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About subjects of transformation towards eco-socialism and revolutionary situations in times of dead-lines of climate change

Abstract:

It is trivial that in the days of Marx and Lenin the magnitude of the current global socio-ecological existential crisis was not known - although beginning with the works of Marx there has been always strands in integrating ecological issues into socialist theory. Since the 50s we have been living in the Anthropocene that can be interpreted also as "Capitalocene". And since more than forty years a global socio-ecological existential crisis is a new reality characterized by many different features from fading of biodiversity to water scarcity. And since about thirty years there can be no more doubts on irreversible climate change. Mankind now is offered the "window of opportunity" to limit these irreversible implications to scope that can be handled by the next generations, and not get out of hand irreversibly into completely uncertain spheres, which would be very inconvenient for our children's children.

So what is revolutionary policy in times of DEADlines for mankind? Firstly we have to analyse the driving forces of these processes carefully and to recognize the connection between many different economic, political and ecological crises. The core of ecosocialism is the intrinsic integration of distribution issues and environmental issues. Practically firstly we have to fight the hegemony of TINA (There Is No Alternative – to neoliberal policy) and replace it by (Russian) TAMARA (There are many and real alternatives). But theory and practice is important, concrete deeds towards development AND an equitable low carbon development are important. In this

historical period the concept of "Ecological Civilization" minted at the 17th party congress of CPC in 2007 anyway is a keystone achievement in socialist theory.

There are open questions or at least answered differently in socialist theory. One important is: Who are the (revolutionary) subjects of a fundamental socio-ecological transformation towards eco-socialism? Are modifications to traditional tenets necessary? One answer is: a new (global) "environmental proletariat" (John Bellamy Foster) is emerging. And are therefore adaptations to the structure of revolutionary organisations necessary?

In times of fundamental ecological crises and climate change people will be confronted more frequently with natural disasters which can result in social and political crises and classical revolutionary situations. For these expectable situation determinedly democratic mass-actions will be appropriate to realize concrete measures of a necessary socio-ecological transformation. In this sense Leninist thinking can have a new revival.

Paper Preliminary version

It is trivial that in the days of Marx and Lenin the magnitude of the current global socio-ecological existential crisis was not known - although beginning with the works of Marx there has been always strands in integrating ecological issues into socialist theory. There are a lot of publications identifying Marx generally as an ancestor of eco-socialism (see e. g. Paul Burkett, James O'Connor, John Bellamy Foster).¹

Since the 50s we have been living in the Anthropocene that can be interpreted also as "Capitalocene"². Since more than forty years a global multi-faceted socio-ecological existential crisis is a new reality characterized by many different features from fading of biodiversity to water scarcity. And since about thirty years there can be no more doubts on irreversible climate change. Mankind now is offered the "window of opportunity" within of at most twenty years and one generation to limit these irreversible implications to a scope that can be handled by all the next generations, and not get out of hand irreversibly into completely uncertain spheres, which would be very inconvenient for our children's children.

Anyway ecosocialist can be widely traced back: The harsh environmental conditions of concrete (work) life, and thus the questions of health and the environment had a significant role in the development of socialist movements in the 19th century although understandably there was no (or only a very limited) systemic view on these questions.

At the times of the October Revolution and in the following the status of environment as precondition of human existence not yet was a general topic in a narrow sense.

¹ O'Connor James (1988): *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism - A theoretical introduction*. Capitalism, Nature, Socialism No 1 (1988). Burkett Paul (1999): *Marx and Nature : a Red and Green Perspective*. New York. Foster John Bellamy (2000): *Marx's Ecology*, New York: Monthly Review Press

² Angus Ian (2016): *Facing the Anthropocene: Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System*. Monthly Review Press, 2016. Moore Jason W. (ed) (2016): *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism*.

In a broader sense the question of war and peace is comparable. And this was a decisive question because the war undermined the bare existence of millions of people (see below).

Later on in the **Soviet Union** there have been sections³ of thinking that in a present view can be labelled somehow “ecosocialist” but never have been mainstream or hegemonic. Yet even - similarly to capitalist countries - heavy ecological disasters happened like around the Aral Sea. The tragedy of the Chernobyl catastrophe and all its implications can be seen as significant event in the last years of the Soviet Union.

Soberly we have to state that the Soviet Union could not develop a concrete alternative model of sustainable development, also because the global context of confrontation in the cold war, arms race and containment policy was not beneficial. But this result has been based also in a too inflexible interpretation of Marxism.

Today especially some most populous countries are already experiencing devastating floods, storms, droughts and desertification, and they will face much higher risks if climate change threats are not mitigated immediately, because climate change is not reversible within very long periods, and triggered off will not stop soon.

The implications of climate change undermine livelihood currently substantially only in some parts of world, but in coming decades will threaten much more regions and much more intensively. The Human Development Report 2013 of UNDP⁴ says that without coordinated global action to avert environmental disasters, especially global warming, the number of people living in extreme poverty could increase by up to 3 billion by 2050⁵.

Capitalism could manage its survival by outsourcing conflicts to nature

Capitalism could manage its survival until now by some balancing the social contradictions in western countries: Evidently since the industrial revolution and the parallel emergence of capitalism with the shift to a fossil energetic basis had initiated the causation of global environmental problems of crises resulting in the “great acceleration” after World War II at least in the seventies the global environmental harm was undeniable.

Because the capitalist western countries could not realize a possible change to sustainability but on the contrary aggravated environmental problems by adhering on the unsustainable track with very high use of resources and very high volumes of emissions p. c. the enforced industrialization of emerging countries also followed on this unsustainable track. Currently all countries, industrialized, emerging and low industrialized countries altogether are challenged to leave the unsustainable paradigm. But emerging and low industrialized countries will industrialize under much more inconvenient circumstances. The industrialization of industrialized countries happened under – for them – favourable (neo)colonial terms of cheap resources and domination of the framework conditions.

³ Gare Arran (1996): Soviet Environmentalism: The Path Not Taken; in Benton, E. (ed.) (1996): The Greening of Marxism

⁴ UNDP (2013): Human Development Report 2013-The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/14/hdr2013_en_complete.pdf

⁵ Cited in: Angus Ian (2013): The Myth of ‘Environmental Catastrophism’. Monthly Review. Volume 65, Issue 04 (September) <https://monthlyreview.org/2013/09/01/myth-environmental-catastrophism/>

And in the 20th century after long fights of the working classes capitalism in the west could manage some social balancing. In many countries some welfare state has been established on the one side and on the other side the basic capitalist system could be saved und upgraded. Despite some Marxist prognosis of pauperization there have been at least three important preconditions for this renewal of capitalism in core countries of the West. 1. The mentioned favourable (neo)colonial terms of cheap resources and global domination 2. The capital could make concessions at the expense of the environment (externalization of costs) 3. The **Soviet Union and later other similar countries enabled easier victories of fights of the working classes** in other countries because – however imperfectly the Soviet Union was – it was a real example of a possible end of the capitalist class that eased concessions and compromises.

- One important – and often forgotten – factor of the triumph of neoliberalism exactly was the fall of the Soviet Union. Since this time capital has been more “free” and dismantled former forms of partial compliancy.

Cores of ecosocialism

The core of ecosocialism is the understanding that exploitation of labour and the degradation (and exploitation) of nature are not separate issues but have a common basis in the capitalist mode of production. And there is a positive relationship between distribution and the process of capitalist accumulation.⁶ This combined perception of ecology and economy is reflecting also a (historical) materialist view. The further logical conclusion is the intrinsic integration of distribution issues and environmental issues. More concretely there is a clear positive correlation between causation of environmental troubles and income along the class criteria. And there is a second positive correlation between the exposition of environmental harm and income resp. class. So literally poverty or richness make a difference in causation of ecological crisis and suffered environmental pressure.

- One important implication for example is that also the health conditions differ substantially along classes and strata: So e .g. in Germany the expectation of life in the upper quintile of income is 8,3 years longer for women and 10,8 years for men than in the lowest quintile, and the expectation of healthy years differs still more in this context: the gap is 13,3 years for women and 14,3years for men⁷. And also - what is even more striking - the overall level of health in a society is clearly correlated with the grade of equality⁸ probably because of less stress for both the “poor” and the “rich”, less tendency for consumerism and conspicuous consumption (Veblen), more solidarity and trust.
- And it is well-known that in most countries because of adoption of neoliberal policy inequality has been increasing since about thirty years. - And we should be aware that climate change will increase pressure on health for example by more heat periods, and that different strata will react or will be able to react differently so that this gap could be increased.

⁶ Piketty Thomas (2013): Capital in the Twenty-First Century

⁷ Robert-Koch-Institut (2015): Gesundheit in Deutschland (German) (Health in Germany) P. 24

⁸ Wilkinson Richard. G., Pickett Kate E.: The spirit level -Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better , 2009. Wilkinson Richard. G., Pickett Kate E. (2015): Income inequality and health: a causal review. Social Science & Medicine.2015 Mar;128:316-26

So the motivation for feasible solutions also for environmental challenges in this materialist view of class analysis **objectively** is entrenched more at working classes and lower strata of income. Although the “other side” can imagine to a certain degree special segregated solutions like “gated communities”, and they have much more resources to overcome environmental problems and havocs. But at the end of the day they cannot really evade climate change. So their interests to find comprehensive solutions are limited, and they will not really promote them; but at the end it is conceivable that they can consent to effective solutions and transformations in their own existential interest.

Ecosocialist Landmarks

There are some ecosocialist landmarks. E.g.:

- In this historical period the concept of "Ecological Civilization" minted at the 17th party congress of CPC in 2007 anyway is a keystone achievement in socialist theory
- Concrete ecosocialist concepts are met e. g. within the European Left including some relevant parties with an explicitly dedication to ecosocialism in Denmark (Red–Green Alliance) or France (Parti de Gauche with the presidential candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon)
- Within socio-ecological sciences “ecomarxism” is gaining ground⁹
- Eco-feminism has been proving as in integral part of Eco-feminism¹⁰

There are a lot of (new) important publications¹¹ on ecosocialist but there are still many contested issues, and we have still a “lack of coherence in ecosocialist theory”¹². And this would be a suitable basis for practice: There are strong explanations in Marxian tradition, but viable concepts for concrete ecosocialist transformations are not numerous.

Integration of segmented regional discourses has potential of synergies

In a worldwide view ecosocialist approaches can be identified in various regions although sometimes other notions or labels are used. E. g. in Latin America the concepts on “buen vivir”

⁹ Burkett Paul (2006): *Marxism and Ecological Economics- towards a Red and a Green Political Economy*. Brill. – See some shift to more weight in the presented papers at the ESEE-conference in Budapest 1917

¹⁰ E. g. Mellor Mary, *Breaking the Boundaries: Towards a Feminist, Green Socialism*, 1992. Salleh Ariel (ed) (2009): *Eco-Sufficiency and Global Justice: women write political ecology*. London & New York: Pluto Press

¹¹ E. g. Borgnas Kajsa et al (ed) (2015): *The Politics of Ecosocialism: Transforming Welfare*. Routledge. Malm Andreas (2016): *Fossil Capital: The Rise of Steam Power and the Roots of Global Warming*. London. Verso. 2016. Foster John Bellamy (2009): *The Ecological Revolution. Making Peace with the Planet*. Monthly Review Press. New York NY. Foster John Bellamy, Clark Brett , and York Richard (2010):*The Ecological Rift: Capitalism’s War on the Earth*. Benton, E. (ed.) (1996): *The Greening of Marxism*

¹² Panitch Leo, Leys Colin (eds) (2006): *Socialist Register 2007 - Coming to Terms With Nature*. P IX

can be seen similarly to ecosocialism albeit the origin and background is rooted in the history of indigenous people.

It is remarkable and not optimal that the the discourses often self-referentially are concentrated on the own cultural area, e. g. in the Anglo-Saxon or German area and almost ignore publications and discourses in other areas of the world.

- China has a long history of environmental degradation, especially deforestation¹³; but it is also worldwide quite unique that over thousands of years in a large region, both the cultural land and civilization nevertheless throughout could be preserved. Probably this is the biggest case of long-term sustainability in the history of mankind. On the other hand in modern history there has been harsh environmental occurrences also in China for example during the "big leap forward"¹⁴ and then especially on from the 90s. But in the West similar major environmental impacts had happened even earlier in the 19th century or in the "Great acceleration" after World War II. Currently because of the density of economic activities in a huge region of Eastern China and the high speed of development in China all socio-economic and socio-ecological processes are highly concentrated and compacted spatially and temporarily, so the current pressure from the socio-ecological area for concrete solutions in China seems to be much more higher than in Europe. – And it is hardly conceivable that meaningful global progress in environmental issues can be achieved without China.

Anyway western discourses could profit a lot from experiences in China. And last but not least in China there is also a own tradition of “Ecological Marxism”¹⁵, and ecosocialism¹⁶

There are lot of mainstream tenets, which diametrically contradict ecosocialist analysis, and which could be reviewed more critically. E. g. the “Environmental Kuznets Curve”¹⁷ maintaining that environmental pollution firstly grows with economic development but a certain point then will decrease. Or the claim that environmental protection is only a matter of “middle classes”.

To be influential politically an ecosocialist approach has to cover all fields of policy, and more concretely we have to analyse the driving forces of these processes carefully and to recognize the connections between many different economic, political and ecological crises; and also the worldwide connections of economy, ecology and policy, also on different levels.

¹³ Elvin, Mark (2006): *The Retreat of the Elephants. An Environmental History of China.* Yale University Press. Elvin, Mark and Liu Ts’ui-jung (eds) (1998): *The Sediments of Time. Environment and Society in China. The Chinese History.* Two parts. Cambridge University Press

¹⁴ Shapiro Judith (2012): *China’s Environmental Challenges*

¹⁵ Liu Sihua (2006) *The Outline on Ecological Marxism Economics.* *Ecological Economy* 2.1 (2006): 11–15.

Liu Sihua (2006) “The Core Ideology of Ecological Marxism: Marx is the Pioneer of the Internal Factors’ Theory of Ecological Environment.” *Ecological Economy* 3.4 (2006): 346–354. Shi Tian (2002): “Ecological Economics in China: Origins, Dilemmas and Prospects.” *Ecological Economics* 41.1: 5–20

¹⁶ Huan Qingzhi (ed) (2010): *Eco-socialism as politics – rebuilding the basis of our modern civilization*

¹⁷ David Stern: *The Rise and Fall of the Environmental Kuznets Curve.* *World Development.* Volume 32, Issue 8, August 200

Open Questions and Challenges in times of DEADlines for mankind

Soberly we have to state that we hardly can offer real and proved alternatives. Anyway we do not have apodictic certainty about the future and we will enter new territory - especially because of well-known DEADlines of climate change.

So what is revolutionary policy in times of DEADlines¹⁸ for mankind? - DEADlines especially since irreversible processes because of the fact that there is something today called "strong sustainability", namely that destruction (e. g. loss of species) or the self-reinforcing warming process of climate change (+ all disastrous implications) cannot be reversed - not even by huge efforts.

Anyway the mechanism of climate change with all the implications cannot be stopped anymore, but the speed can be influenced to some degree; and **speed matters!** The negative effects of soaring temperatures increase - **irreversibly** - in an exponential mode, and at some tipping point cannot be ruled anymore.

Are modifications to traditional tenets necessary? Anyway there are profound theoretical and practical challenges.

Capitalism and sustainability – a contradiction?

Many left analysts contend that capitalism cannot tackle environmental problems definitely. – The central capitalist logic of profit making and accumulation of capital suggest this conclusion. Of course there have been environmental harms before capitalism - resulting even in the end of civilizations, but these harms were limited to regions.

So the concluding argument of this reasoning on the survival of capitalism up to now is that the survival of capitalism by some balancing was owed to special factors, and one the outsourcing to the environment in perspective of climate change is only possible in a limited degree.

Two of the strongest arguments - from a lot - why capitalism is unsustainable are the well-known rebound effect (Jevons Paradox) and the issue of discount rates:

The **rebound effect** indicates that more eco-efficiency will provoke saving resources only at first glance but effect further capital accumulation and so mobilizing additional resources and emissions; so at the end altogether the effect of saving is less than the expansion effect.

Similarly to interest rates but more generally **discount rates** facilitate the comparison, aggregation and evaluation of capital and wealth at different times. The logic of capitalism is to have high profit rates, and to have discount rates like average profit rates. But when we use high discount rates e. g. for calculation of investment and future values we devalue the future massively. With the result that the value of a thing in some future decades is evaluated by a small fraction of the value of the same thing at present. At high discount rates or profit rates future

¹⁸ Klein Naomi (2014): This Changes Everything. Capitalism vs. the Climate

values converge to zero with the implication that in capitalism current or short-term profit weigh very high and the future weighs low or almost nothing.

But nevertheless **we should not underestimate the still existing flexibility of capitalist structures**. Capitalist societies could have adapted to many different conditions and we can look on a broad set of “varieties of capitalism”.

Therefore, although there is a high basic probability of a basic logic of inconsistency of capitalism and sustainable development, from an empirical point of view we should not completely rule out some consistency.

Regulation and planning as central issue of transformation

Directly connected with the question of the possibility of sustainability within capitalism is the issue of transformation towards a non-capitalist society.

If we are aware of the necessary high speed of global mitigation of climate change the fight for saving the foundations of mankind has to start asap also within the modes of capitalism. These beginning measures will also promote the transformation of the now capitalist system. We can promote collective solutions from within the system, which, going against its logic, will play a part in the transition to an other people-controlled system.

Staying within the system the quantity and quality of regulation will be ascertained by the pressure of movements and the overall parallelogram of political and economic forces. So by (re)regulations former deregulations of the neoliberal times can be reversed and the the inherent valorization of capital can be limited. Procedures of planning will safeguard the (socio-ecological) perspective. Concretely increasing spheres can be de-commodified and developed by alternative organisations like cooperatives.

This paradigm somehow took place in Western countries after World War I and also after World War II when the forces of capital were weakened and ready for compromise but later on they could revoke a lot because the progressive forces could not hold the momentum.

Often visions there are of vast localism in an ecosocialist society. But the then arising problem is that of coordination especially in the phases of transformation¹⁹. In a highly socialized world – where the grade of systemic socialization is still increasing - this dichotomy probably can only be solved by some planning. The big question is: which form und which degree of planning. Usually leftist use the phrase “democratic planning”, but also this notion should be qualified in detail. Anyway by the revolution of information technology the current and future possibilities for planning and adherent processes of information compilation, monitoring, adaptation, participation and democratic coordination have created important new realities.

As already indicated the specific use of discount rates is crucial in evaluation of projects. To ensure sustainability and future values it is important to enforce low discount rates near zero, and so be able to hedge high profit rates indirectly and avoid high inequality.

¹⁹ Albo Gregory (2006): The Limits of Eco-localism: Scale, Strategy, Socialism. In: Leo Panitch and Colin Leys, Socialist Register 2007: Coming to Terms With Nature (London: Merlin Press/Monthly Review Press, 2006), P. 337-363

What about revolutionary situations in socio-ecological view?

The new society will emerge from the womb of the old, but because of the huge numbers of determinants, feedbacks and the complexity and it is hard to conceive precise sequences. Probably there will be some disruptions or maybe one big break, in which power shifts away from asymmetries towards some dual sovereignty and then to democratic decision making will come about in some Gramscian thinking albeit this has not to be linear, it can be forward and backward.

Essential in a socio-ecological view is the question if there exists specific extension of factors with the potential of the breaking of a (capitalist) system. Especially: Can more frequent natural disasters result in social and political crises and classical revolutionary situations? Which kind of democratic mass-actions will be appropriate to realize concrete measures of a necessary socio-ecological transformation?

Two conditions for a revolutionary situation were described by Lenin, which were later succinctly phrased as "the bottoms don't want, and the tops cannot live in the old way". In later works Lenin postulated a third condition: high political activity of the working masses, their readiness to revolutionary actions.

In times of fundamental general ecological crises and climate change people will be confronted more frequently with natural disasters which can result in specific social and political crises and classical revolutionary situations. For these expectable situations determinedly democratic mass-actions will be appropriate to realize concrete measures of a necessary socio-ecological transformation. In this sense Leninist thinking can have a new revival.

Because as mentioned (future) hurricanes, droughts, floods are threatening livelihood similar somehow to wars, and it should be stated - if we like it or not – all (potentially) socialist revolutions until now happened in some connection with (national) wars, beginning with the Commune in Paris 1871 until the Vietnamese Revolution. The parallel with the socio-ecological harassment probably is the deep shock of society and the existential threatening. And maybe there is a second parallel in coping with both: in some “state of emergency” combined forces can be mobilized.

“Environmental Catastrophism”?

“Shocks” - usually shocks of economic crisis like inflation und high unemployment – were used systematically by neoliberal forces to create fear and so accomplish measures against workers (and environment) and the reconstruction of the system in the sense of deregulation, flexibilisation and privatisation resulting in higher profits and more inequality.²⁰

But envisaging increasing concrete foreseeable disasters and giving the people a reality check, and change the system to dampen the repercussions of ecological crises is quite another thing.

²⁰ Klein Naomi (2007): The Shock Doctrine – The Rise of Disaster Capitalism

The notion of “Environmental Catastrophism” has been used for long by right-wing climate change deniers for whom it is a synonym for “alarmism,”²¹ but now also some leftist²² use this term and intend to mark apocalyptic claims and catastrophic warnings which could produce apathy and not action, and would support reactionary policies²³ - Of course exaggerations are not useful, but on the other side the real possibility of a collapse of ecological systems in human and planetary history is not disputable any more and backed by a consensus within the scientific community: Will the truth help the right? Angus states rightly that until now no significant section of the ruling class is using “environmental catastrophism” to promote reactionary policies.²⁴

- Let us remember the **Fukushima** Daiichi nuclear disaster 2011, but not the immediate effects in changing attitudes to nuclear energy in Japan in the minds of the majority of Japanese people (but not at the government level), but its implications to Germany: In Germany by this accident in Japan, an industrialized country well-known for high-tech, the short-term reaction of chancellor Merkel was the (surprising) announcement for complete change of the nuclear energy policy, the definite mid-term exit from nuclear energy and the deepening auf the German “energy transition” - defined also by an exit fossil energy. About three months after the Fukushima nuclear accident all German parties approved a law in this sense. But there was a background for this turn, and this was the attitude of a big majority of people to the risks of nuclear energy and the unsolved question of storage of nuclear waste. And what was the background for this development of attitude in an industrialized country: in the background there have been mass actions and grass-roots activities against these risks of nuclear energy in densely populated areas since the end of the 70s, which changed gradually the stance of the majority of the people towards nuclear energy. So: When the German government would not have changed the nuclear energy policy this government probably would have lost imminent elections. Anyway this was concrete progress in a socio-ecological view, but the progress has not been terminated and will require further efforts – So this reflects some specific political dialectics.

Agents of socio-ecological transformation as contested issue

From all the open questions (or at least answered differently in eco-socialist theory) one most important is: Who are the (revolutionary) **subjects** of a fundamental socio-ecological transformation towards eco-socialism? In classical Marxism, and also in the labour movement, the wage-dependent, and, in essence, the industrial workers as most conscious subjects- largely plausibly - are the political mainstay of a transformation. In a fundamental socio-ecological

²¹ Angus Ian (2013): The Myth of ‘Environmental Catastrophism’. Monthly Review. Volume 65, Issue 04 (September) <https://monthlyreview.org/2013/09/01/myth-environmental-catastrophism/>. Angus Ian (2017): A Redder Shade of Green – Intersections of Science and Socialism

²² E. g. Lilley Sasha, McNally David, Yuen Eddie, Davis James (2012): Catastrophism: The Apocalyptic Politics of Collapse and Rebirth. Oakland: PM Press.

²³ Yuen Eddie and Angus Ian (2013): Reply to The Myth of ‘Environmental Catastrophism’ Monthly Review. Volume 65, Issue 07 (December) <https://monthlyreview.org/2013/12/01/reply-myth-environmental-catastrophism/>

²⁴ Angus Ian (2013): The Myth of ‘Environmental Catastrophism’. Monthly Review. Volume 65, Issue 04 (September) <https://monthlyreview.org/2013/09/01/myth-environmental-catastrophism/>

transformation the actors are far less clearly defined. Apart from the strongly altered structure of the working class in times of automatization, and apart from the question of the current global specification of the working class, what makes the difference to the classical situation? If at all, or the other extreme, are all affected and/or activated by negative environmental impacts these subjects? That would be almost all (of course, in graded concern). - And who are then the opponents?

Basically this question would go back to the central issues of capitalism. James O'Connor²⁵ argues for complementing Marx's "first" contradiction between the forces of production on the one hand, and the relations of production on the other: by an a "second contradiction", between the combined forces and relations of production on the one side and the conditions of production (= more general the environment) on the other side. The "first" contradiction politically transforms into capital-labour relation, but at the "second" contradiction this is not as clear. When we take the relation between capital and environment, how about the representation or who is the agent of the environment?

One answer is: the proletariat has always been environmental and so the revolutionary subject in an eco-socialist transformation has not changed basically, and so "only" the policy of alliances has to be adapted.

On other pole of answer is: a new (global) "environmental proletariat" (Foster, Burkett) has been emerging primarily "at the periphery of the capitalist world", "for whom resistance to environmental conditions broadly, and not simply industrial conditions, is the defining struggle"(Foster)²⁶, especially e. g. (future) climate change refugees at low lying coastal areas are referred.

Like James O'Connor also Joel Kovel²⁷ basically focuses on working-class involvement in the eco-socialist struggles but he literally states that "there is no privileged agent" or revolutionary class, numerous autonomous movements can represent potential for agency in eco-socialist transformation. But irrespective of the validity of this contention it is a rather fuzzy term and lacks the traditional class definition.

Anyway environmental and class struggle may overlap, and there are strong arguments that at least on a global level not the "middle classes" are the main driving actors in environmental battles but workings classes, see the "Environmentalism of the Poor"²⁸.

So it stays as contested question what is the objective revolutionary subject in an eco-socialist transformation, some objective "class IN itself" – or agent in itself; and what's about the process to a conscious "class FOR itself" or or agent for itself

²⁵ O'Connor James (1988): Capitalism, Nature, Socialism - A theoretical introduction. Capitalism, Nature, Socialism No 1 (1988)

²⁶ Foster John Bellamy (Feb 24, 2010): Marx's Ecology and The Ecological Revolution. Interview <https://mronline.org/2010/02/24/marxs-ecology-and-the-ecological-revolution/> . Burkett Paul (2017): An Eco-Revolutionary Tipping Point? Global Warming, the Two Climate Denials, and the Environmental Proletariat. Monthly Review Volume 69, Issue 01 (May 2017)

²⁷ Kovel Noel (2007): The Enemy of Nature - The End of Capitalism or the End of the World? 2nd edition. London. Zed Books.

²⁸ Martinez-Alier, Juan (2004): Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation. Indian Edition. New Delhi: Oxford University Press,

- Even more difficult is the interrelated question whether modifications for the (labour) theory of value are advantageous. Especially there are proposals to enlarge the theory of value with some sophisticated ground rent concept. Anyway the conception of value is not only constitutive for the analysis of classes but also has very practical importance for economic regulation and planning.

Perspectives: TAMARA to replace TINA

Productive forces and socialisation of productive relations are pushing for new solutions. Irreversibly local, regional and global ecosystems and social systems are melting together.

The right turn in Europe and the US also puts the question for foundations for global solidarity drastically. In many industrialized countries (far) right demagogues currently have achieved some setback or stagnation in global environmental and solidarity issues in a very special stage of "post-colonial" development when the interrelation between the refugee question, environmental damage and global development and solidarity under the context of globalisation has become very tight and requires integrated solutions.²⁹

But a decisive and most relevant question will be further also in the long run: which political force can secure the livelihood of broad masses at a worsening status of the environment? Only practical global solutions based on equity and solidarity seems to have enduring success.

Anyway expectations that the worse ecological or economic things become, the better they will be for left fortunes are mechanistic, not dialectic, and hardly practical. Positive messages and efforts for positive change are essential to give hope against all forecast for business as usual.

Theory and practice are important together: triggering real deeds towards development AND equitable low carbon development will be important on the way to an alternative hegemonic project on different levels. Moreover migration and refugees issues in Europe cannot be analysed and tackled without the connection to climate change.

So a positive **coefficient of hope** for change to sustain livelihood **in relation to** paralyzing **fear** can reflect the dynamics of development.

Practically firstly we have to fight the hegemony of TINA (There Is No Alternative – to neoliberal policy) and replace it by (Russian) TAMARA (There are many and real alternatives).

Finally we cannot be blindly optimistic in a world of complexity and uncertainty; sudden surprising developments like Fukushima cannot be ruled out with far-reaching consequences and a massive need for action. In order to prevent regressions in this case, effective (revolutionary) organizations and concrete concepts are helpful. The **question of organization** has become **still**

²⁹ Baum Josef (2017): Current multiple challenges in Europe - Refugee question, the rise of the far right, globalisation and the socio-ecological transformation

more important³⁰. And it is still to dispute which adaptations to the structure of revolutionary organisations in times of climate change and digitalisation are necessary.

Lenin mentioned that the development of labour productivity will rule the superiority between capitalism and socialism. Unfortunately he was right for the fate of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union – beyond several problems - stuck in some “middle-income trap”. Maybe the most important issues in this view were failures in achieving more innovation (more substantial innovation because not any innovation is a progress for wealth of the majority).

A prognosis should be dared: eco-socialism will prevail superiority when another type of eco-efficiency in the sense of a comprehensive socio-ecological development can be enforced.

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