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Is Politics Still Possible Today?

Karl-Heinz Dellwo

Abstract: The article presents an analysis of the present conjuncture and demonstrates how its current warmongering is a symptom of the current, ongoing, fundamental lack of political alternatives. It indicates that the inability of capitalism to solve the problems it creates leads to a self-annihilating path from which there are no exit strategies – to make way for new forms of organisation the present way of organizing and destroying the world has to die.

Keywords: Bellicism, Green Capitalism, NATO, Russia-Ukraine War

M., German Jew and Communist, thus doubly exposed at the Nazi extermination strategy, refuses to seek shelter from the bombers of the allied forces during the 1945 air alert. Instead, he watches the bombardment of Frankfurt unprotected from a balcony with a glass of champagne in his hand.¹

„There is no social group in capitalism which would have a transcendent ontological predetermination.”²

„For example, seen from today (i.e., after Marx), politics is a necessary purge.”³

Are we lost? The question easily imposes itself: one only need follow the rapid developments in the present world that by now, apart from the inner and outer limits of its own capitalization, push toward waging wars. What do we have to say? Or maybe differently, what will we have to say? Actually, everything, because our life is at stake. Nothing less. A historical epoch seems to have reached its end. We experience the failure of the 20th century. In our time, the repercussions of a world of escalated age-old exploitation wherein everything has been subjugated to the transformation of nature and life strike out in always tougher, unambiguous, conspicuous ways. But exactly this is what is lacking socially: a substantial answer, a taking of a position in relation to a different foundation of life. In view of such fundamental issues, there is only a gap. In the `70s of the last century, the author of these lines belonged to those who raised the system question as a real question of power. The “other” was no utopia, but something that was concretely imaginable and indispensable. There was an “outside” to the capitalist

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1 I owe this real story to my friend Thomas Seibert, a philosopher from Frankfurt, who has been told this story by the daughter of the person concerned.

2 Kurz 2013, p. 26. [All translations from non-English sources are provided by the translators, F.R. / H.H.Y.].

3 Barthes 1989, p. 88.

world in many-faceted shapes: the Soviet-Union that resulted from the October Revolution, Maoist China, Cuba, the struggling anti-colonial movements, a political-cultural rift in the cultural centers themselves out of which gushed out entirely new fantasies of life. With the “outside”, there also existed the category of politics that it represented. It seems a long time since then. The opposites have been flattened or have corroded themselves. Nothing new gushes out of the world. Everything seems known and old. The world, as it is, seems to have become without any alternative. Thereby, politics – the attempt to organize the life of man outside of a lashed down rationality of a system that has gained independence – has also disappeared.

System on Autopilot

Years ago, the technocrat Draghi, and for the sake of general pacification after Donald Trump who rinsed into the most dangerous office for mankind in the world repeated a maxim of Alan Greenspan: “Italian fiscal politics runs on autopilot.”⁴ The globalized economy has become so autonomous that it is no longer of central significance who holds the power in the political system of capitalism. What was meant to pacify is insidious in its consequences: politics is what has become secondary and implies a deception about its power to organize [*gestalten*]. It does not organize, it only administers from a subordinate position the driving forces of an independent globally oriented economy which are becoming chaotic and delimiting; the driving forces of a system that posits itself as a “new nature”, as “industrial eternity.”⁵ Often, this borders on insanity. The waging of global wars becomes a normal option for some. Here also lies the reason why the political-social main-stream in Western society moves to the right, to the point of establishing new fascist governments of the old kind, such as the alliance between the Fratelli d’Italia, Lega Nord and Forza Italia, which is now likely to follow the government of resigned prime minister Draghi, who at the time head of the ECB celebrated the imposition of capital as “automatic subject”⁶ of society. Following in the footsteps of the technocratic actors, the ideological right is now gaining positions of political power in the societies. With their old fascism they are competing with what one can also call “technocratic fascism”, the rearrangement of human being under an all-embracing factual constraint, so that the external structure of man becomes its internal one. Pasolini called this the “anthropological mutation”,

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⁴ <https://intermarketandmore.finanza.com/draghi-il-pilota-automatico-e-il-fiscal-compact-53690.html>.

⁵ This is a term of Alberto Moravia to whom Pier Paolo Pasolini refers to later. Cf. Pasolini / Bachmann 2022, Vol 1, p. 87; Vol. 2, p. 124.

⁶ Marx 1982, p. 255.

a mutation that was for him more annihilating than the old fascism, because the subject here has become an object entirely and does no longer recognize its own subjection.⁷The ideology of the right is effective because it draws on envy and resentment that become the foundation of mood in a closed system, that is in a system without eligibility of cognition, and that are never directed against the circumstances but only ever against the other. The human being whose entrapment has become its lifeworld nevertheless needs something for the soul. This is provided by the old right-wing ideology and its constant mediatic bombardment of solidarity. The right cannot generate changes in the economic megamachine that has become autonomous, Draghi is right: they fail vis-à-vis the “autopilot.” But they can play off the interests of some against those of the others in an increasingly crude manner and drive the carousel of misanthropy to a new, higher level. Claiming “interests” is in its structure always reactionary because it negates from the outset the relationship to a shared whole as the only position committed to solidarity.⁸The phenomenon is evident in many states. When the existing society which is perceived as the existing world is *without alternative*, when the laws of capitalist economy have become irrevocable, it makes no sense to anybody anymore to think or even attempt to position herself outside of this new nature. Any action, even if it aims at what is called “social balancing”, is based on the wrong foundation.

This is the problem of the Left: it acts within a system whose self-running potency is so overwhelmingly strong that any attempt to control it is like attempting to direct the launching of a large container with a few hands. The problem of the Left is its permanent and egoistic lie that its parliamentarism could make possible anything fundamental against the raging machine of global capitalism. The lie is recognized. This is why the social significance of the Left is becoming increasingly marginal. The longer they hold on to it, the more ridiculous they become. We all very well recall the rise and fall of Alexis Tsipras and of the left-wing alliance SYRIZA in Greece, its adjustment for a capital-conform Europe. Anyone who wants to reassert the currently bleak spectacle of a politically bankrupt Left only has to look at the rapid de-politicization of the German Linkspartei whose positions on Ukraine and Russia are now more or less congruent with those of other bourgeois parties. So, what

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7 Cf here Pasolini/Bachmann, esp. Vol. 2, p. 142: „Here material wealth and enjoyment promise ... a liberation from the burden of human existence, a sort of deal with the Devil, since this liberation comes with the grave sublation of freedom to be anything else than a consumer of superfluous goods and thus a mere factor of bourgeois relations of production.”

8 Cf. Also Alain Badiou: „Communism, this is the universal vocation that is included in a localizable period of the politics of emancipation. The question of communism is that of political action if one knows that this action cannot be reduced to the pursuit of interest of this or that group.” Badiou 2012, p. 13.

does one need such a Left for? The other parties continue to propagate their submission to the god of free market economy as expression of a self-chosen conviction, which is in the meantime again transferring from civilian into military armament the standard work attire. The pace with which ideological feel-good positions of a political force dissolve in the course of the transition to realpolitik can be studied through the Green Party. At the beginning of their political rise, their turn towards the parliamentarism of the bourgeois system was still marked by the emancipatory waves of the 68 revolt and the resulting promise to adapt the political-economic system to the needs of the people. The old attitudes and positions from the last revolt in the system of Western capitalism from the 1960s were quickly institutionally ground down in the integration process. The claim to be different from the previous old parties has long since shifted into the domain of the decorative. Every "march through the institution" to date has ended with the victory of the institutions, which have on their side the supremacy of the real, which has grown historically and has in the meantime become totalitarian. From within its own logic, this real can no longer be transcended. The impossibility of transcendence from within the system forces everyone in the end to adopt the old code of power and violence as condition of their own political existence, which cannot do anything but perpetuate the existing world.

What is being revealed here seems to be more than just the everyday corruption of a political class that, having finally arrived at positions of power immanent to the system, does nothing but execute constraints and passes this off as "decision" and "will". In Germany, the new Bellicism has more or less taken hold of the entire new political middle class. Many a politician who was recently still trying to propagate "green capitalism", wherein everything that will change all by itself for the benefit of humanity, without any account as to why the catastrophic state of the world today exists in the first place; she mutates into a weapons expert and publicly acts as a hired representative of the weapons industry. The new Green politician sits in a tank and has therein found the skin in which they feel safe. The world is seen from the perspective of the battlement and hoped-for military superiority. Politics is exhausted here in the victory over an opponent and in the reactionary need to triumph. She is joined by the mainstream media, an army of warmongers, all the more disgusting since they cool their petty courage from the base by calling *on others* in Ukraine to fight and, in their own country, propagandistically create an atmosphere of alternativelessness to the victory over Russia. They satisfy themselves in the effects of the others and gamble with downfall: there is little more despicable than this cowardly battle cry from the base.

Hatred of Russians

In no other country can the hatred of Russians be so quickly reactivated as in Germany⁹, which is now involved for the fifth time in subjugating Russia to its version of Europe from the West.¹⁰ The category of the new political middle class, the children of the first post-war generation, is formed by those who were still directly associated with the first Nazi generation. *Pars pro toto*: Ursula von der Leyen. She did not need a single day after the start of the Russian war in Ukraine to reissue the old Nazi slogan that Russian industry should be destroyed and Russia should be turned into an agricultural country.¹¹

One could also have seen in this war – which had been looming for a long time – a catastrophe so that one would have asked oneself where one's own responsibility lies for allowing the processes leading to it run their blind course and why one was not capable of developing a strategy of common security interests. But none of this – or at best only a little – has happened or is happening. There was obviously no longer this attitude as significant political force, but all the more that of the successive expansion of one's own militarily secured sphere of power and of one's own social culture, if one were willing to grant to liberal capitalism an independent culture (which must at least be put into question, otherwise there would not be the possibility of the openly fascist turn in the individual societies that can be expected again also in Europe today, after having been witness to the social reality of the USA for so long). Instead, a switch to a military mode of attack bursts open as if one had been waiting for it.

War as Clearance

The velocity with which here old Nazi slogans could be activated and with which a politically more or less ignorant new political- and media caste change tack from praising “green capitalism” to war mode points to a historical rottenness of the existing condition and awakens strange associations with the prewar period and of the outbreak of the First World War. When the event took place in 1914, all previous social barriers opened up and seemingly levelled all differences: except for a marginal minority, everyone wanted to participate in the war. Something had

9 What shows itself here is also how deeply rooted and virulent in society this ideological topos of the Nazi-Reich still is, especially with those from the 3rd generation after Hitler.

10 A continuity of three centuries: 1707 (Karl XII.), 1812 (Napoleon); 1914 (Central Powers Germany and Austria-Hungary); 1941 (German Reich).

11 In the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung [FAZ] from the 25th of February 2022: “Ursula von der Leyen openly says: It is about destroying the industrial basis of the country.” Cf. FAZ, 25.02.2022, EU-Sanktionen: Banken, Flugzeuge, Raffinerien – so vergilt Europa Putins Angriffskrieg, authored by Thomas Gutschker, Brussels. Ironically this was then annotated: “actualized on the 25th of February at 04:49” – one could here also just cite the Führer: “from 5:45 on, we are shooting back.”

obviously come to an end and because nobody could organize the end, the vast majority of society expected the event when it occurred: the social democrats defected to the imperial rule [*Kaisertum*] (and never substantially recovered from this betrayal). The Kaiser, as is well known, no longer knew any parties, only German defenders of the fatherland. The young people oriented themselves toward the national-idealistically mystified battle of Langemarck in November 1914, a military action stupidly organized by the German army that had no relation to the possibly achievable goals but came with great sacrifices which were used again to feed a mendacious patriotism. The twenty years before the commencement of the First World War are reminiscent of the twenty years before the commencement of the new bellicism. The early capitalist imperial state was bobbing along, society was dull, mothballed, and had no active answer as to how to shape the future because a change of the trinity of God, Kaiser and fatherland to a self-modernizing capitalism found no internal forces which were willing to implement it. The outbreak of the war was the result of a disintegration of an old period that had long since set in and progressed. Mariupol is only geographically distant from Langemarck in Belgian Flanders. In the mendacious mystification, this time not by a supreme army command but by a NATO-affiliated brigade of journalists from the base, the places are almost congruent with each other, although it is somewhat more difficult to make a politically and morally decent battle group out of the Bandera fascists and of the right-wing radicals and neo-fascists who have streamed in.

Tighten the Belt and Goebbels's "Stew Sunday"

Here perhaps another background for the apparent war-mongering of a part of the new political and media caste presents itself: they weary of everything. They long to be redeemed from the impossibility to present that which cannot be changed within the system as something that is under their control and could be changed into bliss. The new love for bellicism and for the dream of military victory against competing systems also reveals that there is no solution for their postulated project of a capitalism that suddenly begins with the human being and no longer with abstract value. They have known it for a long time; they will mess up all their promises and, as in the past, deplete every social, ecological, political position which would contradict the political or economic laws of market logic. Everything that has been rejected forever yesterday has since long become possible again: nuclear power, continual use of the fossil fuels of coal, oil, and even gas fracking. This is the central administration of the energy economy as part of a new war economy, replacing the winter aid organization of the Wehrmacht: "Freeze for

Victory!”¹² Renunciation is propagated from above. In a venerated morality of a new now willingness to accept privation, strangely pertinent analogies emerge such as that of the “Eintopfsonntag (Stew Sunday)”¹³ to which the National Socialist leadership urged the population in October 1933. This new social duty propagated from above and linked to the demand to also donate 50 pfennigs for the winter aid organization was intended to be a community-building action against the enemy, which was even religiously charged in the Second World War by redefining the “Stew Sunday” to be the “Opferonntag (Sacrifice Sunday).”

Politics has for a long time divided itself into two completely distinct spheres: there is the politics of the getting-to-power and there is the politics from the standpoint of power. In the end, both have very little to with one another. But above all: neither has any sovereignty vis-à-vis the economy and exists as such only as external image of itself. The task seems, in the sense of Roland Barthes, *to drain life away* and to transfer all power to the rule of valorization.

Climate change and “Green Capitalism”

Since the seventies of the last century the world knows that permanent economic growth will lead to climate changes with catastrophic consequences for mankind, and that the industrialized societies, oriented toward high levels of consumption, which have characterized in Western states the life of man since over one and a half centuries are not transferable to the rest of world without resulting in enormous destruction of life. Much has been said, little has been done. The annihilating relation of capitalism to nature leads to repercussions that have in the meantime acquired the character of the event, i.e. are detached and independent from the normal processes in societies. The limits that are now being placed on the system and its societies occur as if coming from the outside, as if they were consequences of uncontrollable natural catastrophes. They are not the product of any inner design but uncontrolled consequences that become independent and that concern everybody and subject everyone under a paradigm, which forces them to change their previous life. The pandemic of the last two

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12 Consider two examples out of many: Georg Friedrichs, chairman of the GasAG Berlin: “It is best to shorten showering, rinsing, hand washing”; whoever is “young and well-trained will get through the winter well with two jumpers and a bit of stair climbing.” (Source: <https://exxpress.at/energie-manager-raet-fuer-den-winter-haendewaschen-verkuerzen-pullover-anziehen/>, 13.08.2022) – interestingly, after society was almost driven to constantly wash its hands long and thoroughly because of the Pandemic, here the washing times are shortened.

Karin Göring-Eckardt (Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen): „Now: briefly shower, turn it off, soap, wash away, ready... We will have to learn to live with constraints (source: https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/deutschland/innenpolitik/id_100033020/katrin-goering-eckardt-gruene-die-einschraenkungen-sind-nur-der-anfang-.html, assessed on 13.08.2022).

13 Cf.: Eintopfsonntag, <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eintopfsonntag>.

year was such an *event*. There is nothing to suggest that these *events* will not continue to accumulate. One can also fill this with hope, but this does not change the primacy of negative experience.¹⁴ However, it is not only the repercussions of the destruction of nature that puts a spoke into the wheel of the global capitalist system like a saboteur. The laws within the economy are also pointing in an ever more obvious way to their inner limits. It has been apparent for years that the capital, which is forced to produce new capital, in its entirety no longer knows where it can continue to multiply in the productive sector, and it therefore unavoidably deploys the surplus capital in models of speculation. Wars, bad harvests, famines, and natural catastrophes can also be financialized – if only through currency speculation. The 2001 speculation bubble in the IT-sector was an expression of this. But even more so were the toxic finance products which led to the stock market crash of 2008.

Capitalism without growth is like gravity without attraction. Part of the lie of “green capitalism” is the unresolvable contradiction between the development of microelectronics and the robotization of labor processes linked to it which leads to an increasing expulsion of human beings from this labor process, who then in the future, degradedly, will have to see for themselves to get by. These processes take place globally. The impossibility of “green capitalism” is reflected on Europe’s doorstep in the thousands of drowned refugees, who have refused – just as masses of other people will continue to refuse – to surrender to the fate of being part of the surplus population, this ever-growing part of humanity, which is useless for the economy of a capitalism that became independent, and who are neither needed as labor force because machinic labor does the same better nor as consumer because they lack the means to participate in consumption.

Capitalism was never a social project, but at the beginning it augured that everyone would profit from it and that the living conditions of mankind would be gradually improved. These are the snows of yesteryear. The new reality is marked by exploitation and exclusion. Exclusion is the need of the hour. To this end we have **FRONTEXT** and **PUSHBACKS** at our borders, in and the world’s new camps in other regions. With increased productivity, the cake to be distributed gets smaller and smaller. This paradox is explained by the global reduction of the use of living labor and the constant increase of capital in the production process.

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¹⁴ Cf. Badiou / Tarby 2017, pp. 17ff. For Badiou the event is always linked to an opening of possibilities: “A political event is something that makes appear a new possibility, which escapes the domination of the possible through the governing power.” *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The Downfall of the West

The inability of capitalism to solve any major social problem in the world has been obvious for a long time. The political-military caste can also no longer impose any political order. It was still able to do so easily, with a high death toll, in the 60s and 70s of the last century, then clearly failed for the first time in Vietnam and this led to changed military and power strategies. This limit of transferring one's own political ends onto other culture by means of using power was recently demonstrated in the failure of the twenty year long NATO-war in Afghanistan, a war, which was not allowed to be called a "war" for many years, like the speech-conventions concerning the Russian war in the Ukraine. The model of "green capitalism" is based on a reorganization of the world starting from the West, which should politically follow the pattern of a leopard skin: the black dots on this skin are the centers of the world, where the previous prosperity is *più o meno* defended and maintained, while the rest of the skin represents the zones of ecological and economic destruction, wherein there will be no human solution anymore. This also has a military consequences: the high-tech Western system sends from its secure centers drones into the yellow areas, largely without any risk, to kill enemies or those who one suspects to be such in the name of an absolutely mendacious morality and a legal self-justification with thousands of collateral damages, and increases the hate and the hope of its downfall almost exponentially among millions of people who possibly are afraid of the West but will never ever become its friends again.¹⁵

There is no need to have any illusions about the destruction of the world as a terrain friendly to life: the future will be determined by countless millions of refugees, who cannot survive fifty degrees and more temperature increase, whose regions are burnt, dried out or flooded and who, after having lost all means of livelihood, are forced to flee with all their might into regions and to fight for their place there, where they see a chance of survival for themselves. Against this process that will certainly not follow any left-wing orientation but rather that of naked survival in all forms of its raw and brutal expression, the Western states have unsuccessfully attempted, as in Afghanistan, to establish corrupt proxy regimes, which execute their interests, keep the masses off their back, and promise in their green capitalist prosperity zones in the old centers of the world further respite from the historically inevitable disintegration.

The acceleration of the destruction of the ostensibly civil orientation of the European systems is rapid. The reaction to the Russian

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15 It should be noted that Madeleine Albright, US foreign minister, replied to the question of the journalist Lesley Stahl on the 12. May 1996: "We heard that half a million children died (because of the sanctions against Iraq)", "I think it is a very hard choice – but the price, we think, it is worth the price." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJtSpev8zWk>

offensive war¹⁶ in Ukraine is not explicable solely by the fear of the wars, which the West, usually under the leadership of the USA, has brought into the world, and that also return to its own territory. For the first time, as it was mentioned in several reactions, it was not the West that was attacking somewhere in the world to assert its interests, but for the first time in decades the West was confronted with an offensive war directly in its own realm of power. The turn of the inner-imperialist competition between the – current – three great powers to military confrontations refers to a newly emerged end-time consciousness, which in turn shows the becoming conscious of the disintegration of its own position in the world. When Nancy Pelosi politically hyped her travel to Taiwan as struggle between “autocracy and democracy”, one can see that the course is set for a final confrontation with which the West wants to stop its own downfall, which lost its outward invincibility already in 2001 in front an audience of billions of the rest of the world with the destruction of its symbolic economic headquarters in New York. The hegemon that remained after the collapse of the Soviet Union has itself in the meantime become a victim of the processes of capitalist globalization. Already Trump's “Make America Great Again” was a flailing attempt to shake off the mercilessness of a world market that – and therein remained determined by the hubris of the white population that assumed to always be among the winners – has become independent from one's own country and to pass it on, at least largely, to other countries. The Biden government is pursuing the same goals but is clearly more aggressive in aligning economic potency with the military, and attempts to compensate its own weakening through a renewal of the Atlantic alliance. Russia's war of separation against the West will, without a doubt, be successful on this level: the separation is historically posited and creates a new global situation. The orientation of the gaze of the masses of billions on the West will change fundamentally. Under the new hegemony of the non-subjectivity of the globalized market, which replaces the dominance of the bipolar world of the 20th century, we are left with splintered individual blocs whose present aggressivity for mankind will be measured by how increasing or decreasing it is. It is decreasing in the West, in Russia probably also, since after the established separation the country will remain technologically of second if not third rank.¹⁷ Russia's victory in the war of separation will be a Pyrrhic victory that will have to be paid for

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¹⁶ This war is not the first war on European territory after 1945. If one neglects the civil wars in the dissolving Yugoslavia in the 90s, the first offensive war in Europe is the NATO-war against Serbia in 1999, which happened without UN mandate and in which the NATO-states de facto align themselves with the fascistic UÇK of the Kosovo-Albanians who later have been accused of not only drug and organ trafficking but also of serious war crimes. Cf.: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/U%C3%87K>.

¹⁷ As increasing one does have to describe China, which because of its economic strength, which has certainly not reached its peak, does not need to follow any strategy of military aggression but is all the more defined by the West as new central enemy.

by other concessions on the world market and will make Russia become something other than what it should become in the plans of its elites. This is also holds for the NATO-system. The end of any war situation is usually different from what its actors plan to achieve.

Russia's War of Separation from the Defensive

When I attack the West here, the point is not to put the Russian offensive war against the Ukraine as secondary. The causes of this war are multilayered. Their lie far before the war that has now broken out. Armament and agitation of the thoroughly corrupt Ukrainian elite by the USA and parts of their European allies as further outpost against Russia and / or exploitation of the imperial weakness of the West by Russia for the sake of strengthening one's own position in the world. Recall here also Barak Obama's 2014 definition of Russia as a "regional power" in response to its occupation of the Crimea, when he also defined Russia's action also as action "not out of strength but out of weakness."¹⁸ All this will belong to its causes. But to me such explanations alone do not appear to be sufficient to me. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia had fallen into the defensive. This war of separation is a war from the defensive with tremendous consequences for millions of people. Like every war, this war is also to be designated a crime. Its general background is the disintegration of the previous world order after the decline of the USA as the seemingly victorious hegemon after the collapse of the Soviet Union. But no military operation will stop this disintegration. Unlike 1945, in this war there will be no victors, no matter how it ends. Therefore, I, certainly no pacifist, consider any military fighting out of this conflict, which the West as well as Russia must keep below the threshold of an atomic war (which is why no one will leave the field as victor), as the most barbaric option at whose end the Ukraine will be left as devastated as Lebanon was after its diverse wars. Here, I do not share the conviction of my friend Slavoj Žižek, who in June 2022 posited the alternative "Strengthening of the NATO vs. Pacifism" – saying that "we need a stronger NATO – but not as a prolongation of the US politics."¹⁹ What is that supposed to be? NATO exists only as prolongation of US politics! Is it better to go down a wrong path than to admit that all developments are currently rolling over us and we are left empty-handed? Is it an option to act for action's sake, to find a way out, when this very action is determined by those who represent a false world and want to prolong it?

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¹⁸Translator's note: Cf. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/25/barack-obama-russia-regional-power-ukraine-weakness>.

¹⁹ Zizek 2022.

What is to be Done?

Are we lost? It has to be said—at least as far as Germany is concerned – that a large part of the political elite has, for better or worse, existentially affiliated itself with the USA in order to win or to perish with them.²⁰ What has been for years the dogma of German conservatism, that the Atlantic alliance stands above all and must not be questioned, is rather today the basis of a green-liberal generation of politician, who in their political gormlessness are as remarkable as they are highly dangerous.

There should be no illusions about the prevailing consciousness of metropolises. The public propaganda is firmly in the service of system bearers. But it is not simply a manipulation of social consciousness through constant medial bombardment that bestows on this potentially suicidal politics a military clarification of the global situation which is in favor of obsolete and in its privileges untenable western. Such a bipartisan approval even from the side of the population. Through the social life-reality determined by the leap to the 24-hour day of capital, the destruction of an autonomous political consciousness is largely complete. Pasolini's already mentioned disillusioned realization from the beginning of the 1970s that "an anthropological mutation" is taking place in man with the industrial establishing of a consumer society can be regarded a long established fact. In place of traditional values that developed over centuries, such as fidelity, renunciation, devotion, obligation to others and everything else with which human beings committed themselves to each other, the hedonism that negates common sociality is now posited with an exclusive horizon of individual satisfaction of compensatory pleasures, which are superficial as they are trivial, and have today lost any relevant relationship to the past as much as to the future. With the obligation to others, the empathy toward them is also dissolved. This is how the West can be described: without empathy towards the vast majority of mankind.²¹

We will not have the privilege, like M., without fear in face of our own danger – but finally escaping our impotence – to watch the demise of a barbaric world brought about by force from the balcony, with a glass of champagne in hand. The power that could do this is today not foreseeable, even though the processes have announced themselves which will upturn everything in the world. We have no reason not to be pessimistic. All attempts since the October Revolution to fight for a real process of liberation in the world in such a way that it becomes its own power have succumbed to the world conditions, which – and here I return to Marx:

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20 Annalena Baerbock: „We must build a stronger, irreversible transatlantic partnership for the 21st century." Cf. <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/annalena-baerbock-wirbt-fuer-trans-atlantisches-verhaeltnis-auf-augenhoehe-a-2a208707-e456-4911-83ab-6c059e43430a> (assessed on 03.08.2022).

21 Cf. Pasolini Bachmann 2022, p. 350 ff.,

obviously lacked the maturity of the times. What appears today to be necessary in the first place is deceleration and retardation as central condition for being able to intervene at all in the process of decay that has long been set in motion. Nothing will come of what is today called the political space of action. These are lost positions. From there only the logic of the system will be executed. These positions will perish with the old conditions, in form and content. We must have no illusions that the new socialism, which we need, could emerge as a derivative of the old system. It must emerge as a rupture and therefore as radical negation of the conditions or it will in turn be eaten up. We must look for what can constitute this rupture. Our thinking and acting only makes sense today if it is so against the times that nothing of its method or content can be integrated the existing system.

The condition for this politics is the turning away from the conditions of our times. We will not succeed in running a repair shop for a self-destructive process. Thereby we would only perish included in its conceptlessness. This world is historically ordained to die. It destroys itself, but our task is to anticipate this destruction and to inscribe the existence and the necessity of an *outside* into social relations.

Of course we say NO to the war. We say NO to a belligerent Russia! NO to the NATO, NO to the attempt of the US-American elite to reassert the hegemony in the world, NO to the oligarchic elite in Ukraine! NO to capitalism as continual foundation of the life of mankind. We say NO to everything that is not determined by the rupture with the wrong world. This is a path to return to what one could call *politics*.

Freedom for Julian Assange!

Karl-Heinz Dellwo
(Oristano-Torregrande, Beginning of August 2022)

Translated by Frank Ruda and Heather H. Yeung.

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