

## RUSSIA AFTER 1917

### THE COUNTERREVOLUTION AS A "REVOLUTION"

A century ago, in October 1917, the so called "Russian Revolution" took place. Time has elapsed after that; its culmination being the pathetic self-liquidation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) during 1991; the critical changes still in course at a planetary scale; and the publication of a number of studies and assessments, some of them analyzing the facts with a high-quality accuracy, allow us to reach reliable conclusions on the most crucial aspect of this issue, namely, what is a revolution?, and which are its contents, objectives, and policies?<sup>1</sup> Because the main events of 1917 were no other thing, ultimately, than an affirmation and re-launching of capitalism with new garments, and the realization of yet another form of bourgeois, state-oriented counterrevolution.

The worst consequence infringed to humanity by the enormous farce of the "Russian Revolution" has been to discredit and to throw slime at the very idea of revolution. In such a way, this parody has made the greatest service to capitalism, assuring a long period of stability, acceptance (at least resignation), and social peace. It has achieved that the opponents to capitalism do not find the necessary arguments for doing more than a superficial dissident activity, though sometimes outfitted with fuss and fanfare, but with no attempt to do the most needed: to think and elaborate a programmatic, practical negation of the finite totality of the established order of things, oriented to a society with no capitalism, and then, with no apparatus of state power.

Those that make a choice for revolution as a current activity must support and rigorously prove that: i) the events occurring in Russia in 1917 do not mean to be a revolution but a counterrevolution, conducted not *alongside* the working classes but *against* them, ii) its governing theory, Marxism, is a peculiar kind of bourgeois ideology, a radical pro-capitalism progressivism, passionately productivist and economicist, even when its approach to some isolated issues is right and proper, iii) its effects over Russia were so destructive that, at a given moment, the new communist bourgeoisie that realized and consolidated the "Revolution" of 1917 was forced to dispense with the "socialist" superstructure, ruled and owned, in a perfectly regulated way by an elite, the heirs of the Bolshevik bourgeoisie that conducted the great parody of a century ago.

#### Russia in 1917

The Russian state, in its Czarist form, self-annihilated itself in the First World War. Little of it was still standing in 1916, and so it was not too difficult for the Bolshevik Party to seize power, not to make a revolution but rather to give continuity, under new forms, to the old bourgeois and land-tenant regime in crisis, and to the Russian imperialism and nationalism as well. The Bolshevism was a militant group of bourgeois intellectuals, with little insertion in the proletariat, and almost null in the peasantry, who at those times constituted the great majority of the population. Its (doubtful) merit consisted of a better understanding, in comparison with all other political organizations, of the power vacuum generated since 1916, after the death in the trenches of many young men, mostly from the rich and governing classes, when fighting against the Central Empires, starting 1914.

The Bolsheviks ventured to launch the reconstruction of the State because they were bourgeois intellectuals, wishing the whole ruling power and all property for themselves, in order to become a new bourgeoisie and a new State apparatus: that was their difference with respect to the rest of the existing Parties, and that gave them victory. In this direction they generated a colossal State apparatus, which governed violently and for an ever-increasing war, by recruiting more soldiers, more policemen, new jailers and executioners, without neglecting the propaganda and brainwashing effort. Indeed, the inducing of both unbounded terror and indoctrination were the two gears used by Russian communists to build a new, hypertrophic Russian State and to recast their dreaming capitalism, ravingly ultra-efficient, perfect and total. They arose victorious in the midst of such an enormous social chaos as it was introduced in Russia starting 1916.

During the Russian civil war of 1918-22, everyone was fighting each other. The 'whites' were the armed force of the ancient regime, i.e. of the senile Czarist capitalism, as the communists –perhaps unconsciously– were for the new capitalism, that was wanted to be a hyper-capitalism. The working classes, rural workers in particular, were in opposition to them both, at the same time being the main contributors of soldiers for the army, this one in disintegration. In the meanwhile, the industrial proletariat remained quite passive, alert to obtain new vantages and material improvement, consumerists, as has always been and is today the industrial and services working class, given their condition of a new-slavish mass, mutilated by the paid-work regime and little able to rise towards the transcendental.

Since 1916, though in a very confused and inconsequential way, the most conscious and best updated amongst the Russian workers, particularly the rural people, intuitively wanted a complete, revolutionary transformation of the social order. Such aspirations were first manipulated and then bloodily repressed by the Bolsheviks. Also the Czarist counterrevolutionaries, the whites, did the same, but far less effectively. The ordinary people, assaulted and ravished by ones and the others, turned up to be the real losers. In 1922 the Bolsheviks came out triumphant over the whites and over the people(s), even when the fierce resistance of the folk never was never completely abated.

The Russian communists denoted to be the most effective anti-revolutionaries during those years, crushing the popular revolution that was hesitantly under development in the territories subjected to the Russian State.

At this point it is necessary to recall the Marxist notion of a perfect capitalism, magical capitalism, or idealized capitalism, which in the present text will be conceptualized, for simplicity, as hyper-capitalism. Its origin lies in the striking expression appearing in Marx and Engels's *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of 1848: "The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part". The two authors, through a rudimentary, schoolish understanding of history, too self-confidently launch the foundational axiom that the bourgeoisie has a 'revolutionary' nature, and then, so it has capitalism. They argue that the economic and technological development induced by capitalism will necessarily install a new society, much superior to those of the past. However after some point, they add, capitalism entangles itself in the midst of its internal contradictions and becomes regressive, dragging the whole society to the void. It is from this situation that humanity will be withdrawn by the new revolutionary, or replacement class: the proletariat, but different from the really existing proletariat, namely the 'forefront of the proletariat', i.e. the intellectual caste, immensely avid of power, organized around Marxism. This class could only attain its 'redeeming' role if continuing the 'revolutionary' work of capital, if establishing a renewed capitalism, supposedly without

capitalists; an innovative bourgeois order, purportedly with no bourgeoisie. The way forward for humanity was one and the same, they adduced: one segment would be traversed by the bourgeoisie, and another one by the working class, or more precisely, by the party representing the working class; and to this end the party should seize the totality of the sovereignty, authority, and ruling power. They did not realize that the ways forward for the bourgeoisie and the popular classes cannot be but antagonistic, and qualitatively different. The capitalism-with-no-bourgeoisie proposed by the Bolshevik theory, immediately generated its own bourgeoisie: the communist party. As soon as the party, after taking power in 1917, makes itself proprietary of the means of production and exchange, it transforms itself into the new bourgeois class. The property of the productive factors should have been obtained by the working class and the peasantry, not by the party: only in such a way the building of a socialist order could have been possible.

The *Critique of the Gotha Program, 1875*, is a text by Marx praising the most vehement economicism, productivism, and developmentalism, where the material wealth is equated with the supreme good, which is equivalent to support (and to make of it the cornerstone of the communist strategy) the principle number one of the bourgeois ideology: the wealth is all. From that on, the capitalist societies built by the communists kept this pattern, though in an extreme version. And precisely because of that, those societies become dysfunctional and unsustainable, since they produce too many collateral damages, hidden costs, and catastrophes by excessiveness, such that after some point they resume to be the usual bourgeois, prosaic, with no idealization: the consequence being the disarticulation in 1991 of the parody of socialism in Russia.

Marxism is, then, permeated by a credulous, sanctimonious, religious fascination for capitalism, for its supposed economic, organizational and technical efficiency is applied to all spheres of life, for the productivity of human labor rising day after day ... Certainly all this is fiction, idealization, since not any kind of capitalism, either the vulgar, usual one, nor the marvelous, fantastic proposal of Marxism (which it calls 'socialism' and 'communism') can attain such goals. In truth, that cannot (nor should) be done by any political regime, nor by any production scheme; but such a thing is Marx's messianic conception, the reaching of a material bounty ... impossible. And undesirable.

This irrational passion for the bourgeois regime is shown as well in one of the early works of V. V. Lenin: *The Development of Capitalism in Russia, 1899*. The first theorist of Russian Marxism applauds the progress of capitalism as a system of production in Russia, convinced that it would bring a celestial, miraculous social order. His argument is that the evolving capital will settle the economical basis for socialism and communism, so that the proletarian forefront (he and his group) would create an eternally perfect society from and with capitalism, provided that capitalism adopt a new form for itself. In Lenin's words there also appears a substantial intake of Russian nationalism, an extraordinary emotional grief for the Russian 'backlog', transformed into an intense hope in that a momentous leap forward in economics and technology would allow his country, his homeland, to become the world's leading Power. This nationalistic frenzy was covered, no doubt, by the cheating rhetoric on 'internationalism', under the assertion that 'the working men have no country', denied all the time by the actions of the Russian communists, fervent Russian nationalists as they were.

Lenin, in his book just cited, rejects the late Marx's viewpoint about Russia, expressed in his drafts and final version of *Reply to the letter of Vera Zasulich, 1881*, written two years before his death. In this piece of work, by taking a substantial turning around the formulations

he had been assembling since his early years, Marx discovers in the Russian traditional peasant order, a pre-capitalist, not productivist, and distant from modern technology life-style, the matrix and the foundation for a new authentically socialist society in that nation. Lenin and the Russian communists in power not only ignored such recommendations from whom they considered their 'master', rather they made the contrary to what was asserted in such an intriguing writing: they demolish by fire and sword such peasant organization by means of the 'collectivization' of 1929-33.<sup>2</sup>

Marx, after such a lagging position change, disproves himself, rejects Marxism. There is no need to stress that, in this conflict with Marxist theory at the end of his life, reason and truth were on his side, even when his comprehension of Russian rural society was superficial and somewhat erroneous, since once more he rushed to argue about what he imperfectly knew, having studied the situation with too little effort. Anyway, Russian Marxists positioned themselves favoring Marxism and against the late Marx, when he, it seems, recovered his conscience and realized, or perhaps just guessed, that his ridiculous and outrageous entelechies in pro of modernity and technology were not suitable to defeat and to overcome the bourgeois society. That would have required other tools: axiology, morality, conviviality, freedom, the will to do good ... which could not be admitted by the Bolshevik Party, since they wished an industrial Russia, technologized, affluent in the economic and invincible in the military, that is, imperial. This is what the Soviet Union was, until being beaten in the Cold War by his imperialistic rival, the United States of America.

### **The Soviet Union**

The new Bolshevik State was, in truth, a violent mega-machine for private –classist– wealth accumulation, especially through a stringent tributary system, often sustained by direct armed extortion. The soviets, theoretically being popular proletarian assemblies with a governmental function, behaved as an appendage of the communist party, which in turn configured the structure of the State. There was no freedom in the political system, neither real nor formal, so that there was nothing of autonomous in the citizen, nor any involvement of ordinary people in the government of society, or any civil liberty. The political and judicial sovereignty belonged to the party-police-army bloc, not to the people. The individual was defenseless before the power of the State, who could make of him whatever desired, like confiscate his belongings, imprisoning, deportation, raping, torture, assassination. The State was all, and the person, nothing. Not even the enacted law was respected, and therefore people got by under a fearing and paralyzing regime of legal insecurity.

The elitism –easy to become classism– of the Russian communists stems from the dictatorial ideology of the Enlightenment: *"Everything for the people, but without the people"*, which soon was transformed into *"Everything for the people, but against the people"*, since in practice Bolshevism declared war *against its own people*. Such elitism ascribes to the bourgeois argument about the political representation, inherent to the parliamentary system. And then they adduce that, being a party, they 'represent' the working class, of which they also are the forefront, much in the same way they considered the other political parties in activity as 'representatives' of this social class or the other. The extensive treatment of political representation by political scientists is taken as the legitimation of a dictatorship fitting the liberal parliamentary system, since the true democratic thinking rejects all representation, warning that power should be exerted in direct form, and by the totality of the population,

with no delegationism. Bolshevism establishes the power of one elite that is the Party, which says to act "in the name of the working class" and which is, then a tyrannical neo-bourgeois power. The soviets, emerging in 1916 as a spontaneous popular creature of a revolutionary and assembly-oriented nature, were manipulated and adulterated, in addition of being repressed by the Bolsheviks, who could not accept a direct-democratic conceptualization of sovereignty and power, not a representative idea but one where the whole population (rather than an enlightened and redemptive vanguard) governs, self-governs itself.

Then it can be said that, not only in the realm of economics, but in the political one as well, the Bolsheviks were a political force assisted by the bourgeois ideology, though in a very peculiar way. They did so because they were a new type of bourgeoisie.

The extreme curtailing of individual and collective initiative and creativity, in every aspect of the soviet society's life, modeled persons who only (and eventually) started to move when receiving orders, under a complex (and expensive) system of surveillance, control, and restraint, besides an enormous apparatus of propaganda. The zealous denial by the soviet government of all forms of individual freedom, brought along slumber, paralysis, and stagnation, a universal apathy, which was intended to cope by resorting to terror as an impelling and revitalizing factor. However, the absolute lack of personal autonomy plus the everyday experience of the fear to be arrested, tortured, raped, shot, disappeared, and so on, ended in a massive worsening of both the collective and the individual life. That was getting even more severe when the social activity befell over the new generations, that had been 'educated' (deformed and disaggregated) by the soviet regime, shaped as nothing persons, superlatively dull, indifferent, lethargic, resigned, subject to manipulation, autistic, with no personality ... beginning the 60's.

The USSR came to have an extremely serious problem with the dramatic decline on the mean quality of ordinary persons, a setback generated by the USSR itself. This was a grave internal contradiction that the Russian communism was objectively inducing in its so fiercely dominated society.

Indeed, violence became the number one dynamizing factor over the new social structure, practiced by an incredibly numerous and omnipotent police apparatus, who enjoyed vast material privileges (the income of an ordinary policeman was around ten times the salary of an ordinary worker), which incited him to be a well-heeled rascal ready for inequity and no matter what crime, in the middle of a society characterized by chronic poverty and shortage. Every problem or conflict was treated and 'solved' by resorting to brute force, by the unbounded application of state terror. In such a way a State marked by dreadful fear, generalized panic, made the people meet, worse than better, the obligations that the 'socialist' State was ever imposing on them<sup>3</sup>.

It is terrible to ascertain that torture, often ending in death, was mostly admitted. Those winning any of the ferocious internal struggles of the communist party, often tortured their opponents, which the losers took as something of common sense<sup>4</sup>. A social order where this so frequently happens is like Hell made real on Earth. Another terrifying historical fact: under the leading of G. Yagoda, the NKVD (the Soviet secret police) issued a manual describing the most effective torturing methods...

The Russian communists misunderstood and displaced the focus of both the meaning of violence in history and in present societies, and the notion of 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. This last expression was used by Marx several times, though meaning something

quite apart from the militarism and the bloody cruelty adopted by the Bolsheviks. Concerning violence, it should be emphasized that it has a role in history and social life, it has a sense and relevance, but it should be conceived at its lowest level, the necessary minimum, as part of an ordered and coherent totality, only to be exercised by the people in defense of freedom, oriented to open new ways of action and to remove obstacles *rather than as a procedure to construct the new*; and it should be subject to severe restrictions of a moral and legal nature. That is the difference between the just and the unjust violence. The Bolsheviks understood this differently, making a maximum of violence, exerted by them and not by the people, with a mainly constructive virtuality, and with no moral or legal bounds. Summarizing, they were extremely belligerent against their own people, fanatics of the police-military State, in such an extent that the regime they founded became a victim of their militarism. They were also wrong about that.

The concept of dictatorship of the proletariat, as appearing in Marx's writings, is more a metaphor than the statement of a firmly settled, rigorously discussed idea. Marx just proposes that, as far as capitalism is the political and legal dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (which is just partially true, since there also exists the State, it is older than the bourgeoisie, actually the original cause for its development), then, after the working class became to be a ruling force, it had to adopt the form of a political power, quite naturally a dictatorship. Marx never said that such a dictatorship should manifest itself by denying the liberty of the proletariat. Actually, the contrary happens with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, which is the best expression of its liberty as a class. But the Russian communists interpreted this issue deceptively, so justifying their tyranny as a political party, notwithstanding their arrival to power being due to the occasional confluence of several favorable events, and their holding of the power thanks to the exertion of state violence, mainly directed against the working class, specially the rural one. In sum, the power of the proletariat should have shown, as a first priority, in the freedom for the proletariat, and this was never to happen in the USSR.

Also the production activities depended on institutionalized violence. That is to say, the intentionally perfect, or hyper capitalism that Russian communists wanted to create, had as its motorizing factor the exercise of unbounded coercion and extreme physical force. This way they expected to attain spectacular economic results, in much less time than needed by the apparently imperfect capitalism, and achieving a full, sweeping industrialization, at breakneck speed. And then Russia would catch and outpace the occidental imperialist powers in a few years, so transforming itself into the number one imperial power.

The habit of using unlimited coercion and murderous violence as an everyday instrument for government dominated the entire social life. For that reason, the internal debates and factious struggles for the distribution of power in the realm of the Bolshevik party derived into dreadful reprisals, in which the losers were incarcerated, tortured, and assassinated by the winners. And that occurred once and again, showing and gauging the immense degree of dehumanization of the Russian communism. The same can be said of its guiding ideology, Marxism, for which the confidence in the human and the devotion to its integral realization are regarded as 'petty-bourgeois sentimentalism'. Such a dehumanized conception distanced the party from the best of popular classes, depriving it from engaging important sections of modest people, who perceived the brutalities and felonies perpetrated everyday by the communists, ethically in disagreement but remaining in silence with fear. This is realistically described in Boris Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*.

The peasantry –having recovered during the period 1916-20 a significant portion of the farming lands, previously possessed by the big land-tenants and the Czarist State– made a real agrarian revolution, but soon became in conflict with the State and the new communist bourgeoisie. The State could not admit the autonomy of the peasants, and besides they needed to overexploit the rural people to finance the industrialization process, to provide low-priced food to the cities, and to fund the purchase of military equipment from foreign countries. That was the reason for the genocidal ‘collectivization’ of the years 1929-32, where the vulgar capitalist nature of the new regime turned evident, since they applied identical procedures (though with much more virulence and celerity) to those in the rest of the capitalist countries.

The goal for the communist State apparatus was to reach absolute control and power over the rural. So they expected to extract grain from the land in a huge amount, a weighty part for export. In a smallest proportion, this had been accomplished by the Czarism since more than a century ago. The Bolsheviks exploited the land and exported much more grain than before, but this was accomplished through strict police and military methods, by sending armed forces to the countryside, who seized the crops and every other valuable product, in so doing arresting, torturing, murdering, and deporting at best those opposing or simply not collaborating with them.

Hunger came as one of the consequences, killing between four and five million people in the rural zones during the years 1932-33, some studies rising up to ten million the number of the victims of the irrational ‘collectivizing’ experiment. Another after-effect was a long-lasting civil war, since the rural population defended itself. The bringing about of a massive famine was a carefully planned procedure, intended to dominate and to crush the traditional peasantry, who reached a terrible, limit situation. The new communist capitalism exacerbated to the maximum the contradiction between the urban and the rural, by taking away the food from the country to supply the city, so avoiding hunger in the urban zones thanks to the brutal exploitation of the rural. This also shows that the main existing difference, between the Bolshevik capitalism and the classical one, was that the Russian politicians took to their limit the lines of action of occidental capitalism, with the intention to obtain the same results than in the West, wishing they were quantitatively superior and reached in a much lesser time. Then it is appropriate to call this the ‘communist hyper-capitalism’, even when it failed.

Indeed, such a strategy was not effective. The ‘collectivization’ was an aberrant agrarian system. It never worked, since it was based on such an extreme coercion of the rural labor force that they answered with a formidable passive resistance and with apathy for work, a withdrawal, non-collaboration and perpetual sabotage, which kept the yields low, even when the mechanization of agriculture was put into effect. Those factors triggered a continuous shortage of food and raw materials, which in due time prompted the breakdown of the USSR. The driving of agriculture by an extra-economical coercion was a terrible mistake of the Russian communists, which shows their limited intellectual capacities (not to talk of the moral ones), precisely because they saw themselves as unfailing prophets of the ‘*Marxist-Leninist science*’.

The looting and decline of the peasantry, achieved through an all-embracing dictatorship of the State, is part of the modernization process that capitalism inserts and implements in each and every country. Marx describes it in *Capital* as applied in England, starting the 16<sup>th</sup> century; the French Revolution installs it in France; in Spain it is a decisive part of the liberal revolution, and of the late Enlightenment regime; and after the Second World War the European Community assigns much of its funds and coercive judicial-legal power to

control the rural people, from which the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) emerged, and is presently implemented. In fact, the Treaty of Rome, 1957, considers the control of the agricultural as one of its fundamental objectives, and assign most of its budget to this purpose. It is significant to notice that it took the Spanish State 200 years to tame the rural (leading to its *de facto* destruction, evident today), by means of the civil confiscations and the rest of the measures tyrannically imposed. The Bolshevik State unrealistically wished to attain the same goal just in four years (1929-32)... for which they had to multiply a thousand times the restrictions, violence, terror, bloodshed, hunger.

The agrarian policy of the Russian communists substantially reversed the emancipation of the Russian serfs put into effect in 1861, since this new policy returned rural people to a renewed condition of servitude, a neo-servitude worse than the old one in many respects. Even when the 1861 emancipation was made to promote economic development and industrialization, years later the renewed oppression installed by the Bolsheviks turned to be delaying and negative for such an industrialization, which they also wanted to accomplish. They intended to overcome this inconvenience by resorting to generalized violence against the masses, as usual. It is intriguing that such elementary truths were misunderstood by the Bolshevik elite, who boasted of having a superlative expertise in economics. The 'collectivizing' maneuver was so unwise –and brutal– that its effects persist still today, the low productivity of the Russian agriculture in a foremost place. The Marxism's absolute incomprehension of the notion and category of freedom is fundamental to explain such shocking mistakes.

The anti-revolution of 1917 generated a state capitalism covering all branches of industry, finances, services, and, since 1932, agriculture. The main forms for exploiting the workers were the simple extraction of surplus value at the workplace, and through the tax regime. Although the new bourgeoisie did not formally appear as the owner of the means of production, so it was in reality, in everyday economic dealings, and in an absolute way, since it conducted one hundred percent of the productive process, it took all decisions, and it fully appropriated the surplus value, the generated wealth. The wage rates remained in force, actually getting worse, since the militaristic nature of the communist order engendered slavish features on the paid-work system, a regression which in turn caused its disintegration.

Another proof of the vulgar capitalist nature of the early USSR regime was that the economic planning was copied by the Bolsheviks from the national scheme for production and distribution of food designed by the German heads of the military staff for the First World War. In other words, Russian communism was from the beginning a form of militarism, therefore of capitalism. No need to say that this has nothing to do with socialism, since the idea reduces to frame a 'new' capitalism, controlled by the State, more rigorously than usual. The notorious Soviet five-year plans really were chattering propaganda and rarely accomplished, since they were unable to get along with the basic objective laws of capital gain, money, and market –even when the market was quite deformed under such circumstances–. Economic planning aimed to make people believe, in the USSR and abroad, that the Bolsheviks 'dominated' the productive activities, and that they could avoid the cyclic crisis and retarding antagonisms, typical of capitalism, to attain a continuously high economic growth ...When the clashing with reality disintegrated this prodigious lie, starting the 1960s, in the '(economic) stagnation stage', the communist regime found itself devoid of a substantial part of its legitimating argumentative body.

The worldwide success of the communist creed, which existed and lasted until the Hungarian events in 1956, was sustained on the perverse hope that it would be able to build an economic order of maximal production and maximal consumption. That such a thing was physically impossible, since we live in a finite planet, was pointed by many (for instance, by Simone Weil in her 1934 *Reflections Concerning the Causes of Liberty and Social Oppression*), but it did not deter the followers of such a tragic craziness. It must be noted that this belief is utterly bourgeois, selected from the showcase of the demagogic offerings endorsed by the liberal revolution, oriented to get a basis of masses. The idea was taken by Marx: another indication of his questionable intellectual creativity. Those wishing 'the revolution' to consume more, to live as greedy as a pig, and not to be better persons in the intellectual, convivial, and moral ways, deserve the sad outcome of the Marxist experiment and its variants.

The demagogic use of greediness, desire for richness and material welfare, as mobilizing and recruiting arguments, disqualifies Marx as a political thinker. Even more, it shows what he really is: a conventional bourgeois, most able in masking, camouflaging, and demagogic practicing.

The workers were just labor force in the Soviet Union: they had no participation whatsoever in conduction or management ranks, and their salaries kept them in poverty. In case they raised their voices in protest or, even worse, if they decided (which was frequent) to go on strike, then the '*State of the proletariat*' would fiercely repress them. Were the protesters branded '*counter-revolutionary saboteurs*', then their being tortured was sure, and if surviving, a shot in the back of their heads or the firing squad was to be expected. Subject to long working hours; under deficient conditions and short wages; with no political, civil, or religious freedom; continuously indoctrinated, they began to take refuge in drinking cheap alcohol, which created a serious problem with economic, social, labor, convivial, and medical effects, lastly becoming important in the failure of the Soviet Union.

The communist hyper-capitalism fervently adopted the 'scientific management of labor', promoted by F. W. Taylor and his disciples<sup>5</sup>, oriented to suppress worker autonomy in the productive action, to maximize the dictatorship of the employer, to make his orders be rigorously executed, and to rise the exploitation level. Lenin went so far as to arrogantly state "the task to be fully completed by the Soviet government is to teach how to work". That is to say, the worker did not know how to work! And it was just the communist regime, constituted by bourgeois intellectuals, parasitic babblers, who were to do this teaching job. How? By applying Taylorism in its most painful versions, those maiming the most of the worker's personality and capacities. In 1935, Stajanovism was created and applied as a system for rewarding individual productivity, with the same purposes as those of Taylorism. Its economic result was negligible, if not negative (disaggregated production without becoming a settled and stable practice), due to the boycott imposed by the vast majority of proletarians. However it helped immersing the Russian industrial working class into the wage-work inferno. The dictatorship of the new bourgeoisie was reinforced in industry, without any improvement in production, as frequently happens, since Taylorism prefers to expand the power of the capitalists and their agents in the realm of the workplace, rather than rising the yields (which, in fact, seldom happens).

The soviet hyper-capitalism wanted to make real any proprietary's dream: the subjecting of all workers to the 'scientific organization of labor', a target that the occidental bourgeoisie attained only partially and occasionally, given the very strong resistance opposed by the proletariat. This also illustrates the real nature of communism: it is just capitalism in its

most extreme versions. While in the USSR the Taylorism and its derivations were enforced, in the West the political parties and the worker unions resisted their application, but they did not denounce what was happening in *'the nation of the proletariat dictatorship'*. As evident as this was the lack of criticism in considering all news coming from Russia, always taken as substantively 'revolutionary' and 'proletarian'.

Concerning the *'scientific organization of labor'*, an issue presented as determinant by the leaders of the soviet regime, it can be deduced that its application was just a variation of a bourgeois/State dictatorship: had it be, as many said, the 'power of the working class', they would have never admitted to submit themselves to such an organization of labor, since it was a system of coercion, domination, degradation, depersonalization, robotization, and torture to all proletarians.

The production workforce was used by Bolsheviks to the same ends, though with more authoritarianism than the rest of the exploiting classes in history. One of its functions in domination is to contribute to brutalize the workers, since the unceasing productive work is one of the activities that dulls the mind and globally degrades the individual, leading to political and social over-subjugation. For such reason, in a free and popular society the working time must be limited, and freely used, not imposed from above but decided by the workers themselves. The Bolsheviks, while forcing workers to spend all their time and energies towards production, to 'build socialism' they argued, would at the same time organize burlesque parodies as the 'communist Saturdays', apparently a Lenin's design. Each Saturday the chief executives left their offices to visit certain working places and to represent a production simulation during a few hours, guarded from the real workers by an army of policemen and soldiers. Neither was this any original: Mussolini, the ideologue of Fascism, liked to have his photograph taken sickle in hand and with his torso unclothed, with spikes of wheat in the background, to show the frightened people that he was a 'real proletarian' as well. Lenin chose a railway workshop for the same purpose ... Such mockeries to the workers are founded in deliberately negating crucial democratic norms: governmental work must be non-paid, there ought not to be professionalized politicians or government officials, all persons must live on their own labor. Were the people to govern themselves, then the political and administrative chairs would be appointed by popular assemblies, for a limited time-period (a year or so), and those taking these jobs should work in production at the same time. Only in this way may a popular government exist, and be it a true democracy. Soon enough the Bolshevik bureaucrats got tired of the 'communist Saturdays', when realizing that such absurdities were little effective as propaganda, that is to say, they fooled nobody ...

From the beginning, and in parallel with State capitalism, there always existed in the USSR a vigorous and diversified private capitalism, joined mainly by members of the communist party. These people (fully) owned more than a small quantity of goods (especially luxury items like jewelry, foreign money, art objects, and so on, and real-estate properties), as well as some means of production, which grew up with time. Corruption was widespread in the party, and besides its judicial, political, and moral consequences, in economics it became a usual way for expanding private capitalism at the expense of the State, as everywhere else. The private business sector probably outperformed the State-owned one already in the 1960s, which was made evident by the appearing of the famous USSR's 'mafias', or alegal (though not illegal) private capitalist corporations operating in all production and commercial branches, including the financial system. The scholarly analyses of the Soviet Union history, even

Comentario [U1]:

numerous as they are, minimize or deny the existence, right after 'Revolution', of private capitalism; but the empirical studies show its extensive presence and great vitality.

Russian Marxists built an economic system oriented to: (i) the production of arms and weapons, (ii) manufacturing luxury goods for the ruling class and their associates, and, less but still important, (iii) the propaganda and indoctrination activity (the press, radio, cinema, and related). The first sector demanded a fully developed and diversified heavy industry, and also of an active assembly of machinery, without which the modern military equipment cannot be completed. Consequently, popular needs were uncared for, not only food but also those basic goods and means of living supplied by light industry (which received little investment), and so were the varied crafts (wanted to be suppressed). The situation became worse after institutional campaigns against the self-sufficient popular industriousness, named '*capitalist activity*' and '*remnants of a dark past*' by the iniquitous publicists of the system. Indispensable things to the welfare of ordinary people began to get scarce, not so the low-quality alcohol, such as the cheap and toxic vodka, always abundantly supplied. The resorting to massive alcoholism to dominate minds, ideology, and politics, was another of the devices inherited by the 'socialist' regime from Czarism, who operated it for centuries. Changes were on systems and governments, qualifications and rhetoric, but the essentials of the classist order remained ...

The State/private communist capitalist system had a neo-bourgeois dominant class with an extraordinary capacity for squandering. They wasted in parties, feasts, bacchanals, 'sportive' hunts, travelling, sumptuous residences (*dachas*), prostitutes, alcohol, delicatessen goods (even when the working population was hungry, occasionally to the extreme of cannibalism), limousines, luxury cars, princely trains, special airplanes, battalions of bodyguards, numerous servants, lackeys, waiters, cooks, all to serve the communist barons. They confiscated palaces and manor houses from the royalty and the aristocrats for themselves, including the formidable set of buildings in the Kremlin, thus showing that they regarded themselves as the heirs and continuers of such grandeur. This may be attributed to a bourgeois cosmopolitanism, proper of Marxism, which also emerged in the degree of the State violence and the repression to the working classes, even worse than those of the Czarist high bourgeoisie.

The high amount of resources wasted in such extravagant expenses, in addition to the cost of the inflated police apparatus, the propaganda budget, and above all, the weight of the huge military corporation, made the Soviet economy run always poorly, at least in supplying the population with the basic means of living, which even got worse near the end of the USSR's existence.

### **Social life**

The effects of the dictatorial regime imposed by the Russian communists were noticeable in all aspects of social life. For instance, those women refusing libidinal requirements from the Bolshevik chieftains were often accused of having committed political offenses and put in prison, or raped, in some case to be assassinated afterwards. Feeling that the numerous 'dancers' were not enough, the bosses sexually harassed many women, who frequently agreed just to rescue some of their relatives from prison, or to avoid being sent to the labor camps, tortured, shot. But this should not lead to victimist/sexist conclusions: there existed a number of Bolshevik women exerting political autocracy and exploiting the private

management of some means of production, distinguished for their use of violence against the common people. A noteworthy example was Polia Nikolaenko, a woman from Kiev, who in the 1930s was responsible for the death of 8,000 persons, mostly males, accused of being '*classist enemies*' and '*counter-revolutionaries*'. She was not the only one ...

Propaganda was all-present and disproportionate. The Party was the 'forefront', it knew everything; and people were 'the masses', they ignored everything. People were just children with adult bodies, each one good only to be 'made conscious', i.e. indoctrinated, to nod and to applaud. The communists did not believe in popular knowledge, the experiential learning of ordinary people. That was viciously asserted in texts by Marx and Engels, and reaffirmed in others by Lenin. Neither the truth existed, meaning the coincidence between what is exposed and the object, since true was only what was useful to the established power, an argument sustained after the name 'classist truth', a vulgar manifestation of bourgeois utilitarianism and Anglo-Saxon pragmatism. As a result, all was propaganda and indoctrination, the emission of lies, mocking truth, denying the freedom of conscience, annihilating the inner psychological activity, private and intimate, of the individual. This also follows from a failure of Leninism, namely its concept of persons, nothing more sophisticated than the distinction of individuals into those belonging to the 'working class', to be commanded and subordinated; and those in the Party, the 'avant-garde of the working class', ontologically wise and infallible, all-commanding and ruling. This distinction between the commanders and the commanded, the dominant and the dominated, is rarely found, in such a crude and radical form, in other theoretical systems.

The Bolshevik managers engineered a number of propagandistic schemes. For instance, Lenin, during the summer of 1917, in the peak of the Russian State crisis, wrote the book *The State and Revolution*, promising a self-governmental system based on the soviets, i.e. the assemblies of workers, peasants, soldiers, and ordinary people, in addition to other measures having an attractive and healthy nature, oriented to make real the participation of everyone in the political life, and to secure liberty for the working class. We cannot know which his intention was when writing this, since there are not sources of information about that, but we can affirm that in the book Lenin wrote what he never did. Even more, he made the opposite to what he said. And certainly he said what the people in rebellion and revolution wanted to hear, a discourse to induce millions of persons to back the Communist Party in a critical moment, when fighting other parties for power. A similar text can be found in the Bolshevik Constitution of 1936, one of the most astonishing examples of verbal unleashing, massive bluff, delirious promises, and politics-fiction. To begin with, and when the differences between the rulers and the ordinary people were becoming crystal clear, both in the consuming and in the production of goods and services, the document affirms that social classes do not exist anymore in the USSR, nor the divisions between the exploited and the exploiters. It also asserts that the country had already entered into a social and political communist order –which should have been understood as a country without a State apparatus, without a professional police–, just when the police force was sharpening its repressive methods against the opponents to the really existing order. Inconsistency is also present in a number of other issues treated in the Constitution, for brevity not to be pointed out here.

As a result of their boastful refusal of any moral norm, the continuous manipulations and tampering of communist managers obliterated the autonomous emotional and volitional activity of the individual. They went so far and deep as to make it difficult to collect enough labor force as needed, and that conclusively affected the economy. The so called '*stagnation*

*period* of the Soviet economy, roughly from the 1960s till the end of the regime in 1991, was most probably due to this combination of police terror, total lack of freedom/liberties, relentless paid work effort, tearing people away from political life and decision-making, favoring the addiction to alcohol, and the schoolish indoctrination. They built a type of human being that certainly was not able to oppose the Bolshevik dictatorship, even more, he was not able for production.

### **Transition and balance**

The Soviet regime was capitalist much earlier than after its suicide in 1991, perhaps it was so from the beginning. A proof for that can be found when looking at the transition, under Gorbachov, to a perfectly recognizable capitalism, the one present in Russia today. The 'dismantling' of the 'socialist' forms was mere verbosity and make-up. It may be said that the Soviet Union practiced capitalism from its constitution, judging from its end objectives, its leading ideology, the procedures applied, and its fervent worship of the State.

At this point we could ask ourselves: did the regime obtain any remarkable results concerning industrialization and economic development? The answer is: most possibly not. European Russia had reached, around 1914, a sound technological and production development under Czarism, which was hidden and distorted by the Bolsheviks. Their old mantra on the previous Russian 'backwardness' has been refuted today. Quite possibly a normal capitalist system, like the one existing one in Russia before 1917, might have obtained other economic results, more solid, balanced, stable, and lasting than those of Bolshevism, and certainly with incomparably less human cost. That would have been even truer in case Czarism had evolved towards a parliamentary, republican, or even monarchical order. Certainly, agriculture would have been operated with a higher efficiency, so freeing the population from an always present scarcity in the means to make a living. One of the causes of failure is that State capitalism cannot over-dominate the economic activity beyond a certain level without making the whole economy inefficient. For each scenario there exists an optimal mix of State and private capitalisms generating the best results, and if not adopted, the situation will begin to deteriorate, which happened to the USSR during its last 25 years. The reappearing of food shortage in the 1980s, and of the ration cards at the end of the 'socialist' experiment, was a wake-up call for a change, especially when food in the USSR began to depend on wheat and grain imports from USA.

In view of these facts, the 27<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party in 1986, backed the initiation of a process of dismantling the Soviet order, leading to the official dissolution of the USSR on December 25, 1991. The overall balance is clearly negative for Russian Marxists. They wanted to accelerate a historical process by skipping some stages, generating many serious internal contradictions, that resulted in an enormous hidden cost, not only material ones but especially human hardships, making the system collapse.

A true socialist regime should not place as main objective the growth of production and consumption, but rather the integral emancipation of all human beings. Consequently, though socialism certainly wanted to organize an efficient and stable economic system, it would not choose to treat the economy as the paramount subsystem, so subordinating everything else to it. True socialists would start by securing personal and social reasonable freedom, by eliminating the paid-work regime and implementing the worker participation in the management of productive activities, by developing an ethics of labor, by building mutual-help

systems and free collective work from the base, by making real the efficient use of non-oppressive technologies, by ending the urban hegemony over the rural, by cancelling all parasite and unproductive activities –beginning with the extinction of the ruling class–, by universalizing the duty to work, the consumption decrease, and the self-construction of the personal identity.

Returning to the historical perspective, it is natural to ask: were the Nazis defeated in 1941-45 thanks to the achievements of the communist regime? This is a complex question, perhaps with no definitive answer, but we should be aware of a fact that can help the analysis: Hitler quite defeated himself in Russia, since he did not design a founded strategy, other than voluntarism and adventurism. By applying his goofy racial and colonialist policy in the occupied territories, besides attaching to a colonial model that was already out of date all over the world, he deprived himself of any backing coming from influential sectors of the Eastern population. Besides, he made a series of subsequent strategic/military mistakes, now accepted as the main cause of the Nazi debacle. Therefore, the fate of the historical events was due to the demerit of Nazism more than to the merit of Bolshevism. The Communist Party made the USSR population the cannon fodder to be used by the Western powers to defeat the German imperialism, in those times their main rival in the struggle for a planetary hegemony. Those powers gave huge amounts of supplies and weapons to the government in Moscow, who in return deposited around 24 million dead bodies on the field. It was the Soviet Union, more than anyone else, who made possible the hegemony of the American imperialism possible after Second World War, a hegemony still alive; therefore, it can be said that Russia was the vanquished victor. And then, is there anything meritorious or admirable in all this? Another unwise decision of the Russian Communist Party was its imperialistic foreign policy, a continuation of the Czarist colonialism. The Soviet State launched an aggressive war against Poland, to recuperate the territories that had been successively being seized by Russia from that nation in the past, and that had come to be Polish again since the decline of Czarism, starting in 1915. The Bolsheviks were defeated and had to abandon their purpose, but in such an early attempt they showed their nature. The coming into being of the USSR, that incorporated 15 republics in its best moment, configured a new expression of the old Czarist system for dominating their neighboring peoples. The USSR was formally a federal State, but in fact it worked by forcing other nations and peoples into submission, and ‘Russifying’ them. In this connection there was also continuity, not a revolution but its opposite, since such neighbors had reached a certain level of national freedom and self-government with the downfall of Czarism.

Thanks to the Communist International (or Comintern, or Third International), a league of communist parties of different countries, which had its First Congress in 1919, the USSR extended its influence worldwide. The national communist parties, after an initial period when they produced some interesting material as the *“Thesis and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat”* –quickly forgotten after issued–, the national communist parties became subsidiaries of the new growing imperialist power, the Soviet Union. The Comintern banned all national revolutionary processes in countries where the USSR had forged alliances with the proprietary and ruling classes, calling this policy ‘anti-colonialist’. In such a way, peoples were ignored, and urged to join their own ‘anti-imperialist’ oppressors. Up to this day, those members of the Left still ascribing to the Communist International keep this type of policy. They allow criminal States, multi-millionaire oligarchs,

fascist Islamic clergymen, oil monarchies, 'indigenist' politicians acting as oppressors of indigenous people, statesmen with blood in their hands, and the like, to be considered as excellent rulers, that turn their countries into some curious societies without classes or class struggle, without oppression or exploitation, and therefore with no need for revolution ...

It is instructive to review the main reasons leading the new bourgeoisie/new State, born in 1917, to dismantle the 'socialist' regime in 1991: (i) as already mentioned, the economy had begun to decline steeply from the end of the '70s, with a return to the ration books and the risk of famine, given the dependence on grain imports from the main opponent, USA; (ii) in parallel a crisis on the health care system was going on, with a persistent descent in the life expectancy of the population, due to the deficient nutrition, the widespread alcoholism, the terrifying environmental pollution, and the lack of investment in the state-based health system; (iii) the USSR was being defeated, sometimes politically but also in the battle field, after having embarked in socio/imperialist adventures in Ethiopia, Angola, Indonesia, Chile, Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt, Poland, and so on, which in turn made it impossible to recuperate the expenses generated by the neo-colonies, i.e. the USSR was financially exhausted; (iv) the conflict with China, besides discrediting the 'proletarian' block for quarreling with other communist countries, forced the Kremlin to keep a constant alert in the vast Southeast border, with a costly military cantonment; (v) the productivity of labor was stagnant, which actually meant a decline, due to the poor quality of the products, the waste of energy and raw materials, the workers apathy, the lack of innovations, and the colossal unproductive overheads; (vi) popular resistance was rising, not only noticed in the growing circulation of underground pamphlets, but also in the workers riots and street tumults, engendering anxiety among the rulers; (vii) the evidence that the Soviet Union was a classist society, in which a minority enjoyed a princely existence while the vast majority vegetated in poverty, thus showing that the order was based on the exploitation of men by other men, impossible to be disguised by resorting to the political propaganda, and discrediting the State and its government; (viii) the explosion of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in 1986 revealed to the international opinion that the Soviet technology was obsolete, which caused a reduction in the technical equipment exports; (ix) the demerit of the Marxist ideology was so complete that its upholding through the education system and the media power created popular indignation, becoming not only useless but rather counter effective in everyday indoctrination; (x) the Communist Party existed just formally, since it had been fractured into a number of warring factions, each one inserted in an economic powerful group, making them impractical for political action and highly devalued; (xi) the Communist Parties of the satellite countries were already bureaucratized, hardly respected and quite out of date, little helpful for the foreign policy of Moscow; (xii) the non-Russian peoples in the Federation resisted their Russifying more than ever; (xiii) around 1980 it was clear that USA had overwhelmed the USSR in the Cold War, and that the Soviets should strategically retreat before their situation was to become too calamitous; and (xiv) the Red Army was delivering signs of indiscipline, disorder, and decomposition, making it necessary to have a period of several years devoted to its reorganization.

In such a situation it was indispensable to change the form of domination, to turn the totalitarian soviet regime, which was a left-wing fascist one, towards a somewhat believable version of parliamentarianism, to recuperate at least partially the credibility on the established power and to relaunch the political action of the government. Gorbachov was the person in charge for this transition, including the cutting down of the inherited State capitalism, and the

introduction of a recognizable state/private capitalist system having the optimal proportion of each component.

Communist Russia followed an expansionistic and imperialist policy since 1917. And so did the rest of the countries governed by communist parties, where also existed bourgeois neo-dictatorships. That explains why the USSR and China engaged in a cloudy border war, resulting in numerous victims for both sides, each one threatening with using nuclear weapons. In 1979, both communist China and Vietnam entered an armed conflict. Peking sent 290,000 soldiers to invade its neighbor, and hostilities –apparently bloody enough– remained until 1984. The reason was a previous Vietnamese attack to Cambodia (also under a Marxist regime), which was subordinated to China by neo-colonialist ties and having conducted one of the worst massacres of the 20<sup>th</sup> century against its own people between 1974 and 1979.

If all countries that undertook ‘revolutions’ inspired by Marxism and conducted by communist parties have built regimes having severe degrees of neo-bourgeoisie, tyranny, corruption, extreme classism, police harassment, and militarism, then it can be concluded that Marxism (and its variants) is obsolete as a theory, politics, and ideology. And so are the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and its survivors –Cuba, Venezuela, North Korea, and others–. Such a failure is, or might be, the prelude to a revival of the idea and practice of revolution.

### **Recovering the notion and experience of revolution**

The category of revolution encourages transforming qualitatively what is existing. It is not intrinsically equivalent to violence, but rather to a positive and sufficiently complete modification of the established system. Its object is to make real the main values having civilizing meaning: liberty, popular sovereignty, personal autonomy, truth, justice, a reasonable equity, the centrality of the individual consciousness, the emancipation of the oppressed peoples, and the civic virtue. The revolution must be popular, not of a party or group; plural, not of an ideology or theory; integral, to transform the whole and not only a part. Its key is the conquest of freedom by and for the people, by and for each person, which means that a revolution must extinguish the domination structures, those opposing or curtailing freedom, those concentrating economic resources in a minority –the business/manager multinational class–, and the political power in another minority –organized as a State–, because where the State exists, then there is no popular but just State sovereignty, that is to say: dictatorship and tyranny. And where there is a big businesses, there is no civic liberty.

The appropriate values for inspiring a popular revolution must be of a natural, rather than of a theoretic character. They must stem from the basic experiential life of the human being, in society and alone. In such a way, people thinking and feeling differently may be incorporated to revolutionary action, under the condition of prioritizing what is common to all persons as natural beings, with especial attention to their concrete essentiality. Revolution, being a social event oriented to transform the collective life, is only a part of the emancipatory process, which must be complemented together with the self-desired and self-performed betterment of each person, of her or his own self. There is no social change without enough personal change, or vice versa, and then those suffering the political situation that are committed to improve it, must, at the same time, give themselves a plan for their personal self-construction. Revolution will most probably not bring about a perfect society or make it real a utopian dream invented by some redeeming genius. Rather it should create a system to

live in community, qualitatively better than the existing one, which was at the same time improvable, perfectible. Any society will be conflictive, with needs of new transformations to be carried out by means of the intellect, the courage, the willingness to serve, the sociability, the capacity for self-correction, the want of conviviality, and the will to do well to the new generations. Such a struggle will never end, and the human condition will be ascending, self-ascending, to higher levels of existence and concrete essence.

For these reasons, the Russian Revolution of 1917 cannot be considered as a reference or a guidance, except as an example of counterrevolution. By having uncritically copied the French Revolution of 1789, a determinant event in the construction of present capitalism, it showed that the Russian Communists' anti-capitalism was artificial and demagogical. Actually, what happened in Russia in 1917 was the beginnings of an explosion of a bourgeois developmentalism, a fanatical enlightened progressivism, coupled with a vulgar neo-corporate willingness to build a big industrial complex and a global military and financial power<sup>6</sup>. The changes it really made were similar to those accomplished, for instance, by the liberal Spanish revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a poor local copy of the French Revolution, equally cruel and totalitarian<sup>7</sup>.

Today, already in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is necessary to end imitating, or even appreciating, the harmful revolutions that have been building the present society at a planetary scale: firstly the French Revolution, then the Russian, and afterwards the many failed elitist revolutions that followed (China, Vietnam, Cuba, Venezuela, and the like), all of them creating new bourgeoisies with harsh reputations; not to forget the behavior of the workerist parties in the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War<sup>8</sup>. The remains of all these attempts are today in a theoretical and practical bankruptcy.

When looking for lessons in history it would be convenient to review some experiences of social and individual transformation that were much more truthful and inspiring. Such is the case with the Bagaudae movement around the 5<sup>th</sup> century, which originated the communal council vernacular regime in the Iberian Peninsula, analyzed in my article '*El derecho consuetudinario en Navarra. De la revolución de la Alta Edad Media al Fuero general*'<sup>9</sup>.

The foundations and motorizing element of the popular revolution must not be the State but rather the individual as a unity and as a social being living together with people like him. If a State was built supposedly to destroy capitalism, then the number one cause of capital would be kept alive, since everywhere capital comes mainly from the State. This was not understood by Marxism, and so the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 neatly showed again that State is equivalent to capitalism, which is a contradiction, well at the core of the Marxist theory. Marx's anti-capitalism has come to be a peculiar combination of capitalist ideology, policy, and economy, which due to their extreme characteristics had to be disguised to win the popular support.

Marxism bases its main ideas in those of the Enlightenment –the elitist and pedantic movement which formulated the anti-popular ideology and policy of the European 'absolute' monarchies, the immediate precedent of the aggressive and genocidal liberal States–, reinforced by the progressivism, the official intellectuals, and the bourgeoisie. There is but little in Marxism different from a re-elaboration of the worldview that was forged by the European States and the ascending bourgeois class since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Let us list the main elements in support of these assertions: (i) the Theory of Progress, which Marx adopts in a radical form as a deterministic, messianic, and mechanistic faith; (ii) the economicism,

productivism, and developmentalism, which constitute the heart of the bourgeois worldview; (iii) the statalism, the conviction in that the State save the peoples, and the concealment of the fact that any State inevitably generates capitalism; (iv) the overestimating use of coercion and violence in manipulating social life; (v) the lack of a system of ideas on the person, its essence and its self-construction, and the rejection of individual autonomy, by conceiving the individual as an instrument of the State, even more, as a thing possessed by the State, as a working force and not as a human being; (vi) the persistent dismissal of real individual freedom and of freedom for the people; (vii) the amoral and nihilistic axiology, leading to the commonplaces of bourgeois ideology: hedonism, the addiction to pleasure and happiness, conceived only from their physiological and zoological aspects, aggressively non-spiritual; (viii) the neglecting of the category of truth, coupled with the indoctrination of the masses and the negation of any popular wisdom, which translates into an intellectual and political avant-gardism, the new version of the enlightened and bourgeois redemptivism which considers people as a plebe to be 'educated' and 'awareness-increased', actually to be indoctrinated and acculturated; (ix) the pedantic attachment to treat life in theoretic/doctrinaire terms, based on the bourgeois scientism typical of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; (x) the irrational devotion for technology, in parallel to the underestimation of the human and the human being; (xi) the faith in richness and material abundance as remedies to all evil, an idea taken from the most pedestrian bourgeois set of beliefs; (xii) the extreme vindication of the city, of the urban, destined in Marx's opinion to dominate the rural world, which creates a deprecating urban order, devastating nature and unsustainable in the long term; (xiii) the radical misrepresentation of history, in a Hegelian sense, as a universal history that Marxism pretends to 'scientifically' understand; (xiv) the concept of revolution as a ferocious struggle for power for the leaders and the Party, leaving the popular classes to act as a chorus and as extras, i.e. under the strategy of reorganizing society from above, from the State, and not from the individual and the people; (xv) the promotion of consumerism to ideologically subdue the masses: Marxist utopia reduces to the idealization of the material welfare; and (xvi) the omission of the category of civic virtue, without which a post-capitalist order cannot be constructed, to be complemented by recovering the notion of personal virtue.

Marxism is the theoretical product of those bourgeois intellectuals and officials, waged primarily by the State, which visibly emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and multiplied in the following centuries, having purposes of ideological and mental domination, as a part of the system of power/powers being under composition in the West. After some point in the evolution of such a social group/caste, it begins to ask for more ruling capacity for itself, 'allied' to the emerging working class, actually establishing a rigid submission relation between them. This scheme supports and drives the capitalist system in times of social peace, though requiring ever growing amounts of power and money in payment for such a function. In times of open social crisis, the intellectual social caste, organized into the socialist parties –later in the communist parties, after the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century–, jumps to stage to rebuilt the State under decomposition, and to recompose the bankrupt capitalism, giving it the form of hyper-capitalism, with a hard repression against the ordinary people (generally to the conscious, civic, generous minority of the people) which, with different degrees of lucidity and consistency, wish a real revolution. In casethey operate in economically lagging-behind countries, then they raise the flag of development and industrialization at all costs, i.e. they themselves become agents of both the old and the new bourgeoisies. That was the role of the Bolshevik Party in Russia, with Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky in charge. This has also happenedat the end of Antiquity when the Church, established by the Emperor Constantine in the Council

of Nicaea and composed by intellectuals coming from the patrician and aristocratic classes, who sustained and finally substituted the Roman State wherever it was weakening, and rebuilt the power of the landlords when the old baronial families got dispersed by the general crisis of the Roman regime and the growing social unrest. For that reason the Bagaudae revolutionaries of the 5<sup>th</sup> century clashed against the ecclesiastic power and killed a few bishops in combat.

Returning to present times, it must be noted that he who creates a differentiated theory, a singular doctrinaire system, is at the same time producing, as an unavoidable consequence, a group, party, or organized body of supporters. Such a group tends in time to seize power, to adopt a dominant structure, thus giving birth to a State when the appropriate conditions coincide, most probably during a serious social crisis. And, if arriving at this stage, then a new form of capitalism usually emerges. Therefore, to overcome capitalism, a popular revolution without a rigid theory, or stable organized structures, or a State, has to take place. As long as the objective balance of the negative previous 'revolutions' were proceeding, then a general notion and a programmatic proposal of a revolutionary project will begin to take shape. A revolutionary project for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is needed, nowadays barely elaborated nowadays but with possibilities of being efficiently designed in a few years to come. This process will be accelerated by the convulsive character of our time, increasingly inappropriate to keep essaying the old reformist, institutional recipes. In conclusion, the Russian Revolution of 1917 becomes exemplary due to its negative aspects, from which there is much to learn: what has to be avoided and, after a dialectical turn, what has really to be thought, proposed, and, when the objective conditions were present, decidedly done.

The illusory Russian Revolution is already a thing of the past; the necessary, integral, popular, worldwide revolution, is the task of the future.

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