

May Day 2021

This 1st of May is very special because of the worsening of the economic crisis (which has endured for many decades) also because of the health crisis due to Covid-19. The current economic system **appears visually for what it essentially is**: a dissipative, inefficient, deadly system incapable of solving problems that in a different society, not based on profit, would be solved quickly and well. Moreover, it reveals its extreme fragility: the health crisis and the consequent worsening of the economic crisis have dealt a mortal blow to a society that has already been for decades “*a still marching corpse*”, as we wrote in 1953 (*Il cadavere ancora cammina*, in *Sul filo del tempo*, 1953). Nothing is needed to make the situation even worse; think of what happened with the closure of the Suez Canal for a few days. The bourgeois themselves are well aware of the situation (it is enough to read their most qualified press) but they cannot do anything about it. Capitalism will inevitably continue to destroy the environment at an accelerated rate (the very appearance of Covid-19 is due to the destruction of the ecosystem that facilitates the passage of viruses from an animal species to the human one); it will increase the bestial exploitation of the proletariat to maintain its now freely falling profits; it will expel from the production process millions of workers no longer useful to production and who can never be re-employed; more and more slavery will be practised (today there are over 50 million slaves in the world in the literal sense of the term). Enormous masses, made up of unqualified proletarians and the petit-bourgeoisie in the process of proletarianisation, are pouring into the streets of metropolises all over the world, clashing with the police from Latin America to China and India, from the USA to Russia, from Europe to the Middle East. They are asking for practically nothing because there is nothing to ask for except the end of this social system. Their conscious demands are still vague and partial, but what counts is the substance of things: “*It is not a question of what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this being, it will historically be compelled to do...*” (Marx – Engels, *The Holy Family*, 1844).

The globalised economy leads revolts to automatically synchronise and self-organise themselves; the bourgeoisie can do nothing but increase repression, triggering new, even more radical revolts. In order to delay reaching the point of no return, it is also forced to feed its subjects without compensation; but that society which is forced to feed its slaves instead of exploiting them is inevitably condemned to the end. Moreover, the bourgeoisie itself is completely at the mercy of impersonal – largely financialised – capital and can do nothing but follow the course of things, much like a rudderless boat in a raging river, until the inevitable final shipwreck.

The insatiable hunger for surplus value on the part of the capitalist *Moloch*, i.e. the exploitation of labour-power, places a **social limit** on the existence of capital; the unbridled hunger for natural resources adds an insurmountable **physical limit**. The very existence of the human species is endangered and only the communist revolution can break this infernal spiral before it is too late. Here, too, the shrewdest bourgeois have understood the danger a long time ago; but **the bourgeoisie only knows its own world and it is only its very end that it can contemplate**. Until not so long ago it thought its world was eternal. Now

it understands that it is heading towards its historical implosion but it cannot see anything else. A sort of bourgeois version of the “*After me, the flood*”; just as the aristocracy was wrong yesterday, so is the bourgeoisie wrong today.

The social field is rapidly re-shaping up, and individuals, currently atomised, will be powerfully drawn to one camp or the other: to that of conservation or that of revolution. The inevitable worsening of the social crisis will lead the proletariat to rediscover its hidden theory preserved by the communists and to organise itself into the future world communist party suited to the new historical phase we are living through and whose form we cannot yet predict. In view of the epochal clash looming on the historical horizon, the ruling class is preparing its ideological and material weapons: the tightening of surveillance of society in a warlike spirit; the dissemination of the most diverse reactionary ideologies (religious, nationalist, racist, social-reformist, pacifist, democratic, pseudo-revolutionary); the procuring of the “*white guard*” (fascist, Nazi and – as they now say – souverainist labour; useful idiots who believe being autonomous but whom capital uses for its dirtiest job).

The various “leftists” deserve a separate discourse. Heirs of the various dissolved social-democratic and Stalinist parties, they appear on the stage of history in various forms, trying to divert the proletariat from its main road. The bourgeois ideologists know very well, as we said above, what is happening and they also know – without being able to say it – that they can do nothing about it. The petty-bourgeois ideologists know, badly, what is happening and think they can do something about it. The incredible thing is that they really believe the rubbish they say. In the past they wanted to “*make the revolution*” (no one had informed them that revolutions are not made); then they wanted to “*make the Party*” (but one doesn’t make a party either). They did not accept the role they were given in the production process; they felt mortified and wanted to give “*power to the imagination*”. So they wanted to be “*workers’ vanguards*”, they wanted to fight all the time, they wanted to be autonomous (in the sense of being completely autonomous from critical theory), alternative (alternating between one bullshit and another), they wanted to serve the people (a horrible democratic and interclass term). Their political project to replace Stalinism and social democracy in controlling the proletariat failed. They were an expression of the radicalised petit-bourgeoisie caught between the proletariat (into which it is historically destined, in the course of the crisis, to sink) and the bourgeoisie (to which it would like to belong). The ideologists of this failed political project, unable to play their own social role, thus ended up serving only one part of the people: the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie has rewarded them for the services they rendered then and those they render today, by placing them in the places where ideological work is done: newspapers, universities, television studios, economic institutes, state institutions, political apparatus (*first* and foremost in parliament where they are always at the forefront in distinguishing themselves in that incurable mental degeneration that Marx already called “*parliamentary cretinism*”). In the meantime, Stalinism and social democracy have died out in decline and the proletariat, when it emerges from its torpor, driven by material determinations, will find itself facing, without intermediate forces to act as a buffer, its historical enemy of all time, the bourgeoisie and its decaying capitalist social system.

While the bourgeoisie and some right-wing intellectuals are rediscovering Marx in order to understand things, and not a day passes without an article on the subject, the “left”, on the other hand, considers Marx to be outdated and speaks of him almost with indignation. After all – as we have proved experimentally – it is practically impossible for one of these gentlemen to become a communist; it would be easier for a policeman to become one. Just as it is historically inevitable that they will become policemen. There is always a need for little Noskes. They are already grovelling to get such posts. After all, history shows that the fiercest anti-proletarian repressions were carried out by the “leftists” (by name or in fact): the massacre of the German proletariat by Noske and the social democrats; the same applies to the Hungarian social democrats. In the America of the *New Deal*, the police fired on workers; trade unionists were lynched and hung from telegraph poles; some were crucified on railway cars as a travelling warning; the bosses' squads raged with the complicity of the democratic police, even going so far as to carry out summary executions in the very prisons; hundreds of strikers were taken into the desert with all their families and left there. And one could go on. When these gentlemen weren't turning into cops, they acted as firemen (in Italy, France, Great Britain) putting out the fires of the proletarian revolt.

The crisis of overproduction, which began in the second half of the 1970s, at the end of the post-war accumulation cycle, has dragged on with ups and downs until today, getting worse and worse. *“In [commercial] crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and as soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property.”* (Marx, Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party, 1848). Moreover, fictitious capital has reached plethoric proportions. Of course, the origin of the crisis is not in the stock exchanges but, on the contrary, it is the fall in the quantity of the rate of profit rate that makes capital desperately seek expedients for its valorisation, raking up capital wherever possible, like a drug addict in search of his daily dose. Even the states are unable to avoid monetary speculation and this only aggravates the crisis further. That epidemic, of which Marx and Engels spoke, has reached the proportions of a serious social pandemic; to it is added the Covid-19 pandemic, which further aggravates the situation.

As far as the proletariat is concerned, it has by no means disappeared, as the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois ideologists have been claiming for years; on the contrary, it has increased. More than three billion people are employed worldwide, 50% of whom are wage earners (85% of the employed in the oldest capitalist countries, 40% in China and India, 30% in other countries). A proletarian mass of this magnitude has never existed in the history of capitalism, either in absolute or relative terms. In addition, there is an industrial reserve

army of over 500 million unemployed and 900 million underemployed. If sociologists do not see, they do not believe; it would be like saying that volcanic activity does not exist until a devastating eruption occurs.

This society appears to most people to be the only possible society, an eternal society that is always the same. Whether one thinks of the past or the future, one always sees the same society in different forms. Capital has annulled history and lives and lets its subjects live in an eternal alienated present. Those who oppose capitalism in a confused way experience a sense of powerlessness because the enemy seems invincible. **In reality, capitalism, especially in this historical phase, is a colossus with feet of clay.** In the words of Marx: *“You will hardly suggest that my opinion of the present is too exalted and if I do not despair about it, this is only because its desperate position fills me with hope.”* (Letter from Marx to Ruge, May 1843).

Almost a century ago, the first assault of the world proletariat on the fortresses of capital was defeated by the joint reaction of the bourgeoisie, social democracy and Stalinism. We confidently await the next assault.

We make our predictions with the certainty of seeing them confirmed and in this there is not an ounce of doubt because *“we believe in the revolution, not as the Catholic believes in Christ, but as the mathematician believes in the findings of his research”* (Amadeo Bordiga, L'idealismo socialista, in L'Avanguardia, no. 253, 1912). Just as an astronomer can predict the motion of a planet (*its revolution*) and when an eclipse will occur, we can predict the development, trajectory and catastrophe of capitalist society and, on the historical scale, when the conditions of its total eclipse will occur; the conditions of social revolution. Capitalism has already died in decline; it is a question of burying it and consigning it to the dustbins of history. The proletariat will not be its executioner but its gravedigger.

The alternative is not capitalism or communism but communism or the end of the human species.

Tertium non datur (Latin, excluded third)

Spartakist revolutionaries during the 1919 German revolution in Berlin



Rivoluzionari spartakisti durante la rivoluzione tedesca del 1919 a Berlino