

**Alex Demirovic: Workers council democracy or the End of the Political.** Similar to the capitalist economy liberal democracy is subjected cyclical crises. In political theory and in the debate of the Left there is a search for alternatives to depoliticisation, passiveness or apathy. Criticizing Hannah Arendts republicanism, it is proposed to appropriate arguments of Marx' analysis of the Paris Commune and of the debates during the German revolution in 1918/19. Concepts of workers council democracy are discussed, and it is argued that this tradition had developed important insights in the problems of socialist transformation.

**Raul Zelik: After Capitalism - Reasons for the economic inefficiency of state capitalism and its consequences for today's alternatives.** In the 20 th century, different types of socialist societies failed – not only because of an evident lack of democracy, but also due to their economic inefficiency. Apart from the historical underdevelopment of Russia and other socialist countries, there could be given three main reasons for this inefficiency: 1) Based on the Leninist concepts of party and leadership, the socialist states were characterized by new social contradictions that led the majorities to a kind of silent resistance to central planning. 2) The socialist model of development and modernization didn't offer a real alternative to the economic paradigms in capitalism. Socialist countries turned out to be incomplete copies of fordist societies. 3) The socialist countries didn't find answers to some fundamental systemic problems of planning, as there are: decentralization of decision-making and scope for a self-determined reorganization of working processes.

**Katharina Götsch: Market socialism – the Left searching for a new concept.** The history of a theoretical concept called 'market socialism' is inspected. This concept has become updated in the face of current or imminent occurrences and developments in transforming societies like Cuba, Venezuela and China. It will be discussed whether market socialism is a 'contradiction in terms', the unconditional surrender in favour of the market or the last chance for an existing socialism in the future.

**Christian Siefkes: Is commonism communism? Commons-based peer production and the communist purpose.** During the last decades, a new mode of production has emerged, for which names such as "commons-based peer production," "commonism," and "peer economy" have been proposed. This article explores the main characteristics of this mode of production and discusses the relationship between commonism and communism: if communism is "the real movement which abolishes the present state of things", can commonism become the mode of production which allows this movement to realize this purpose?

**Hendrik Wallat: Neither state nor collective. Karl Marx's critique of other socialisms.** Even Marx had never written a systematical critique of other socialism's, his whole work is full of commentaries about various forms of them. On the one hand Marx's critical notes are directed against anti-individualistic, authoritarian and etatist conceptions of human emancipation, on the other hand they focus doctrines which perpetuate capitalist modes of production and social synthesis.

**Ralf Hoffrogge: "The real movement which overturns the actual condition..." - the German labour movement and its concepts of Socialism 1848-1920.** This article gives a short overview on the German labour movement from its beginnings to the 1920ies and shortly portraits the different concepts of socialism within the German social democratic party. Against the common misperception of a hegemonial, coherent and powerful concept of socialist politics in the past the article argues that even in their heyday the German labour movement did not have a clear concept of socialist politics, that the term socialism itself was an object of permanent discussions. Both the Marxist critique of utopian socialism and the overwhelming domination of the Prussian state often

constrained these discussions about the political form of a post-capitalist society. The most interesting concept of socialism was not created by theoretical discussions among leftist intellectuals, but by political actions against the first world war, which ended with the German Revolution of 1918 and the rise of a powerful council movement. This movement not only insisted on the principles of class war but practically overturned many authoritarian and state-dominated ideas of socialism which were common at that time.

**Marcel van der Linden:** The Socialism that wasn't: Marxist critiques of Soviet Society. This article presents a few salient contributions to the Marxist debate on the Soviet Union's class nature since the 1930s. It focuses on the theories of Bettelheim, Cliff, Trotsky, Rizzi, Carlo, Bahro and Ticktin.

**Renate Hürtgen: Socialization and participation, or what can be found on socialist alternatives inside the GDR-plants?** The article illustrates the fundamental difference between socialization and nationalization at the industrial plant in the GDR. The real "situation of the workers" did not correspond with the official image of a privileged class, workers and simple employees in the GDR were also at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Furthermore the real participation opportunities of the workers were extremely low. Actually the functionaries had the power within a domination structure, based on absolute party discipline and the uncontrolled authority of a central power. In such a society was no room for participation.

## Zu den AutorInnen

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