Market radicals have obviously managed to convince the public very successfully that, apart from natural disasters such as earthquakes or volcanic eruptions, markets could solve all world problems with flying colors and much more efficiently, unbureaucratically and also more cost-effectively.

One only has to refrain from politically regulating the markets and thereby robbing them of their effectiveness. Market radicals basically ascribe miraculous powers to the markets in a propagandist exaggeration, so to speak. Beyond such an almost religious narrative, however, markets are neither efficiency machines that optimize everything and increase wealth, nor are they all bulldozers. ...

This would also reveal the mystery of why radical market forces are in reality the partisans of the rich and powerful, who cleverly try to conceal their true intentions behind the supposedly miraculous forces of the markets. Leaving climate protection to market forces would be tantamount to turning the buck into a gardener."^[151]

In the broadest sense, the subject of 'the environment' also includes:

"The neo-digital revolution"

Werner Meixner re-coined the term 'neo-digital' in 2017 as a combination of 'neoliberal' and 'digital', which is supposed to mean that the digital revolution is primarily taking place under a neoliberal-capitalist guise.^[152] - My question: Does 'neo-digital' therefore only refer to the capitalist West, not also to the People's Republic of China? In a party-dictatorial regime there can certainly be capitalism, but not neoliberalism. In China, 'neo-digital' means something different than it does in our country.

The global digital revolution of our time, for example through the Internet ('WWW', the "worldwide web"), computerization and robotization, on the one hand opens up completely new possibilities for being a person, but on the other hand

endangers it to an unprecedented degree. As the NSA espionage affair has shown, among other things, it is to be feared that not only the public but also the private life of every individual will be fully spied out (or can be spied out). Freedom is then completely lost, as is the possibility of real freedom in the long term, a *realm of freedom for everyone*. Both the individual and society will have to defend themselves against this, be it through private protective measures (encryption of online communication, etc.) or through legislative measures.

Incidentally, you can quickly find out about the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet on the Internet yourself. Main advantages: information in abundance; you can find out more about almost everything faster and better than ever before. You can establish contacts worldwide at any time, communicate inexpensively and in a variety of ways (of course also professionally and commercially); you can shop cheaply, book trips, do banking, etc.

But this also makes the downsides visible: Criminals can infiltrate online banking as well as practically any other form of online communication. Illegal business is possible as a result of insecure or missing legal bases. Children and young people can be endangered by violence and porn videos, among other things. Diverse, often criminal abuse cannot be ruled out.

It is not (yet) possible to conclusively determine what value - or worthlessness - the digital revolution actually represents. A lot is expected of individual freedom of choice, especially when weighing up the opportunities and risks of digital freedom. The question to be asked is how much self-control is possible, how much external control, even manipulation (eg also by the personal and collective unconscious), is to be feared.

In any case, it is important to consider the actual balance of power. In their book on the *Digital Dictatorship*, Stefan Aust and Thomas Ammann describe the position of power in the capitalist West that the large corporation Google has already achieved as follows: " 'Googling' has changed our way of understanding the world. Google decides what is important and what is unimportant - and what Google does not show is not available. >If you googled something, you researched it, otherwise not. In any case, I would like it if people ultimately thought this way and not differently<, says Google co-founder Sergey Brin. But Google not only has the largest search engine in the world, it also has the largest video platform with YouTube, the most widely used browser with Chrome, the most widely used e-mail service with Gmail and the most widely used operating system for mobile devices with Android." ^[153]

In the meantime, among other things, sophisticated spy glasses have been added, the invisible mini cameras of which make the respective environment completely recognizable in images for Google. - Incidentally, the Google board promised back in 2013 to turn science fiction into everyday reality as soon as possible, namely: " >driverless cars; automated wardrobe; mind controlled robots; virtual versions (holographs) of ourselves that we can send to other places; intelligent drugs and micro-robots in the body that keep us constantly up to date on the dangers of illness <." Why Aust and Ammann, perhaps understating, remark that "not everyone is well" with such prospects (ibid.) - and draw certain conclusions from this or as an answer to the neo-digital revolution as a whole. With *Julian Assange* they want to "redefine the balance of power" and propose, as a first step, "to finally establish the right to informational self-determination across Europe so that no national loopholes remain as before, which have been exploited by US corporations for their purposes." (loc. cit. p. 341). In addition, large corporations should be asked to pay more immediately: "If the Internet giants make billions in business with our data, the question should be what they are willing to pay for it. After all, we are the raw material suppliers, perhaps even the raw material for the >fuel of the 21st century<." (op. cit. p. 342). Which apparently remained a pious wish. After all, the authors close their book with demands for complete "control over as much as possible of all stored data" and for the "right to be forgotten". Without the "restoration of the power of disposal over the data" there would be "no democracy in the long run" (p. 343). - The "right to be forgotten" has actually been guaranteed in a new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). However, I dare to doubt whether an individual "control over as much as possible all stored data" was guaranteed.

The suggestions that Werner Meixner made in response to the neo-digital revolution (see above) seem all the more ambitious. He is striving for nothing less than an "ethical reformation" (op. cit., p. 22 ff.). To this end, he calls, sometimes going beyond Aust and Ammann, the "protection of communication and traffic routes of any kind from influence by monopoly corporations or imperialist states" (ibid. p. 22) in order to prevent the fatal development towards a perfect surveillance state. Meixner is not satisfied with appeals, but also refers to his own concrete behavior, from which he derives recommended immediate measures, including: only buy books in bookstores, cars without internet connection, only open expected e-mails, encrypt permanent e-mail contacts, etc. My question: Can this promote the "Ethical Reformation" or even question the power of the neo-digital corporations? Hardly likely. Because: As long as employers can use digitization undisturbed to assert their interests, nothing will change in the power position of large corporations.

It is a feeling of powerlessness that creeps up on you when you realize how the turbo-capitalists are using digitization to

increase productivity and profit maximization and to keep wage earners dependent, for example by “increasing the turnover rate, reducing the unit labor costs, increasing the efficiency of work, diversifying constant capital, reducing circulation costs and creating completely new areas of business. The effects of these interests consist in the compression of work, the lowering of the relative wage, the reduction of work in the circulation sphere, the extended surveillance of the employees and an intensification of competition. And this extremely in the moment, when “people lose work because a robot takes over what they were doing”.^[154] Those are all factors through which *social inequality and injustice* is constantly exacerbated. This is especially true for the

Surveillance capitalism,

on which Harvard professor *Shoshana Zuboff* presented an extensive study in 2018 entitled *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* (more than 700 pages!). After a few dedications, but before the table of contents, the author gives on page 7 a series of criteria and definitions that suddenly illuminate and delimit the phenomenon:

" 1. New market form that reclaims human experience as free raw material for its hidden commercial operations of extraction, prediction and sale; 2. a parasitic economic logic in which the production of goods and services is subordinated to a new global architecture for behavior modification ; 3. an out-of-species form of capitalism characterized by a concentration of wealth, knowledge and power unparalleled in human history; 4. foundation and framework of a surveillance economy; 5. in the 21st century as important for human nature as industrial capitalism in the 19th and 20th centuries for nature itself; 6. the origin of a new instrumental power which claims to rule over society and which confronts market democracy with dismaying challenges; 7. aims at a new collective order based on total certainty; 8 . an expropriation of critical human rights, which can best be understood as a coup from above - as the overthrow of popular sovereignty."

With the exception of the half-sentence of point 6, which deals with “market democracy”, Zuboff’s provisions surprisingly apply *mutatis mutandis* to today’s China too! So apparently it is a globally observable phenomenon. - The author provides evidence of her scandalous findings on more than 600 pages, albeit in a partly popular scientific manner - with such curious chapter headings and subtitles as "Clear the stage for surveillance capitalism", "The gentle conquest of freedom-loving animals" or "On your seats, set, Pokémon Go! "and “Our canaries in the coal mine ”. ^[155] To finally come to the following results - rather surprisingly - on pages 598 f.: “The decades of economic injustice and the concentration of immense wealth after the civil war, which we Americans summarize under the term 'Gilded Age' ^[156], showed the people how they did not want to live. This knowledge has enabled the Americans to put an end to the Gilded Age and forge the weapons of progressive legislation and the New Deal. Even today we speak of 'robber barons' - when we think of the capitalists of the late 19th century. – Surely the age of surveillance capitalism will suffer the same fate. After all, it already shows us how *we do not want to live*. It teaches us the value of our greatest and irreplaceable moral and political achievements by threatening to destroy them. It reminds us of the trust that is the only real protection from uncertainty. It demonstrates that power that is not tamed by democracy can only lead to exile and despair. ... The Berlin Wall fell for many reasons, but above all because the people in East Berlin said to themselves: >That' s enough now!< – We also can be the authors of many 'beautiful and great' new facts demanding the digital future as the home of mankind, our home. It is enough! Let's take this as *our* declaration."

Unfortunately, the author does not mention what the East Germans traded back then: the return of “robber barons” capitalism with all its consequences. Another question to be asked is how - despite the New Deal and “progressive legislation” - the present surveillance capitalism came about at all. New Deal, ie redistribution, hardly changes the actual capitalist power and property relations, which, as is well known, repeatedly create new inequality and injustice. From which it follows that “surveillance *capitalism*” must also and especially be included in the *question of system*. After all, the USA brought about a *revolution* as early as 1776 ff. From which the first modern bourgeois democracy arose.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), Trans- and Posthumanism

The overall picture of AI research is rather ambiguous, if not frightening, especially in view of some future prospects that are already recognizable. The rapid development has prompted, for example, the AI and futurologist *Ray Kurzweil*, who works at Google in Silicon Valley, to prophesy a “singularity” for the year 2045, the dawn of a new world age. Although the choice of words is striking, because the term ‘singularity’ is mainly used to characterize the so-called “Big Bang”. In the context of AI, however, the term means something like “the development of a >superintelligence< through the continuous use of new technologies”.^[157]

In fact, Kurzweil holds out the prospect of a total break with previous human history - and even its demolition. In doing so, he relies on the allegedly not linear, but exponentially advancing development of computer technologies. The corresponding expert knowledge doubles in ever shorter intervals, so that by 2045 at the latest the contents of the human brain would be transferable to *robots* without exception, which not only completely replace humans and far surpass them due to their immeasurably increased intelligence, but would also initiate a whole new era in the history of the universe; these super-beings would be able to conquer all of space. - Preliminary stages already now: more and more inadequate ("fragile") parts of the human body are being replaced by prostheses. In the long term, *bioelectronics* aims to produce *cyborgs*, semi-human beings that mainly consist of technical implants and are thus on the way from "biological humans to posthuman beings" cyborgs.^[158] The dangers that arise for the human person who has hitherto been given inalienable rights can currently already be seen in an invention that every secret agent should welcome: the espionage 'Google Glass project'.

Nonetheless, Kurzweil considers the development to a cyborg and ultimately to the perfect AI robot to be irreversible and, so to speak, a natural necessity. He believes that one can completely technically copy mind and consciousness, even the emotional life and psyche of man and reproduce them at will, especially since he is convinced that he has discovered a parallel between the supposedly hierarchical structure of the universe and that of the human brain, according to which both are organized according to certain "information patterns". The "300 million pattern recognizers in the human neocortex ... that serve to recognize the information patterns contained in the world" can be modeled.

In addition, Kurzweil apparently sums up "all of his thoughts on the human brain, artificial intelligence and the possibility of their fusion in the concept of the pattern recognition theory of the mind".^[159] Accordingly, there will be "conscious machines", robots with humanness, as early as 2029, which will be able to achieve the aforementioned AI "singularity" by 2045. Kurzweil ends his book *'The Singularity is Near'* with optimistic references to the alleged evolution of humans from a biological to a purely technological machine being and the bold prophecy: "It will continue until the entire universe is at our fingertips."^[160] - However, this leads to a blatant contradiction, because not we humans, but the machine beings who replace us are, by Kurzweil, supposed to conquer the entire universe after we humans have disappeared ...

Criticism of trans- and posthumanism

Transhumanism goes beyond being human up to now; posthumanism starts with the "end of mankind". Kurzweil combines both directions in his ideas, although he not only neglects important facts; he also makes several mistakes in reasoning. The facts: The human mind is not just made up of pattern recognizers in the cerebral cortex. Rather, their functions are inextricably linked with the activity of the entire brain. However, this activity - and with it the entire *neural combinatorics* - is neither completely manageable, nor fully researched, nor mathematically comprehensible.^[161] It is a thoroughly *creative* activity, which enables new knowledge to be achieved, which is dependent on pattern recognition, but goes far beyond this.

Unfulfilled - and probably even permanently unfulfillable - consequently remains a basic requirement for the technical modeling of the human brain. This is especially true for the spirit, the consciousness and the psyche of the human being, because these manifest themselves as comprehensive subject-object events and are by no means exhausted in brain activity.

In addition, Kurzweil overlooks the fact that the recognition of patterns does not happen immediately, but mediated through *linguistic and non-linguistic meanings*, ie by means of semantic, syntactic, associative and emotional assignments. These, too, are ultimately unmanageable, especially since linguistic meanings occur not only in the form of denotations (basic meanings) and connotations (secondary meanings), but also in purely individual, subjective association meanings that are decisive for any imagination, creativity and decision-making activity. In other words: Kurzweil's AI concept is not only flawed, but also inapplicable. Mind, consciousness and psyche of the human being, always closely connected with his emotional world, are technically neither modelable nor reproducible.

If the transhumanist presumptions were to become a reality, we humans would be denied access to a possible *realm of freedom* forever. Mankind would have to abdicate, give up on itself, even if, as the likewise transhumanist *Hans Moravec* envisions, only robots were produced as *super-intelligent work slaves*; because they too could one day use their super intelligence to destroy humanity.

In order to prevent such fatal developments, legislative countermeasures are likely to be required now. In the long term, I believe that overall social control over key industries (including the IT sector, of course) will be inevitable. On the other hand, any attempt to force people to give up on themselves is out of the question. Anyone who wants to abolish human beings is

robbing themselves of their human dignity. Personality is lost to the extent that one destroys the unity of the human being, which consists of spirit, psyche and body matter, in order to ultimately reduce it to technically manipulated inorganic matter. Any such attempt exacerbates the prevailing competitive situation in which the people of this earth find themselves.

Richard David Precht confirms this view in his book *Artificial Intelligence and the Meaning of Life* (Munich 2020), in which he even sees humanity as facing the alternative of either overcoming capitalism or giving up being human (loc. cit. p. 9 ff.). His presentations on the subject of “*machines and morals*” (p. 146 ff.) are extremely interesting. Precht rightly considers any form of “ethical programming” (= technical production of ethics!) to be out of the question.

5. What are the implications for an alternative model of society?

One might get the idea that all of the problems mentioned can be solved by a “strong hand”, namely through the *dictatorship of the proletariat + bureaucracy*, according to the Chinese “model”! Based on reliable sources, I have been able to show that this is precisely *not* the case (see p. 80 ff.).

So other ways and means must be found, namely in answering the above question No. 5, for which the following requirements, principles and guiding principles can be derived from the entirety of my previous representations and from my treatment of questions 1) to 4):

a) Basic Principles

1. Socialism has not finally failed.
2. Social work remains an *engine of history*.
3. As a whole, the working class cannot represent itself.
4. The bureaucracy trends to become independent.
5. Incompetence and obedience to authority constantly threaten the functionality and *raison d'être* of the bureaucracy.
6. Marx and Engels' criticism of bureaucracy is still largely valid.
7. Lenin's “lawless DdP” easily turns into terror, abuse of power and arbitrariness.
8. Stalinism has discredited the basic ideas of socialism to a great extent.
9. The current “surveillance capitalism” creates new challenges for socialism worldwide.
10. The connection between surveillance capitalism and neoliberal globalization threatens a downward spiral of social inequality, environmental destruction and de-democratization.
11. The eco-crisis is also a special kind of *cultural crisis*.
12. The eco-crisis is, among other things, a planetary *crisis of the person*.
13. Climate change is predominantly “homemade”.
14. Climate change is widening the gap between rich and poor, especially in developing and emerging countries.
15. Market radicals hinder the sustainable fight against the eco-crisis.
16. “Ethical programming”, synonymous with the technical production of ethics, is unacceptable.

b) Guiding Sentences

1. The current Chinese hybrid model of surveillance capitalism and market economy is not a future model of socialism.
2. The new forms of social emancipation in Cuba are noteworthy and worth imitating.
3. The French 'Projet Socialiste' (1980-83) shows, as *humane socialism*, feasible ways of socializing the key means of production and of co-determination.
4. Marx's theory of revolution did not fail because of its “conclusion by analogy” (HA Winkler), but because of certain developments in capitalism not foreseen by Marx.

5. The "conclusion by analogy" theory applies more to the early USSR. The Bolsheviks were unable to replace the existing bourgeois or tsarist bureaucracy, but had to take it over - with numerous negative consequences.
6. The delegation to a revolutionary "avant-garde" has proven to be the wrong path everywhere.
7. The connection between the party and state bureaucracy with the DdP contributed to the collapse of "real socialism" after 1989.
8. Mao Zedong's "great deed" consisted in adapting Marx's theory to Chinese peculiarities.
9. Mao's "Great Leap Forward" and the "Cultural Revolution" were non-socialist, criminal aberrations.
10. Pol Pot's terrorist equality fanaticism temporarily brought socialism into total disrepute.
11. The excesses of the "neo-digital revolution" - especially in the form of surveillance capitalism - threaten all of humanity.
12. The New Deal and progressive legislation alone are unlikely to overcome surveillance capitalism.

c) Claims

1. Democracy, law and ethical principles are mandatory for every form of socialism and also for revolutionaries.
2. The long-term goals of socialism must be recognizable in its immediate goals and in its political practice.
3. Surveillance capitalism can and must be overcome, among other things, through new forms of resistance and organization of the working class.
4. *Workers' self-management* (as in the former Yugoslavia) is to be demanded again for a democratic eco-socialism.
5. The danger of aberration through DdP + bureaucracy must always be considered if the future prospects of socialism are to be developed.
6. DdP and all other forms of dictatorship must be eliminated or permanently excluded.
7. Bureaucracy must always be subject to overall social control, in particular *legal* and technical control, and be accessible.
8. Far-reaching measures to protect the environment and the climate are urgently required.
9. The "fossil path" must be abandoned as quickly as possible.
10. *Nuclear power* can be used again if it is possible to completely recycle the nuclear waste.
11. AI excesses, transhumanism and posthumanism require energetic countermeasures such as social control over the key industries.
12. In order to avert the acute threats to humanity and to overcome surveillance capitalism and the globalized, neoliberal turbo-capitalism connected with it, a democratic eco-socialism must be (further) developed.
13. This eco-socialism should be *ethically* based.
14. First of all, it must be clarified what is actually to be understood by 'socialism' and what kind of socialism can be meant.
15. The realization of democratic eco-socialism can and must begin at any time.

On the ethical foundation of a democratic eco-socialism

On the concept of socialism

In contrast to my results (see above), in many places socialism is not only regarded as having finally failed, but as downright frowned upon or no longer even debatable. I think it is all the more necessary to clarify what I mean by socialism, referring above all to Marx, Engels, Ernst Bloch and the 'Projet Socialiste'.

Bloch explains: "The truth of the social is socialism."^{f.162]} And he concretizes this definition with his concept of *substance aim: socialism*, by which he means a (still) utopian unity of substance and subject, substance as a historical-philosophical

category in the Hegelian sense. The substance of history can become "subject" in an end *substance of in-and-for-itself*, that is, in Marx's *realm of freedom of the "free association of free individuals"* in a classless society. In other words, "the truth of the social" does not simply consist in identity with socialism, but also in the *struggle for socialism*.

"Vive la sociale!" was the battle cry of the Paris Communards of the year 1871 (whereby the feminine form 'la sociale' is probably explained by the fact that here above all 'la révolution sociale' was thought of). Without the Paris Commune Marxism would not have become "substantial" in the sense of *a revolutionary subject substance*. Because: Especially through the Paris Commune we now that direct democracy, workers control and domination-free Solidarity are possible as

long as such achievements are not destroyed by enemies. – I would like to remind you that in the Paris Commune the principle of *council democracy* and not that of the DdP was what Marx called "the most humane and most rational" form of

government, especially since he, under certain conditions, held possible parliamentary-democratic paths to socialism (see p. 17, 23 f.).

Nevertheless, the question arises as to how such goals can be achieved under today's conditions. - As a model for a humane socialism, a *socialism with a human face*, I have regarded the French *socialist project* from 1980 to 1983 (see above), in addition to the 'Prague Spring' of 1968. This socialist attempt was really humane because it was not based on violence, oppression and the terror of opinion, but on social, liberal and democratic principles. One finally wanted to replace the capitalist exploitation system frozen in arrogant domination with a new humanity in freedom, equality and solidarity = brotherhood / sisterhood. - From which it follows that a democratic eco-socialism *per se* and always has to be a *humane* one.

"Ethical Socialism"

If a socialism is to be ethically founded, it seems obvious to go on the achievements of the late 19th century "Ethical Socialism". Authors such as Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), Paul Natorp, FA Lange, Karl Vorländer and Max Adler developed

the ambition to associate the teachings of *Kant* and *Marx* in a new, socialist synthesis. For Cohen, Kant is "*the true and real originator of the German Socialism*"^[163], and the categorical imperative is not only the top principle for any socialism, but also contains "the moral program of the new time and all future of world history".

As a result, Cohen's concept of socialism is fundamentally different from that developed by Marx and Engels. Cohen rejects not only atheism, but also dialectical materialism and class struggle theory. His socialism based on an "idealism of ethics" cannot be based on materialism. The class struggle should be replaced by an "ethical state" that balances out all conflicts.

But it is precisely this that contributed decisively to the failure of the ethical socialism conceived by Cohen. No state can prevent the - ultimately *materially* conditioned - class antagonisms; a socialist state as a "state of God" (as Cohen envisions) would be absurd, especially since God can act as a postulate of faith, as with Kant, but not as a guarantee for social equilibrium. Cohen's additional concept of "cooperative socialism" does not change anything. - It is all the more urgent to build more on *Marx* than on Cohen and the Ethical Socialist. Hence now

Marx's ethics

Marx's new concept of a *humanistic naturalism* or *naturalistic humanism* is also the basis of what *Matthias Möhring-Hesse* calls Marx's "recognizable ethics of appropriate life, work and coexistence".^[164] Marx and Engels put these ethics in place of the *class morals* of the capitalists, with which they have always justified the assertion of their interests against the wage earners.

The essential components of the *ethics of the appropriate life* developed by Marx and Engels in their works - consistently implicitly - can be summarized as follows:

1. Alienation, exploitation, inequality and oppression are hallmarks of capitalist rule.
2. All previous morality is class morality in which either the rule of the ruling class or the rebellion of the oppressed against this rule was justified.
3. In his *Critique of Hegel's philosophy of right*, Marx calls for the *categorical imperative* to **"overturn all conditions in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, abandoned, contemptible being"**.
4. In order to achieve true freedom for all people, the capitalist mode of production and with it class society must be

abolished.

5. The *normative immediate goal* of socialism is: "Everyone according to his / her abilities, everyone according to his / her needs."
6. Only in a classless society can the *ethics of a decent life* come into full effect, and a *realm of freedom* be established in a "free association of free individuals".

Ernst Bloch's ethics of change

ties in with Marx and Engels, but also with the concepts presented by Kant on ethical concepts and postulates such as *value, dignity, the greatest good, virtue and responsibility*.

I consider *Bloch's concept of value* to be extremely important, as it makes it possible, *probably for the first time*, to explain plausibly not only the subjective but also the *objective* components of the concept - *and thus the problem of value in general*. Bloch defines: "Only work plus raw material and material content creates all values; there is no creation of value, especially in a higher climax, through an isolated subject side without intrusive value materials." ^[166]. If the human work on the material becomes the decisive criterion, the object side gives "the material to the value", but it is only through the work on this material that *value differentiations and gradations* arise, based on the *setting* of purposes and useful activity: "Everywhere like this value goes back to a desire, including its subjectively intended, objectively concretizable value-purpose content" (p. 1570). So that use, exchange and surplus value are of course to be related to human labor, whereby Bloch emphatically refers to the Marxian definitions: value = "condensed work", measure of value = the "socially necessary working time" (p. 1571 f.), in order to finally indicate the limit of any theory of value: "... the subjective as well as the objective theory of value ceases at the *highest moment of the highest good*, like the entire subject-object relationship that is still kept away from one another" (p. 1577).

And that ultimately constitutes the content of Bloch's ethics of *change*, which not only urges "that homo homini lupus is no longer profitable" ^[166], that people no longer face each other like wolves and destroy each other. Rather, these ethics should serve to fight for *real freedom*, for which Bloch writes in his *Politische Messungen* (1977, p. 252): "Only this ethics of change cancels out the mere gallery of the previous ethics history." Which means not all of the previous Ethics becomes obsolete, but becomes *critically inheritable*, not least in favor of concrete political practice, to which Bloch notes: "A really encouraging ethics can start like this, directed against dehumanization, with theoretical practice and towards citizenship. If one suspects with Kant that true politics cannot take a step without first paying homage to morality, then that is correct, but only because true morality in this our time cannot take a step without being politics, revolutionary." (ibid.) Which does not mean that morality finally has to merge into politics, because: "Politics neither completely resolves the individual conflicts below it (such as the 'communist forget-me-not' of sexual love) nor does it explain and illuminate the why, the *summum bonum* and even the darkness of death." (op. cit. p. 253). Also and especially in the *ethics of change*, it is morality that gives the individual their dignity, both in class society and in a future realm of freedom of a classless society: "You don't die for a well-organized production budget; our totality is not only politically negotiable, let alone merely a matter of advice and teaching in politics. *Morality of its own accord falls to the fighter for the realm of freedom, but the fact that he is a fighter is not written in communist politics, but only in communist morality.*" (Ibid. Emphasis added by me.)

Dialectical materialistic ethics (supplement)

The value doctrines of Marx, Engels, Bloch and other Marxist theorists can be expanded into *adialectical-materialist ethic*, the basic principles of which I have already given (2020, pp. 178-181). In order to indicate its dimensions here, I quote the following "core sentences" that go beyond Marx, Engels and Bloch in order to supplement and round up my remarks on the *ethical foundation of a democratic eco-socialism*.

- "1. Kant's God, freedom, thing-in-itself and immortality of the soul cannot be assumed as the basis of ethics, but the *"unfinished entelechy of matter"* of Ernst Bloch.
2. This basis does not apply absolutely, especially since every ethics is connected with the course of history, the social conditions and certain truth claims.
3. The entelechy of matter manifests itself in Schelling-Bloch's concept of nature, according to which nature can be understood as "its own legislator" and *natura naturans* with a *hypothetical* natural subject.
4. From these determinations follow the *end in itself* and the *intrinsic value* of nature, which are to be respected.

...

15. *Horkheimer* : In the categorical imperative Kant completely disregards the actual interests of the individual and therefore also of the contradictions and conflicts that prevail in a society.

16. According to Horkheimer, the latter cannot be resolved through a Cat. Imp., but only through *change in society*.

...

19. In spite of the fact that morality is conditioned by society, the requirement to respect the legal person is just as important as the demands a) to comply with the law and b) to participate in shaping it.

20. *Habermas* was possibly guided by semantic and conceptual protuberances of the term 'discourse' when he tried to justify the *discourse ethics* that he and *Karl-Otto Apel* had newly conceived.

21. According to *Lumer*, *Habermas*' failed in the attempt to secure the discourses on normativity, which are accessible to everyone, not only in terms of form but also in terms of content, in order to replace the Cat. Imp. .

....

29. Bloch thinks and argues *genuinely ecologically*; this already because of his concept of nature (so core sentence no. 3).

30. Man - also and especially the revolutionary - wins and retains his dignity at all times through morality and ethics, temporarily secured by general legislation in which everyone is to participate, even if the "real generality of moral legislation" only seems to be possible in a classless society. (op. cit. pp. 178-181)

Socialist eco-ethics

In January 2009, a *World Social Forum* took place in the Brazilian port city of Belém, where the social found its alleged truth in the demand for a radical eco-socialist upheaval, the main goal of which, however: *sustainability* was only considered achievable under extremely far-reaching, sometimes problematic premises, namely a) the "collectivization of the means of production", b) the introduction of the planned economy and c) a drastic shrinkage of production, with the following justification:

"To avoid global warming and other threats to human and environmental survival, entire sectors of industry and agriculture need to be abolished, reduced or restructured, and others developed, while ensuring employment for all. Such a radical upheaval is impossible without collective control over the means of production and without democratic planning of production and exchange. Democratic decisions about investment and technological development must replace control by capitalist corporations, investors and banks in order to do justice to the long-term horizon of the common good, both in relation to society and nature."^[167]

With which the authors of the 'Declaration' demand no more and no less than *acomprehensive eco-socialist revolution*, and that *worldwide*, so that finally also "the most oppressed part of human society, the poor and the indigenous peoples" of the Third World, of misery, underdevelopment and injustice (eg through unequal, unfair trade!) can be freed. In the course of this liberation, full equality between men and women, "gender equality" as an "integral part of eco-socialism", could be guaranteed all over the world. It is a program for which the majority of the population can be won over everywhere.

In further concrete terms, the authors propose radical upheavals ("transformations"), which deserve to be quoted in full, namely: "1. Transformation of the energy system by replacing fossil and biofuels with clean energy sources under the control of the communities: wind, geothermal, wave and, above all, solar energy; 2. Transformations of the transportation system by drastically reducing private use of trucks and cars and replacing them with a free and efficient public transportation system; 3. Transformations of current modes of production, consumption and construction based on waste, built-in aging, competition and pollution, through the production of only sustainable and recyclable goods and through the development of "green" architecture; 4. Transformations in the area of food production and distribution by advocating local food self-sufficiency as far as possible, by eliminating polluting agricultural industry, by creating sustainable agro-ecosystems and actively restoring fertile soil." (p. 5)

The authors also recommend their program as a guide for urgently needed *reforms in the here and now*. Hunger, hardship, misery, the destruction of nature and the environment can no longer be delayed. Remedial action must be taken immediately wherever possible.

On the socialist concept of revolution

According to Lenin, a “revolutionary situation” exists when “the upper classes can no longer do the same as before and the lower ones no longer want to do as before”. However, this is precisely what is currently not the case - at least in the highly developed industrialized countries. In Germany, for example, there is a lower class, which only makes up about a third of society and is only found sporadically in *class consciousness*, while the upper two thirds apparently have no trouble keeping in check any rebellion emanating from the lower class. In addition, in the age of *surveillance capitalism*, practically nothing remains hidden from the rulers. Revolutionaries would be caught before they could take action.

What is more serious is the fact that the presumption of a self-proclaimed “avant-garde” to pull through the revolution by means of a “dictatorship of the proletariat not bound by any law” (Lenin) has often proven to be a *criminal aberration*, for example from Lenin to Stalin, Mao and Pol Pot.

Nevertheless, I have meanwhile come to the conclusion that a revolution (or a popular uprising) is justified if it is brought about in *collective self-defense as an answer to inhumane, unbearable conditions*. It would then also be compatible with the Categorical Imperative^[168], so everyone could always do justice - without terror, arbitrariness, abuse of power and lawlessness.

Advanced eco-ethics.

If you read *Ray Kurzweil*, you could come to the conclusion that humans must be ashamed of their *own nature* and therefore forego it as soon as possible - in favor of AI and "super-intelligent" robots. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that as *part of nature* - and not only as free-creative cultural beings - we have an end and intrinsic value in ourselves. Which is vital to any eco-ethics. If eco-ethics serves to protect nature, then it serves all the more for self-preservation and self-respect of people. Without this “extension”, which is in reality an indispensable requirement, eco-ethics cannot exist. Accordingly, I would like to show to what extent eco-ethics can be seen as the basis of an ethics of behavior control. I would also like to refer to my discussion of the relationship between ethics, anthropology and the philosophy of history (Robra 2020, p. 202 ff.).

In nature, every passing is apparently followed by a new arising, whereby it should be noted that matter and nature as such are neither good nor bad. Rather, such black-and-white categories only gain importance in our *evaluations*. We perceive and designate the *senselessly destructive*, the senseless annihilation of supposed enemies *asevil*, as it is shown, for example, in the pure lust for murder which supposedly, ie according to Wilhelm Reich and others, began in the distant past in the animal kingdom.

In any case, it is understandable and scientifically confirmed why Kant considered it impossible to be able to base ethics on inclinations. There is no guarantee that the tendencies that are deeply rooted in the subconscious and the physical, will automatically bring about the good that we are normally ready to decide for reasons of self-preservation - spontaneously or after more or less careful consideration. Of course, it's not just about ourselves, about our own personhood, but also about that of our fellow human beings, so that not only “radically evil” but also the question of being a person play a role here. There are existentially significant ethical problems that Kant deals with primarily in connection with his discussion of the categorical imperative, which I, however, reformulate into a *legitimate request*- so that the Cat. Imp. largely retains its validity, but not as an obligation and ought *ethics* with a claim to absoluteness, but as *apersonal ethics of values* (see Robra 2020, pp. 3-16).

My legitimate request is:

In everything you do, make sure that you respect yourself and your fellow human beings as legal entities and personalities and that you always obey the moral law as far as possible.

"As far as possible", because there are exceptional situations, such as those of *self-defense*, in which the rights of one's own person have to be defended against existential threats and illegal violations of all kinds.

Nature, eco and animal ethics.

As I already mentioned, *Karl Marx* calls for the "categorical imperative to overturn all conditions in which man is a humiliated, enslaved, abandoned, contemptible being". With this reference to the almost all-encompassing object area of “relationships”,

the Kantian concept of person loses its latent anthropocentric limitation. The environmental disasters caused by humans, the mistreatment of animals, contempt for nature and much more, humiliate people, violate their sense of honor and their right to a decent life. - Marx, on the other hand, anticipates what *Hans Jonas* called the "ecological imperative": "Act in such a way that the effects of your actions are compatible with the permanence of real human life on earth!" (Jonas 1979, p. 36)

Nature, animal and ecological ethics can be derived directly from the intrinsic value of nature. *Klaus Sojka* names "compatibility with the unity of life" as the main criterion for eco-ethics and explains: "This means that self-preservation, which is made compulsory, requires the preservation of animals of all types and qualities that live in community with humans, as well as renunciation of the consumption of existing materials, unless it is absolutely necessary to cover emergency needs. The superficial measures have the effect of averting damage to living beings of all forms, in particular through torture, mutilation or destruction, because they claim solidarity as part of the unity and community of fate." ^[169] - Everyone has to ask himself / herself whether his / her behavior is useful, harmful or neutral on nature and the environment. Everything harmful must be avoided.

In animal ethics in particular, the question of whether animals should also be granted *personal status* has long been controversial. Which is impossible if being a person is defined as "the total scope of man" (Mounier). In contrast, the Californian ethics and economics researcher *Thomas White* suggests distinguishing people from things as follows: A person is a *who?*, one thing a *what?* so that the animals, which are not things, would probably be called 'people' without exception. A possibility that White does not go into. Instead, he drafts a special catalog of criteria for a personhood that animals and humans alike would have to be granted. According to this, people are characterized by factors such as life, consciousness, perception, feelings, "an idea of oneself", control of one's own behavior, recognition of other people, highly developed cognitive abilities (eg for solving problems), memory and the ability to communicate of thoughts. ^[170] According to White, these criteria are applicable to all people, but not to all animals, but only to elephants, "whales and dolphins, great apes, birds, reptiles and, if necessary, even to extraterrestrials" (where unfortunately there is something becoming dubious ...). - In relation to this classification, however, the question immediately arises as to where the exact boundaries of personhood in the animal kingdom would be drawn with it. Don't ants, bees, dogs, cats and horses, for example, also show intelligence and other abilities that roughly correspond to the criteria mentioned? A dilemma, for the solution of which I propose that *the entire extra-human world and all human children in the prenatal stage be given pre-personal characteristics, whereby gradual differences can be made.*

With this assumption, I consider it possible to supplement the ethics of the person with an ethics of nature, for which I have proposed a *natural formula of the categorical imperative*, which takes into account the fact that *legitimate interests* may be necessary in dealing with nature. It is a formula that cannot or should not prejudice the ongoing discussions about (possible) rights of nature, the environment, the animal and plant world (natural, ecological, animal rights). It is:

Behave in such a way that you always treat nature in every person and in every other form of appearance as an end - and as a means only for ethically justifiable and morally justifiable ends.

If it is now to be clarified which specific rights and obligations can be justified with this new formula, the question arises of the legitimacy of corresponding legislative measures. What is legit? Legally positivist is undoubtedly the current written and spoken law. And in cases of arbitrariness by the state? Or even in unjust states? First of all, only the natural law recognition of the *intrinsic value of nature* and the *self-end of the person*, which is also contained in Kant's functional formula of the categorical imperative, for which my *natural formula* only serves as a *supplement*.

If, with Schelling, creative nature ('*natura naturans*') is to be accepted as its "own legislator", this applies both to nature in humans and to non-human nature. "What is "legitimate" must be ethically and morally checked and justified. There are *general, fundamental rights anchored in natural law* (such as human dignity, freedom of the person, natural and environmental rights) that must be preceded by any public law." ^[171] - I can only reaffirm the claim of the content of these quotations from 2015. May they be heeded!

Democratic eco-socialism

Since I have already made this proposal several times (2017, 2018), I can content myself with a summary here.

Digital socialism

Computers and “social media” alone cannot solve the problems of society, especially since the complexity of the human person - also and especially in the community - eludes the merely quantifying and classifying access of computers.

Socialist planning.

Nonetheless, computers and the Internet are opening up entirely new possibilities for socialism. Macroeconomics, but also detailed problems such as working hours, can suddenly be calculated with unimaginable speed.

Direct democracy

would mean: Those who create values through work would finally be the masters of their own house, namely by granting positive rights, of which the authors *Cockshott* and *Cottrell* in 1993 name as the most important: “(1) The right to earn a living, (2) The right to receive the full value of their work and (3) The right to freely dispose of the value of their work.

Overall: a beautiful new world of freedom, justice and solidarity. But: *How should it be achieved, how should it be created, how should it be implemented?* And why have we come almost no closer to it since the *Cockshott* and *Cottrell* proposals appeared in 1993? - Shouldn't the failure of both the Soviet and the French (pseudo-)socialist experiments (1983 and 1989 ff.) have caused authors such as *Sarkar*, *Kern*, and *Cockshott*, *Cottrell* to come to completely different conclusions?

Market socialism

could probably only become possible if the market economy is subjected to overall social control, macro- and microeconomically by competent control authorities at all levels, from workers' control in the factories to local and national institutions to international bodies, including for example through corresponding innovations in the UN. The capitalist market economy would therefore have to be transformed into a new market socialism, for which, in addition to political power, the consent of the majority of the population is required. In order to make a *peaceful, non-violent transition to socialism* at least conceivable in view of the current world situation, a new market socialism must be compatible with a democratic constitution of the community.

Short-term and long-term goals of a democratic eco-socialism

If in the following overview I differentiate between short-term goals and long-term goals of ecology, democracy and socialism, this primarily serves to make it easier to understand. In reality, the five terms are mutually dependent, the rubrics do not represent “windowless monads”.

Short-range goals	Long-term goals
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Ecology:

<p>1) Sustainability guideline for any environmental policy.</p> <p>2) Energy system: conversion on clean energy sources</p> <p>3) Local food Self-sufficiency, sustainable agricultural ecosystems</p>	<p>4) Economy: only with renewable resources</p> <p>5) Production: only sustainable, recyclable goods</p> <p>6) Transport: changeover to free, efficient public systems</p> <p>7) International authority for the protection and wise use of global resources.</p>
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Democracy:

<p>1) Education and mobilization of the population.</p> <p>2) Full equality of Man and Woman.</p> <p>3) General law on own earnings for a living</p> <p>4) Publicly controlled PC calculation of working hours</p> <p>5) General democratic right to cooperative organization of work</p>	<p>6) Publicly controlled PC calculation of the working hours for all economies.</p> <p>7) Collective control of the means of production.</p> <p>8) Cooperative organization and democratic self-government of all establishments</p> <p>9) Investment planning and -control</p> <p>10) General plebiscite for all important decisions.</p> <p>11) Right to the full value of one's work.</p> <p>12) Right to freely dispose of the value of one's own work.</p> <p>13) maximizing the common good through general active participation and co-determination</p>
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Socialism:

1) Strengthening and expanding the welfare state.	5) Society as a whole: control over the market economy.
2) Gradual elimination of the social injustices and inequalities.	6) Eco-market socialism instead of capitalist market economy.
3) Constantly reinforced social control over the market economy.	7) Co-determination at all levels of society.
4) Raising the general cultural level.	8) Abolition of capitalism.
	9) Solidarity, fair, classless eco society.

And how can democratic eco-socialism become a reality? On the Teleo-Logic of Socialism in Transitional Societies.

If the truth of the social is socialism, both a truth theory and a theory of the social are required. If the social is to flourish to full truth in socialism, it must serve itself as a starting point for the transformation, so that first of all the existing social achievements, especially the welfare state, must be linked.

For a specific analysis of the specific situation

It is essential to get the clearest possible overview of what is already social. - Enlightenment agitation and propaganda, 'agitprop' in the best and broadest sense of the term, are necessary in order to come closer to the emancipation of society as a whole, to the appearance of the *realm of freedom*, as far as possible across all party and ideological boundaries.

Oscar Wilde realizes socialism in art.

Wilde sees significant aspects of materiality and personality united in the work of art. There are no limits and no "decadence" for artistic expression. Artists tolerate no political compulsion, no "authoritarian violence" above themselves: "*The form of government that is for the artist is the best means: no government*".- And this corresponds well to what Karl Marx understood by the *realm of freedom* and the *free association of free individuals*. (See: Wilde 1970)

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Person register

Adler, Max 146
Ammann, Thomas 133, 134, 162
Anweiler, Oskar 33-36
Arzt, Ingo 84
Assange, Julian 134
Aust, Stefan 133, 134, 162

Bahro, Rudolf 57, 58, 111
Bakunin 18
Behrens, Uwe 81, 82, 85-87, 162
Beierlein, Hannes 138
Bergmann, Theodor 15, 16, 162
Bischof, Henrik 70
Blanqui, Auguste 15, 28, 29
Bloch, Ernst 111, 120, 145, 148-151, 162
Borche, Astrid von 16, 28, 29, 32
Bojanowski, Axel 130, 131
Bresning, Karsten 156
Breschnew 5, 7, 64-66
Brin, Sergey 133
Bronner, Eric 45, 162
Brown 7
Brunner, Frank 18, 162

Ehrenburg, Ilya 64
Ehringfeld, Klaus 100
Eisler, Rudolf 153, 162
Engels, Friedrich 1, 4-10, 15-28, 30, 42, 45, 46, 58, 59, 62, 66, 91, 113, 118-122, 142, 145-149, 163, 164

Feng Xiang 83
Fetscher, Iring 11, 12, 24, 26, 41, 42, 162, 163
Formeyer 129
Frambach 24, 163

Gajic, Zoran 104
Götze, Lutz 95, 96, 123
Gorbatschow, Michail 5, 7, 10, 65, 67-69, 80
Grefe, Christiane 127, 130

Capra, F. 128
Castro, Fidel 5, 97-99, 119
Castro, Raúl 97, 98
Chruschtschow 5, 7, 63-66, 76
Cockshott, W. Paul 158, 162
Cohen, Hermann 146, 147
Cottrell 158, 162
Courtois, Stéphane 162

Daniel, Juli 65
Deng-Xiaoping 80, 81, 88, 92
Dietzsch, Steffen 152
Djilas, Milovan 52, 58, 162

Dörr, Nikolas R. 111
Dubček, Alexander 109

Habermas, Jürgen 14, 1
Hartmann, Klaus 16, 17, 23, 163
Havemann, Robert 111
Hegel, G.W.F. 13, 20, 23, 43, 145 f.
Hermsdorf, Volker 100
Heinz, Tina 109, 110
Hilpert, Alexandra 62, 163
Hofmann, Werner 64
Honecker, Erich 2
Horkheimer 150

Illner 24, 163

Jonas, Hans 155, 163
Jünke, Christoph 57
Junker, Stefan 32, 33, 41, 163
Kádár 76
Kant 83, 96, 146, 147, 148-150, 153-155, 157, 162
Kardelj, Edvard 72

Grigorenko 111
Guevara, Che 97

Kellner, Manuel 14
Klenner, Hermann 44, 45, 162
Kolpinski, Nikita 20, 21, 163

Kofler, Leo 10, 51-56, 62, 163
Kostka, Genia 83
Koubek, Norbert 24, 163

Kromb-Kolb, Helga

129

Kubi, Michael 51, 163
Kurzweil, Ray 138-140, 153, 163
Kuster, Bruno 102, 107, 108

Machiavelli 43
Mandel, Ernest 10, 12-14
Mankwald, Bernhard 8-11, 164
Mao (Ze Dong) 1, 5, 8, 77, 78-81,
88, 94, 119, 122-124, 143, 153, 164
Mark, Rudolf A. 63
Markovic, Mihajlo 101
Marx, Karl 1, 4-30, 32, 33, 36, 38,
42, 43, 45-49, 53, 57, 60, 62, 63,
65, 66, 72, 77, 81, 82, 88, 89, 91,
97, 112, 113, 117-124, 142, 143,
145-149, 154, 155, 161-165
Massarrat, Mohssen 132

Lange, F. A. 146
Lassalle, F. 22, 45
Lauterburg, Christoph 129
Lenin, W. I. 1, 4-10, 12-14, 25-34,
36-46, 48-52, 54, 58-63, 65, 77,
80, 88, 91, 97, 113, 117, 119-124,

Medvedjew, Roy

111

142, 152, 153, 163, 165
LeoGrande, William 100
Leonhard, Walter 67, 111, 114, 115
Lienkamp, Andreas 129
Lobe, Adrian 84
Lukács, Georg 111
Luther 7
Luxemburg, Rosa 45

Meixner, Werner 132, 135
Meyerhold, W. E. (Meierchold) 55
Mitterrand, François 115, 116
Mladenovic, Peter 103, 104, 108,
109
Möhring-Hesse, Matthias 46, 147
Mondl, Josef 79

Nawalny 70
Nietzsche 43

Odysseus 42

Pam, Anton 81, 82, 92, 93
Pasternak, Boris 64
Pavleski, Stefan 107
Petsch, Florian 37, 38, 164
Plaggenborg, Stefan 68
Pöppel, Walter 102-104, 108
Pol Pot 5, 8, 93-96, 119, 121, 123,
124, 143, 153
Precht, Richard Daniel 141
Putin 2, 62, 65, 68-70, 163

Sandkühler, Hans Jörg 146
Schadt, Peter 135
Schelling 150, 157
Schmeitzner, Mike 32, 165
Schumann, Harald 127, 130
Schumpeter 14
Seewald, Berthold 93
Shevtsova, Lilia 69
Siegert, Jens 2, 3
Šik, Ota 58, 109, 165

Rákosi 76
 Reich, Wilhelm 154
 Retief / Wessels 61, 164
 Rizzi, Bruno 47, 59, 164
 Robra, Klaus 43, 46, 48, 83, 84,
 96, 115, 126, 129, 146-148, 153,
 154, 157, 164
 Rösler, Walter 104, 105, 107
 Rogovin, Vadim 66
 Rosenberg, A. 33, 37, 39, 40, 165
 Roszak, Theodore 128

Sinjawski, Andrei 65
 Sojka, Klaus 155
 Stalin, Josef 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13,
 42, 48-68, 70, 71, 73, 76, 77,
 80, 98, 100, 102, 110, 113,
 119, 121-124, 142, 153, 162-
 165
 Steimle, Uwe 1
 Steiner, Jakob 2, 3
 Symonds, Peter 80, 90, 91

Thomas G. 12
 Tito 51, 52, 102, 104, 105, 119
 Tofall, Norbert 80
 Tomic, Dorde 107
 Trotzki 42, 62, 91
 Trump, Donald 129

Ulbricht, Walter 56

Van der Linden, Marcel 57-59, 165
 Venturelli, Aldo 43
 Vorländer, Karl 146

Walesa, Lech 74, 75
 Weber, Max 14
 Weisbuch, Gérard 139
 Weydemeyer 6
 White, Thomas 155
 Wilde, Oscar 161
 Winkler, Heinrich August 4-8, 11, 124,
 143, 165

Wohlleben, Nathalie 9, 10
 Wolkogonow, Dimitri 52
 Xi Jinping 82, 84, 91
 Zimmermann, Rainer E. 48
 Zuboff, Shoshana 119, 124, 136, 165

Notes

....

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^[29] Cf. Norbert Koubek, in: Illner, Frambach, Koubek (Ed.) 2020, p. 382

^[30] Lenin 1959, p. 67

^[31] Fetscher 1972, p. 66

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^[33] Marx in: Lenin 1959, p. 372

^[34] Cf. A. v. Borche 1977, p. 23

^[35] See *this*. *ibid*.

^[36] Cf. A. v. Borche loc. Cit. P. 26 f.

^[37] Lenin 1959, p. 378

^[38] Marx in: Lenin 2017, p. 62 f.

^[39] Lenin 1959, p. 418

^[40] ^{It is} estimated that at least around 250,000, perhaps even 1 million people fell victim to the Red Terror ("partly through mass executions"). See: www.de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roter_Terror . Lenin himself allegedly never signed an execution warrant. Nonetheless, he was called a "desk felon".

^[41] Cf. A. v. Borche 1977, p. 538

^[42] In: Junker 2011, p. 1 f.

^[43] Lenin, in: Junker op. cit., p. 2

^[44] In: Junker *ibid*.

^[45] Cf. Rosenberg 1932, p.123

^[46] Anweiler 1958, p. 29

^[47] Cf. so loc. . cit. p. 41

^[48] Anweiler loc. cit. p. 139

^[49] Cf. Petsch 2008, p. 70

^[50] Lenin in: Rosenberg loc. cit. p. 65

^[51] Lenin in: Petsch op. cit., p. 73 f.

^[52] Petsch op. cit. p. 72

^[53] *id*. p. 75

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^[57] Lenin in: Fetscher 1960, p. 395

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^[62] Klenner 1998, p. 92

^[63] Bronner *nd*, p. 7th

⁶⁴ See Robra 2020, p. 123 ff. ; There it also goes with the conclusions for a contemporary *ethics of behavior control* .

⁶⁵ Marx 1962, p. 450

^[66] Rizzi 1939, see bibliography!

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