13. The Third Stage

The third stage of the chronology we have proposed above goes from 1926 to 1929; it follows the first, that of civil war and war communism (from 1917 to 1920), and the second, that of economic restoration and the N.E.P. (from 1921 to 1925). This third stage is referred to as "industrialization" and precedes the fourth, the so-called "collectivization of agriculture". It is during the third stage that the fight against the kulaks, called "liquidation of the kulaks as a class", is carried out in the campaigns and the economic policy of the five-year plans is prepared. All this will be given the official name of "building socialist society".

We have already explained that we admit these denominations for their chronological content and to fix the ideas about the succession of events, but at the same time we must give radical criticism, as of all, of their serious inaccuracies, even of their theoretical misinterpretation.

In the period which ends with Lenin's death (this is also a historical fact and not yet an explanation) the social processes are given their rigorous Marxist name. In this period, however, as we have amply explained, there are many differences of interpretation within the Communist Party. But, during the third stage, they become so deep that a careful examination shows a revolutionary Marxist position clearly dissociating itself from an anti-Marxist position that is moving ever more dangerously towards the denial of communism. Until then, Trotsky is right when he says that the struggle of the tendencies expressed a class antagonism plunging its roots in the social subsoil and when he explains for his part why there was no armed struggle for political power: The political significance of the ongoing struggle was largely obscured by the fact that the leaders of the three tendencies - the right, the centre and the left - belonged to one staff, that of the Kremlin, the Political Bureau: the shallow minds believed in personal rivalries, in the struggle for Lenin's "succession".1

Elsewhere, Trotsky even speaks of a "honeymoon" phase within the first "troika" that formed with Lenin's death. Stalin, Trotsky and Zinoviev worked in a spirit of friendship and cordiality. And in memorable pages, he pulverises the stupid explanation of the inextinguishable hatred reigning between him and Stalin and elevated to the rank of historical cause, or that of the anti-Semitic motive of the persecution undergone by him, Zinoviev and Kamenev. In the marsh of world politics, this doctrine still reigns, replacing the role of Marxist determinism with the ferments of the unchangeable Hate from the depths of generations and millennia.

We, the Italian left, recall, as on many occasions, the significant episode of the incredulous smile of old experienced Bolshevik comrades when, in March 1926, under the still vivid impression of the heartbreaking struggle that Zinoviev and Kamenev, more than Stalin himself, led against Trotsky from 1924, we told them that the "frauds" Trotsky and Zinoviev were one and the same thing, which was historically realized from the following enlarged Executive, in December 1926. The acuity of our historical vision was less in question here than the simple fact that, in an atmosphere already stung by police harassment, the Italian Marxists of the left, strangled in all the world congresses, were the only ones to whom dangerous secrets could be entrusted without danger. This opinion was even expressed by citizen Stalin to the extended Executive of February-March in the form of a comparison between representatives of the international opposition.

Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and we, less illustrious, were firmly entrenched on the Marxist side of the barricade, the positions of Stalin and his retinue being on the other side. We wanted to push Marxist social

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analysis to the point that Bukharin himself, Rykov, Tomsky, whatever the stupid round of names, were potentially on the same ground. The names do not explain anything and it becomes a headache when Bukharin, in the third stage, that of the "destruction of the kulak", is thrown overboard as an economist, that one adopts against the "right" the proposals of the "left" and that despite everything, after Zinoviev was dismissed from the presidency of the International, the same Bukharin accedes to it and occupies it until 1929! Then, under Bukharin's pontificate, Trotsky was expelled from the International and the Party. Death and history will bring them all together as well as us, the unknown and the living.

From the quarrel of the "tendencies", then, to the production reports, which tells something to us Marxists, covering the din of the most illustrious names.

14. Industry and Agriculture

Lenin had well established that being obliged to accept the predominance in the countryside of small commercial production and after the NEP measures had given free rein to the private trade in commodities, an accumulation of capital was inevitably allowed to develop there; this was inherent in the formula of accession to the next stage: private capitalism.

The whole problem was based on the historical "phase shift" between industry and agriculture. Modern industry is characterized by the combination of huge masses of production instruments (capital) in one hand. It is secondary - it is the ABC - whether the hand is that of a physical person or whether it is passed on to collective firms, trusts and the State. But this is a form of ownership that results from a change in the nature of productive forces. The new productive forces that have emerged in the manufactured goods sector (they are still dormant, and for a long time, in the foodstuffs and assimilated sector) are the following: (a) the simultaneous and associated work of many masses of manufacturing workers; (b) the technical division of labour, namely the training and experience acquired by workers in mastering the new organization and in their technical culture; (c) the use, which by its nature is social, universal and not private or national, of scientific discoveries and their technical applications. The accumulation of capital, on the basis of the monetary mechanism, is the effect and manifestation of this revolution, not its social cause.

In Russian agriculture (and, to a different and lesser extent in all countries with advanced industrial development), capital has hardly appeared in the countryside for the following reasons: (a) the worker acts within the family and apart from his fellow workers socially; (b) all peasants know how to do the same things and have the same limited experience and culture; (c) human society has not systematically created a new agricultural technology that would replace the old, multi-millennial one, on the basis of scientific conquests.

However, where capital has never manifested itself, the perspective of socialism, a superior mode of production, based on original, non-market and non-wage relationships, is distant.

However, the existence in the countryside of large land holdings is not and in no way replaces the penetration of capital in the countryside. The revolutionary break-up of these property units did not, and could not, create any conditions comparable to the three prevailing in manufacturing industry: associated work, the ability of men to lead it, technological revolution.

15. The Russian Duplication

Before the revolution, there already existed in Russia the three conditions of industry and an important capitalist accumulation (we have sufficiently shown that at the beginning, it had presented state forms). The objective was to return to the quantitative level of 1917 and then to exceed it. Kerensky, as we always say, would have done the same and would have also opted for emulation between capitalisms.

Some Marxists (including Bukharin) wondered, while the new accumulation of industrial capital in the hands of the workers state was taking place, and Lenin himself had pointed to the need for industrial capital to penetrate Russia by means of concessions (which the Stalinists, "sworn Leninists", evoked in the following years with such blatant contempt; and was not participation in the 1939-45 war not a colossal "concession"
of human force to world capital? if we were not witnessing the entry of capital into the countryside (with the three physical conditions mentioned above) at "a snail’s pace". And they asked if it was faster to inject state capital (first necessary, in Bukharin’s vision, for the anti-capitalist war) into the countryside or to let private capital sprout spontaneously.

It is logical that such a process should favour - as in any initial phase of the capitalist economy - the rise of agricultural commodity prices, although this was in contradiction with the demand for over-industrialisation supported by Trotsky-Zinoviev’s left against the Centre, before being embraced by the latter, following the typical "versatility of instructions", characteristic of the most infamous opportunism.

Did Bukharin want the private bourgeoisie to invade the city from the countryside, as affect to believe, to read some passages, representatives of the left and the ultra-left? Certainly not, he was only seeking, in the absence of world revolution, the least long way; and his error was not there, in economy, but precisely, alas, in his appreciation of international politics.

For a description of the 1927 trend table, we refer the reader to Comrade Vercesi’s study and the document quoted therein, in which the Stalinist Central Committee characterized its opponents group by group. The rest of the manoeuvre is known: complete block with the right against the left, then break with the right and apparent adherence to the proposals of the left: industrialization, crushing of the kulak as representative of private capitalism in agriculture. Theft of ideas, with assault.

The next phase will show that the solution of the centre - the kolkhoz - represents the most retrograde way in relation to the socialist goal of the struggle: to overcome the peasant narrowness whose Marxist equation can be written: the welding of the family institution and the unit of production, infra-bourgeois formula.

16. The Conflict with the Kulaks

The inevitable substitution of trade for the requisition of foodstuffs, in particular wheat, is manifested by the first phenomenon of accumulation: that of wheat itself, inevitably once again becoming an article of trade. The nepmen accumulate cash on the one hand, wheat on the other hand, buying wheat from poor peasants to whom the revolution gave a little land but who cannot cultivate it for their own account because they have no money to buy a minimum of tools and stocks (tragedy of all the agrarian reforms that distribute lots of land). The workers state had to witness, helplessly, the formation, in the countryside, of forms of leasing and wage labour. Of course, "in law" land ownership is not reconstituted, but the smoker "equal enjoyment" of populists becomes unequal enjoyment: small peasants abandon their lands to the management of the rural capitalist for a handful of pennies or wheat to eat and then become his daily labourers.

All accuse Bukharin: you want to tolerate the kulak, peacefully integrate him into socialism, you want to stifle the class struggle between the kulak and the peasants without capital. This is false, even if the accusation came from the left and admitting that Stalin (still the names, excuse us!) took a path that Bukharin had first indicated when he maintained that the class struggle between peasants, workers state and urban proletarian class had ended.

Bukharin’s Marxist thesis was quite different: in 1918, a first form of class struggle, indicated by Lenin, took place in the countryside, the plundering of feudal and large bourgeois landlords with the overthrow of peripheral powers before October. The new class struggle must not imitate the old one, i.e. pit peasants against kulaks in order to share also, like the land before, agrarian capital, or even wheat and money (this is what happened with Stalin and the kolkhoz despite the very firm condemnation of Trotsky and the whole left), but must give way to the authentic, broad and modern rural class struggle of wage labour against the capitalist agricultural entrepreneur, for the socialization of agricultural capital, which is only accessible in a later stage (today, in 1956, we are far from even the nationalization of it!). This was the objective of the

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2 Cf. Vercesi (Ottorino Perrone), La tactica del Comintern dal 1926 al 1940, in Prometeo, série I, n°2, p. 91 et sq.
representatives of the left and the ultra-left (Sopranov, Smirnov) who wanted to reach directly the collective agricultural exploitation, the industrial agriculture managed by the workers state, which in theory joined Lenin’s directives but fished in the analysis of the real evolution of the Russian countryside.

On the contrary, Stalin's famous left turn, with his instruction to annihilate the kulak, led precisely to the exasperation of rural individualism, in a direction opposite to that of a leap towards socialism in the countryside.

The 15th party congress (December 1927), which condemned the left opposition by expelling Trotsky and Zinoviev, but not Bukharin, decided, following the new Stalinist course, "to develop the offensive against the kulaks and to take a series of measures aimed at limiting capitalism in the countryside and directing peasant farms towards socialism". At the same time, it was decided to develop the first five-year plan. However, still according to this ignoble text, "the kulaks knew that they had, in the person of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov and others, defenders and intercessors...".

The kulaks therefore "refused to sell to the Soviet state the large surpluses of wheat they had accumulated; they resorted to terror (...), set fire to the kolkhozes[?] and public wheat depots".

"The party and the government took a series of exceptional measures, confiscating wheat hidden or refused to the authorities. On the other hand, the poor peasants were granted some advantages by virtue of which they could have 25% of the wheat confiscated from the kulaks (...). The middle and poor peasants joined in the decisive struggle against the kulaks...".

Stalin discovers then that the Bukharin group incites the kulaks to resistance and that it denounces "the degradation of agriculture". In 1928, Stalin accused the right of representing a danger as deadly as the left; in April 1929, at the XVIth conference which approved the first five-year plan and "rejected the minimal version of the right-wing capitulators", he denounced it as "anti-Marxist". In this monstrous counterfeiting, dictated to "historians" by Stalinism, the real agents of the ruin of the Bolshevik revolution fabricate from scratch a construction, which no one would have believed so friable, by which they accuse the opponents of treason and present themselves, despite the incredible series of their contortions, as the saviors of socialism!

17. Trotsky's Presentation

The phase of the struggle against the kulaks could not be better presented than in Trotsky's own terms, not so much because of his indisputable personal qualities, including that of a rigorous historian, but because he was one of those who, against Bukharin and Stalin (at the initial stage of the polemic), proposed a policy of anti-kulak struggle.

"The population was astonished to learn on February 15, 1928, by an editorial in 'Pravda', that the campaigns had by no means the appearance under which the authorities had portrayed them up to that time, but looked very much like the picture drawn by the[left-wing] opposition excluded by Congress. The press, which, the day before, literally denied the existence of the kulak, discovered it today, on a signal from above, not only in the villages, but also in the party".

"To feed the cities, it was urgent to take the daily bread from the kulak. We could only do it by force. The expropriation of grain reserves, not only among the kulak but also among the average peasant, was called an 'extraordinary measure in the official language'. But the campaigns did not believe the good words and they were right. The forced requisition of wheat removed any desire on the part of wealthy farmers to extend seeding. The farm labourer and the poor farmer were without work. Agriculture was, once again, at an impasse...".

"Stalin and Molotov, still giving individual farming the chief place [as they had done in polemic with the left], began to emphasize the necessity of a swifter development of the soviet and collective farms. But since the
bitter need of food did not permit a cessation of military expenditures into the country, the program of promoting individual farms was left hanging in the air (...). The temporary “extraordinary measures” for the collection of grain developed unexpectedly into a program of “liquidation of the kulaks as a class.” From the shower of contradictory commands, more copious than food rations, it became evident that on the peasant question the government had not only no five-year plan, but not even a five months’ program.”

Trotcky’s argument on the agrarian question brings us here to the threshold of the fourth stage, that of “collectivization”. It should be noted that Trotsky is not in favour of the policy of tolerance towards rural capitalism, of which he accuses Bukharin, any more than he is in favour of the policy of protecting the exploitation of plots of land, of which he accuses Stalin and Molotov.

Nevertheless, he criticized without appeal the cooperative solution that the government adopted and supported in the countryside: the kolkhoz formula. We must therefore return to these institutions which we have dealt with many times with a critical aim and which we dealt with at the meetings in Naples and Genoa.

A summary of the paper, the most extensive to date, was published after the Genoa meeting in issues 15 and 16 of 1955. The second (point 23) concerns the status of the kolkhoz and the characteristics of this new type of agricultural lease in relation to the 1936 Constitution.

18. The “collectivisation” stage

Trotsky refutes the bourgeois thesis that this turning point was "the fruit of violence alone" while describing the disasters caused by the "direction" exercised by the Stalinist administration. He recognized that the appearance of this new form, which we will call collective-plot, was determined by the productive structure and conditions independent of the will and capacity of the authorities: the resumption of production, he said, was a matter of life or death for peasants, agriculture, urban industry and for society as a whole.

Trotsky gives the history of the serious errors of the central administration at the very moment when it was making, in a monstrous way, the history of the betrayals of its critics. At years of distance, it is important to make the history of the productive forms which succeeded one another effectively. The so-called collectivization was a turning point imposed by necessity, but its initial course first caused ruin, as described by Trotsky, before a systematization which, it is known, has not, even today, brought the production of the countryside to a satisfactory level or even decidedly higher than that of the departure, before the revolution.

In fact, during the years of "collectivization" there was a frightening fall in cereal production and a real slaughter of livestock, which gave rise, in 1932-33, to the famous "Stalin famine" whose Trotskyist polemic estimated the number of human victims at four to ten million deaths, without taking into account the spread of epidemics and chronic diseases among the Russian population.

Here are the data that official statistics could not hide: we have already said that, in the period of the revolution and the civil war, the harvest fell to 503 million quintals of cereals only, against the 800 of the pre-war period (1913). During the NEP it was possible to increase it again as well as during the third stage (industrialization) which prepared, with the thread of the internal struggles of the party, the war with the kulaks launched at full speed in 1929. In 1930, it was 835 million quintals; the following two years (the kolkhozes having replaced the smallest private farms and those of the kulaks) it fell to only 700 million! Less than under the tsar with a larger population. In the first two years of collectivization (Trotsky still speaks), sugar production (which was already monopolized before the revolution) fell to less than half. Livestock were ravaged between 1929 and 1934. The number of horses fell to 45%, cattle to 60, sheep to 34 and pigs to 45.

We will see that even today this appalling crisis has not been overcome at all.

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3 Ibid. at 467-468. Bordiga highlights.
4 Naples (24-25 April 1955), Genoa (6-7 August 1955): The great historical questions of the revolution in Russia.
5 The Soviet civil law of today.
According to Trotsky, this waste of productive forces is due to the gross errors of the central direction, but the superiority of the kolkhozian form over the free fragmented form as well as over that defended by Bukharin of the free private agricultural industry, remains whole. It cannot be otherwise explained, he thinks, that the only invasive power of an administrative body made up of incompetent people (with the famous bureaucracy, it is served) is at the origin of this progression: in the first ten years after 1918, only 1% of peasant families had integrated cooperatives. In 1929, it went from 1.7 to 3.9%, in 1930 to 23.6, in 1931 to 52.7 and in 1932 to 61.5. Today, we know that free farms are declared non-existent or near non-existent.

But if everything was played out between the smallest traditional free farms and the "kolkhozian" groups, which families and peasants constituted the mass reduced to dependence on kulaks and that collectivization would have liberated?

It must undoubtedly be thought that the movement of the very small peasantry towards the cooperative form (defined as collectivization) took place to a certain extent (which was considerable after the NEP, if the fraction of wheat fallen into the hands of the kulaks was so large that a kind of social war had to be waged to wrest it away) under the effect of Lenin's type 3 expansion: private agricultural capitalism.

From then on, Bukharin wanted us to rise to state capitalism. Where have we come with the kolkhoz form that Stalin found advantageous (he absurdly places it at level 5, that of socialism) and that Trotsky too, considered in principle superior both to the very small culture and to the private agricultural enterprise? Before answering, let us recall on what, according to Trotsky, the disastrous initial balance of the new form depends.

The peasants, exasperated by the rumours of cattle being confiscated by the state, worked hard to slaughter them for meat and leather. "On the eve of entering the kolkhoz, they were getting rid" - according to a report to the Central Committee of the Stalinist Andreyev - "in a crude spirit of profit, their tools, livestock and even seeds". Twenty-five million isolated peasant egoisms, which yesterday had been the sole motive force of agriculture – weak like an old farmer’s nag, but nevertheless forces – the bureaucracy tried to replace at one gesture by the commands of 2,000 collective farm administrative offices, lacking technical equipment, agronomic knowledge and the support of the peasants themselves."

Trotsky's quotation is vigorous, but could the bureaucracy, in these social circumstances, not exist or behave in a diametrically different way?

19. Irresistible influx towards the kolkhozes

As far as we are concerned, we do not see that the force that pushed the peasant towards the kolkhoz consists in overcoming his egocentrism (absurd thing to demand state decrees as well as a general sense of peril - or only for a part, of highlighting national perils - and that one could expect, on the contrary, the "Boukharine process" of transforming the peasant into a pure agricultural worker) but rather a dialectical relationship that is established between the peasantry or any other petty-bourgeois layer and the powerful central state. The peasant plot has the State in horror as long as the latter makes him pay taxes, but he is strongly seduced when the offer of administrative subsidies or the opportunity to rake in "government money", with concrete examples in support, appear.

The peasant already robbed by the kulak and reduced to almost total poverty was seduced by the certainty that within the kolkhoz - besides being paid for his work on the collective lands at a rate at least as high as that of the kulak - he would be given a small plot of land, animals, tools and seeds. He hastened to sell everything before joining (according to Stalin and as mentioned in the Précis7 and Trotsky) not by isolated groups but by villages, groups of villages and sometimes by districts.

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6 Ibid., p.469-470.
7 It is presumably some kind of Stalinist textbook.
Determinism generates in the fragmented producer an imitative psychology, logical consequence of the instinct of conservation. The rural people, crushed for centuries by their feudal masters and, for years, by the kulaks, rushed into the kolkhozes like a herd after their chiefs. Since they were men and not sheep, and since the revolution had expanded, through a logical sequence of events, the field of mercantile exchange and monetary circulation, they sold (or ate) before returning a few four-legged animals that remained.

With the money, they could perhaps hope to be given a better plot by a kolkhoz administrator. The petty-bourgeois layers have no other ideal and Trotsky will allow us to say that these nasty things were not invented by the sinister Joseph Stalin; himself, among so many other materials, teaches us this.

But what do these welcoming kolkhoz have to see with collectivism and socialism? Bukharin knew as well as Marx and us what evolution the rural capitalist enterprise announces. And the kolkhoz, what evolution does it announce? Is socialism on its way? We will deduce it from the status of the kolkhozes, not without still asking Trotsky's great spirit for a touch of disorder and disgusting improvisation: "The very status of the kolkhozes which tried to link the individual interest of the peasant to the collective interest was only published after the campaigns had been cruelly ravaged".

20. Structure of the kolkhoz

The kolkhozian is a double figure and the kolkhoz is a complex economic institution. The land at his disposal, which theoretically remains State property, is divided into two parts. The largest is the unitary domain of the kolkhoz enterprise and has its own working capital, which was originally formed not by the contribution of the peasant's small monetary reserves, but by the expropriation of rich peasants or by state intervention. Moreover, the machine capital is provided by the state stations of machines and tractors, direct property of the state which, at the beginning, offers them free along with the labor of drivers and fuels; later, when the kolkhozes filled their pockets, despite the stupidity of administrators and agronomists, it will get a decent rent.

All these subsidies and advances of capital, in a manufacturing and wage economy, are clearly a fraction of the social-state surplus value levy carried out on the back of the industrial proletariat and are related to the low standard of living in the cities where, in the period of collectivization of the countryside, food rationing had to be restored and where, even today, factory workers still endure harsh deprivations.

After having received the land and the capital in endowment, paid to the State a certain rent in the form of taxes on the land and a certain interest for the provided management capital, the kolkhoz appropriates the labour power of its members and pays it to them. If the kolkhoz occupied the totality of the cooperants' labour time, one would then pass to the sovkhoz form or to the state enterprise; the workers would be employees and, on the economic level, the enterprise would be the equivalent of any state-owned production unit. It would have an asset balance sheet, which Trotsky would say is a written state balance sheet item, in monetary units, and it would not need to pay property taxes or anything like that.

In the sovkhoze, all the land at its disposal (it seems that from the twentieth congress onwards the individual-family vegetable gardens also came to bastardise the sovkhozes) is managed in a unitary manner; the worker is, as in the factories, a pure non-possessor and, with reference to the equivocal formula of "jouissance", a non-player. This is the only social condition from which one can leave in order to put an end to the narrowness, so that socialism may live on and all the other dross and slaveries of state, industrial or agricultural capitalism disappear: the form of enterprise, wages and trade.

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9 See the summary already quoted in the n° 16/1955 of Il programma comunista.
In the kolkhoz, therefore, the other part of the land, that which is not managed in a unitary manner in order to withdraw products which remain the property of the kolkhoz itself as a company, is divided into small lots, each of which belongs to a kolkhoz family.

Here the puny family management and, in substance, the small peasant property reappears, however without this being alienable.

According to the 1936 constitution and the standard status of the artel, i.e. the kolkhoz, these are the rights of the rural family affiliated, even spontaneously, to the kolkhoz. The spontaneity is explained in a totally "deterministic" way: It is a question of sharing the remains of the revolutionary proletariat of industry. It is the miserable expedient from which all the unfortunate and pusillanimous middle classes of the modern world are reduced to live: the alms of the capitalist state in the throes of emergency.

Legally the land, even that of the kolkhoz, is the property of the State, but the kolkhoz has free and perpetual enjoyment.

The social property (or socialist according to the Constitution) of the kolkhoz is then the enterprise itself with its dead or living stocks as well as the immovable social property (rural buildings). Thus the property which is presented to us as "kolkhozian-socialist" has as its object an enterprise capital and extends, as in any classical capitalist form in the sense of Marx, to "products supplied by the kolkhoz". If the state wants them, it must buy them. If the kolkhozians want them, they have to buy them. The kolkhoz is a collective capitalist, but a capitalist whose capital belongs to workers and employees. When there is gain, business profit, either it is invested to improve crops and equipment, or it is shared among cooperators. This ancient "ideal" inspires both Mazzini's naive writings and the colossal scams of modern plutocracy in America.

What the kolkhoz has of original and, by far, more reactionary is its second aspect, fragmentation and family.

Each family belonging to a kolkhoz "has in personal possession" a plot of land attached to the house and, in personal ownership, the auxiliary enterprise installed on this plot, the dwelling house, productive livestock, backyard animals and small agricultural implements.

21. The Economic Categories

The discussion on the kolkhoz as an economic-social form has two aspects: one qualitative, the other quantitative. With regard to the first, it is a question of seeing whether, according to the Marxist theory of capital and land, we are dealing with the characteristic relations of the socialist mode of production or the bourgeois mode or even older modes than the latter, even if they subsist in the law of bourgeois states.

Let us give priority to the qualitative side. On the quantitative level, it should be noted that the productive result obtained by the Russian campaign with the kolkhozian type constitutes an argument a posteriori; now the historical facts show that the problem is solved in a negative sense. The Russian capitalist state, by whipping the workers of industry, invested colossal capital in the countryside: the return on this capital was lower than that which a private agricultural enterprise economy would have obtained (Po Valley, California and many other bourgeois countries). If it were socialism, what would become of our Marxist thesis on the incapacity of the capitalist system to boost the agricultural economy?

Faced with this gigantic bankruptcy, what a plethoric public administration consumes by lazing about and what it gathers by stealing here and there is little; it is the fact of an ordinary administration in the modern world and in all the historical forms reached, in a deserved way, at the phase of decomposition.

The economic category in which we classify the kolkhoz as a unit is thus that of a private company to which belongs the invested capital, constant and variable, which buys wage labour, has full disposal of the goods produced and sells them on the market making a monetary profit in the event of a positive balance. The margin does not belong to a group of private persons or even to the State: it always comes back, we say. to
the qualitative aspect, to the associated cooperators themselves, to the kolkhozians. Private capitalist company, therefore, and cooperative.

If the balance is negative and the profit disappears, the state provides for it - that is, the class of industrial workers whose wages are reduced by the centre - and in a certain sense the kolkhozians themselves also provide for it by virtue of one of their souls, that of employees. In fact, a register of the days and hours worked during the year is kept for each worker in the Kolkhoz region and, by means of a unit called trudoden determined by the administration, the annual salary is paid at the end of the year, i.e. a basic salary to which is added his share of profit in good and due form, whether visible or not.

But if, as a worker paid by the time, the kolkhozian runs this type of risk, he has an unknown reserve of the employee of the State or of the possible employee of an organized cooperative industry (there is no systematic example in Russia). This reserve has its origin in the second figure of the kolkhozian, his second soul, namely in his tiny individual agricultural enterprise whose product he is free to consume or sell in order to provide for his needs.

22. Russian agricultural perspective

In capitalist countries, the small peasant bears the weight of the whole society, because his real economy is more unfavourable than that of the worker without property and without reserve.

Qualitatively and on the scale of social categories, the kolkhozian is at the same level as the small farm holder in the West, but he differs from it in ways that are all to his advantage.

Its family balance is completed by the trudoden of the various members of the rural family and the product of the family culture where all the working time is used, including that of the elderly and children. This balance, losses for debts, legal disputes, mortgages etc. being excluded, is by definition positive

By analogy with Marx's formula according to which modern society lives at the expense of the proletariat while the Roman proletariat lived at the expense of society, we can say that modern Russian state capitalism also lives at the expense of the factory proletariat, but that it makes the Kolkhozian peasant live at its expense, in the broad sense of a social average.

The Russian kolkhozian, thanks to this magnificent invention of the much-vaunted "agricultural collectivization", lives at the expense of society and, in return, maintains at the very level of small traditional culture the social potential of food production.

That, at the same time, the accomplices of the system, namely the employees of the administration and politics, live at the expense of society, is neither an original nor a new fact whose weight is not even decisive, since it is specific to all the economic societies of history and the world. Only the young revolutionary forms escape it.

This proves that not only does socialist revolution not live in the Russian countryside, but that capitalist revolution, which has made giant strides in cities and industry, does not even prosper there.

This gap is the result of all bourgeois revolutions where capital seizes all power. But in Russia, it failed to subjugate and defeat, even politically, the forms of small production and, despite the colossal achievements of industry, it riveted itself to a crumbling form of peasant narrowness that feared and conjured Lenin.

23. The kolkhoz according to Trotsky

We have talked about the qualitative aspect of the structure of the kolkhoz, but before addressing the quantitative aspect let us report Trotsky's judgment on the nature of the kolkhoz and the social figure of its population.
Our objective is to make a comparison between: Russian agriculture of the tsarist era, where feudal forms existed, of great bourgeois production, of small peasant and patriarchal production - the one after the October revolution, where forms of great and medium capitalist production (kulaks) and others, inferior - and the current one where we find forms of collective-plot production (kolkhozes) and of large state-controlled production (sovkhozes) by comparing it to the form that Bukharin assumed: the great capitalist farm enterprise of the state. From these different forms of production derives the appreciation of the distribution into social classes on the framework of Lenin's five classical points. In the form of Bukharin we would have had: rentier state of the land (ruled by the urban proletariat) - class of capitalist agricultural entrepreneurs - class of pure wage earners (agricultural workers).

It is not a question of idealizing Bukharin's "plan", which is too bold in terms of economic determinism, but of demonstrating that the current system is no better than it is, that it is closer than the latter to agricultural "individualism" and, consequently, further from socialism.

We are interested in Trotsky because he believes that the kolkhoz system, the winner of the "liquidation" of rural capitalists, would be more advanced than that of Bukharin. Indeed, they aspired not only to the possession of masses of capital, but also to the land ownership on which Stalin was on the point of letting go in part until 1927, and of which Bukharin never proposed that the State divest itself, which on the contrary, in his plan, would have confiscated the capital accumulated by the kulaks; today he cannot confiscate, without damaging the population of the countryside, the capital accumulated at the expense of the industrial population by the kolkhozians in small reserves but whose total mass is considerable.

24. The false collectivization

Here are Trotsky's grave words: "During the period when the peasant policy was still oriented upon the well-to-do farmer [Stalin-Bukharin], it was assumed that the socialist transformation in agriculture, setting out upon the basis of the NEP, would be accomplished in the course of decades by means of the co-operatives. Assuming one after another purchasing, selling, and credit functions, the co-operatives should in the long run also socialize production itself. (Note that this is a mediocre translation; let us re-establish the meaning of Trotsky’s Marxist thought...: Once the first accumulation of stock capital, commercial capital through the right of access of products to the market and monetary capital to increase investments had been achieved in the hands of the kulaks, these accumulated capital would have been accessible, with the support of the socialist political State, to groups of peasants with the labour power, acting in cooperatives on a single piece of land and not parcelled out, which would have created the conditions for socialization of all capital at work in agriculture. For us, there are two distinct moments: a) nationalization; b) socialization, but we will deal with this in more depth about industry and in relation, there too, to Trotsky's economy. The whole, Trotsky continues, “the co-operative plan of Lenin.”.10

(This passage deserves another intervention on our part: the double-sided structure of the kolkhoz, one fragmented and the other unitary, but more proprietary than associative in relation to the hybrid worker was never foreseen by Lenin; it is one of the thousand Stalinist falsifications to locate its origin in the writing of January 1923 on "cooperation" that we have already studied. Lenin speaks of "bonuses" granted by the Soviet state to peasant cooperatives, of facilities, credits, privileges, preferential prices for their products compared to those of small plot farmers: he never speaks of bonuses consisting in "enjoyment" of a populist type. Among other things, he says: "In this respect NEP is an advance, because it is adjustable to the level of the most ordinary peasant and does not demand anything higher of him. But it will take a whole historical epoch to get the entire population into the work of the cooperatives through NEP. At best we can achieve this in

10 Ibid. at 491. Underlining of Bordiga.
one or two decades.” It was Lenin's twentieth anniversary that made so much talk, twenty years of “good relations with the peasants”, a simple prologue to the true international socialist transformation.

25. Revenge of the rural egoism
Let Trotsky continue as a vigorous Marxist historian:

“The actual development, as we know, followed a completely different and almost an opposite course – dekulakization by violence and integral collectivization. Of the gradual socialization of separate economic functions, in step with the preparation of the material and cultural conditions for it, nothing more was said. Collectivization was introduced as though it were the instantaneous realization of the communist regime in agriculture.

The immediate consequence was not only an extermination of more than half of the livestock, but, more important, a complete indifference of the members of the collective farms to the socialized property and the results of their own labor. The government was compelled to make a disorderly retreat. They again supplied the peasants with chickens, pigs, sheep, and cows as personal property. They gave them private lots adjoining the farmsteads. The film of collectivization began to be run off backwards.

In thus restoring small personal farm holdings, the state adopted a compromise, trying to buy off, as it were, the individualistic tendencies of the peasant. The collective farms were retained, and at first glance, therefore, the retreat might seem of secondary importance. In reality, its significance could hardly be overestimated. If you leave aside the collective farm aristocracy [Trotsky means those who lead a privileged life], the daily needs of the average peasant are still met to a greater degree by his work “on his own”, than by his participation in the collective. A peasant’s income from individual enterprises (...) amounts frequently to three times as much as the earnings of the same peasant in the collective economy. This fact, testified to in the Soviet press itself, very clearly reveals on the one hand a completely barbarous squandering of tens of million of human forces, especially those of women, in midget enterprises, and, on the other, the still extremely low productivity of labor in the collective farms.”

What we will say about the quantitative data tends to prove that the overall yield remains low, whether one observes one or the other face of the rural Soviet Janus and its peasant face strongly resembles that, warrior, of the Roman temples: the countryside is the nerve of the imperial legions.

On the qualitative level, Trotsky, who had however said that the war with the kulak had been imposed in a deterministic way by the need to fill the belly of society more than by Stalin's ukases, agrees with our thesis. The soul - and stomach - deprived of the adherent of the kolkhoz palpitate two or three times more than those of the co-operative and associated worker. Its evolution is in a direction exactly opposite to that which Lenin had in mind, who, throughout an entire historical course, wanted to tear it, body and soul, from the vile self-servitude of the glab, the worst of all because it takes the appearance of the stupid boss and owner instinct. Psychologically, the kolkhozian is at the level of our southern peasant, small owner attached to the land by secular traditions - or tomorrow by the program, with all due respect, of the Italian Communist Party. Our peasant withdraws, satisfied, into the tiny kingdom of his prison for life and declares: at home, I am the boss; I put my feet in the narrow circle of my plot of land of which I am master and slave. I can't understand why I exchange ten hours here breaking my back for a kilo of bread, while outside “home”, in the middle of my comrades, I would exchange two hours for two kilos.

26. The worst compromise
Stalin's compromise, of which we think we have sufficiently withered the blustery boast according to which he would have turned to the left by sacking the kulaks and thus substituted "socialism" for capitalism in the

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12 Ibid. at 491-492. Bordiga highlights.
13 In dialect in the text.
countryside, is much worse than that of Bukharin with the capitalist kulaks. The superiority of the latter was not only, central point of all this study, not to put out of play factors that are not words, but driving forces of a revolution not betrayed. A Marxist may well say: this form existing in today's reality and not yet about to disappear, is state industrial capitalism and also private agricultural capitalism and has nothing to do with the socialist form and economy. Socialism, the positive magnetic pole of the world revolution, comes out neither dishonoured nor stabbed: but when we laughingly admit that these ancient forms can be declared socialist, it is without remedy. The Russian counter-revolution is here, all of it.

Lenin also made a compromise with the revolutionary socialists and more broadly with peasant populism undermined by half a century of doctrinal and "terminological" struggle. He recognized that the SR Marxist program was a bridge to cross and accepted them into power! But soon after, history demanded their destruction; and it was possible to go further.

The compromise "à la Lenin" is admissible when it comes to disentangling the historical legacy of a bourgeois revolution. Time has passed in the historical areas where it is only a question of leading the anti-bourgeois revolution as in Western Europe. There it is also a question of crushing the opportunist petty-bourgeois parties, more dangerous than the big-bourgeois and fascist parties with the exception that the way of alliance with them, whether offered or suffered, perfectly devoid of any economic or social motive, does not lead to their destruction but to being, we communists, destroyed by them or to degenerate until fulfilling their miserable function, as happened after Lenin.

The compromise with the kulaks planned by Bukharin, who had not understood many of Lenin's brilliant compromises (peace with the Germans, support for oppressed nationalities, use of high-paid bourgeois specialists, etc...) was a Lenin compromise. Once the kulak had accumulated and concentrated in the countryside the previously disseminated productive, commercial and financial agricultural capital, it would have been eliminated, as happened to the SRs, but with ten times greater utility because the historical-economic pattern of a large-scale agriculture based on private capitalist enterprises provides a much more solid basis for socialism than the pattern of private usufruct at the level of the family enterprise.

This compromise could end like Lenin's. Stalin's compromise, besides the crime of destroying the potential of the watchword and aspiration of socialists, commits that of offering no prospect of being able to destroy in the future the bastard form with which we have compromised ourselves: the rural individualism - and worse, the familialism - that Lenin and Trotsky curse like us.

The kolkhoz is a static form, not evolutionary, except in the sense of an increased preponderance of selfish and patrimonial lusts, where the capital of the cooperative enterprise accumulates not to prepare the classic explosion of Marx but to put butter in the spinach of the puny and anti-social peasant micro-richess. Tomorrow, the State will not find there a single head to take to the neck to socialize the productive machine, nor, if it is necessary, a single head to make fall, but an invertebrate to the hundred, to the thousand vital nodes, impossible to reach all.

The compromise with the kulaks was based on Marxist logic. The compromise with the kolkhozians - even without profitable bureaucracies - was the real capitulation of Bolshevik glory.

27. Origin of the kolkhoz-form
In Russia, the common exploitation of land has very distant origins, which we have discussed elsewhere. The "mir" is a community of serfs insofar as they must collectively pay tribute in labour or food to the feudal lord, monarch, state or religious institutions. In the mir already exists the double form of exploitation: each family has its small usád'ba, the vegetable garden, where is the izba, the house of the peasant with its living and dead reserves; the common land is periodically divided into plots called fields, worked only by one family, on which it could cultivate and harvest by paying a silver tribute (obrok) or in servile work on the land of

14 Cf. Russia e rivoluzione nella teoria marxista, par. 29-33
others (bartschina). With the reform of 1861, the purchase of the land by the serfs was allowed, which from then on tended to a stable allotment of common lands. But the peasants paid enormous prices to the lords, which totally ruined them, and were reduced in part to industrial wage earners or landless day labourers, while the old collective forms survived in part and the class of rich peasants was formed. In 1906, Stolypin's more audacious reform did not even succeed in setting up a system of sole proprietorship over the entire agricultural land by replacing the old practice of nadiel, or periodic division of collective lands, by a division into stable possessions. But it is estimated that on the eve of the Great War only a quarter of the collective management form had been liquidated. After the October Revolution and despite the anarchic invasion of the lands taken from the nobles and bourgeois, there were still notable examples of collective enterprises derived from these very ancient forms and which were the matrices of the current kolkhozes.

Before seeing the relationship between family management and cooperative management in the present kolkhoz, regulated by statutes promulgated in 1925, 1930 and finally in 1935 in relation to the 1936 Constitution, it is worth mentioning the three types of form existing, to a limited extent, in the era of war communism and the NEP: 1918-1925.

A "collective farming society" is a form in which a group of farmers contributes only part of their land, labour and reserves while retaining individual ownership of the capital contributed for the purpose of product distribution or in the event that a member withdraws from the society. This form of joint work is temporary and is therefore the least collectivised and least stable.

On the contrary, the "agricultural commune" must be considered as the most advanced, including in relation to the modern kolkhoz which has its origin in the third form or "artel", name of the peasant corporation of the Middle Ages which, used indifferently with that of kolkhoz, designates this same current form in the official statute.

Although the withdrawal of a member is theoretically possible, everything is transferred to the "commune": land, capital, labour, without the possibility of individual enjoyment. Products are also common and distributed equally, while what exceeds consumption needs goes to the company's development fund. It's that type who was always the perspective of Lenin. In the commune, like the modern sovkhoz, people live and eat together; not only is any form of property radically forbidden, but also any form of individual use of the land and any form of wage labour. In the 1925 statute, it was stated that "the purpose of the agricultural community is to increase the material and spiritual well-being of its members through: (a) the common organization and management by the members of the agricultural economy; (b) the equal distribution of all the products of their work among the same members; and (c) the common satisfaction of their needs". It can therefore be said that the past form of the agricultural commune achieves a complete communist economy from the internal point of view. The sovkhoz differs in that not only the land but the entire capital is owned not by the sovkhoz association but by the central state. This advanced line has for counterpart a backward line: the products go to the State and the worker receives a wage.

28. The rights of the kolkhozien

According to the statute of 1935 of the artel-kolkhoze, intermediate form which subsequently absorbed the two extremes, Communes and Societies of culture, let us recall which are the individual-family endowments authorized to the members. Residential house (hereditary property). A plot ranging from a quarter to a half hectare and a maximum of one hectare in the case of less fertile land. According to the model status, "each Kolkhozian household" also owns the following property: "three cattle including a cow, a sow and its piglets, up to ten sheep and rams, an unlimited quantity of poultry and rabbits, and up to twenty hives".

The statute indicates that in some regions the laws extend these rights. According to an article by Pavlovski in the 1946 issue of the magazine Soviet Culture (n°1-2), one cow and three calves, two sows and their young, but in highly developed reared areas there are 8-10 cows, 100-105 sheep, 10 horses, 8 camels...
We will see how important the numbers are. From a legal point of view, there are some discrepancies in the versions, or perhaps in the translations. In essence, it is a genuine private property right over: the house, the small plot, the stock capital consisting of small tools and animals. The statute applies the term property to all these endowments, sometimes in relation to the "kolkhozian house", sometimes to the "members of the artel". The Constitution speaks of individual ownership for the house and the enterprise installed on the plot, and for the latter of "individual enjoyment" or "individual usufruct".

But just as for all the territory that the State attributes to a kolkhoz one speaks of "free enjoyment" without mention of a term, i.e. perpetual, the same must be said of the "enjoyment" of the kolkhozian on his plot. Indeed, the Constitution, in article 10, protects the right of hereditary succession (which is perpetual by definition) on the following property: property of the member on the products of his work and on his savings, on the dwelling house and on the auxiliary family business, objects of domestic and individual use, etc. .

According to an old idea, "socialism does not destroy individual property". But it's a stupid formula. Marxist doctrine is not part of "law" because it is the theory of law that is part of it and is a simple chapter of it. If, however, we could give a legal formula of the socialist economy, it would be expressed as follows: society immediately owns any product of the work provided by each of its members, who exercise no rights over it.

But even using the terms of the current science of law, we affirm the truth of this equation: free and perpetual enjoyment equals full ownership. It is also an economic truth and it is not only in our Marxist eyes that law is born of economics. The sum of the future pensions of a property that is perpetually disposed of, if discounted (in full agreement with bourgeois compound interest theory), is equal to the full value of the capital invested at interest. Only the calculation of a usufruct whose future term has been fixed gives an amount lower than that of the capital value of the property and the lawyers name the difference: naked-ownership. Mathematically, this truth is expressed as follows: the integral of the infinite series of future interests of a capital, reduced to their present value, is equal to the capital itself.

It emerges that all the value of the land, stocks and others whose unlimited use is offered to the kolkhozian family, is property and belongs to the private economy; and all this domain, which it is a question of estimating, is subtracted not only from the socialist domain but also from that of state capitalism.

It is even below private capitalism in the historical series of modes of production since there is at work of non-associated and non-salaried labour (the kolkhozian provides salaried labour on the land of the cooperative) and maintains itself at the height of Lenin's second degree: the small peasant market economy.

29. What returns to the kolkhozian

It is now a question of seeing how much work the kolkhozian does as an associate worker, outside his small field and the time spent caring for it. According to the Statute, when entering the kolkhoz or when he enters the kolkhoz through the grouping of many former individual enterprises, the land is brought in and all the boundaries between private fields are erased forever, except the area that each family unit (dvor, according to the traditional name) keeps close to the dwelling. As for the reserves previously held by each member, 50 to 70% of these are credited to him as a contribution to the company's registers, while the rest is paid into the indivisible capital of the kolkhoz on a non-refundable basis. Each member pays a registration fee of 20 or 40 roubles (1935) to this common fund.

Any employable individual, male or female, may join the kolkhoz. It is not clear how the children of kolkhozians will join, either on the marriage certificate or later, with or without payment of a part, it is not clear; nor is the attribution to them of a new house and a new field; in recent years, there has followed an urgent request from kolkhozian houses. The member of the kolkhoz can leave and withdraw his personal capital except for the plot of land. In serious cases there is the expulsion procedure.

In joint work, all members of the kolkhoz are grouped into brigades of about 50 people, assigned to certain work cycles and specialized in a particular technique.
Individual work performance is measured in trudoden or working days whose value varies according to technical capacity and general productivity, which also differ from farm to farm. The "brigadier" records them in individual booklets. Of course, as in Russian industry, the system of bonuses to the most zealous as a percentage of the trudoden of the year works. Annual cash or food advances are permitted.

Before the final settlement of the shares of the kolkhoz and the workers, third party deductions are made. To the State are due large fractions of the various products, wheat in the first place, paid at an official price lower than the market price. "These compulsory deliveries of kolkhoz to the State constitute - according to the Russian author quoted - the most important form of taxation of peasant farms. These compulsory deliveries of kolkhoz to the State constitute - according to the Russian author quoted - the most important form of taxation of peasant farms. Until before the war, the percentage of these deliveries in years of good production was estimated at 12 to 15% of the harvest. In addition, seed advances and rental prices are paid to the State at machine and tractor stations, often also valued as a percentage of the gross product. Deductions are then made for the usual seed stocks and assistance and contingency funds. Then the kolkhoz assembly decides how much of the remaining product will be sold on the market to cover operating costs. From the net gain of these compulsory and free sales is derived the monetary income. About 20% of the latter goes to new capital investment. The rest of the money is distributed to the partners of the artel in proportion to the trudoden credited to each. Even the in-kind portion of the production that is not sold is distributed in the same way.

What the kolkhozian thus derives from his associated work takes the form of a wage, provided that the basic measure is the working time provided for a given type of technical activity, and comes under the profit dividend, that realized by the cooperative enterprise of which each is a member in two aspects: the initial contribution of a reserve capital and a subscribed share; and the contribution of working time.

30. Relation between kolkhozes and the state
If then, as a peasant plot on his usádʹba, the kolkhozian is socially a small owner and direct operator, he is at the same time, a partner of the artel, an employee and a corporate shareholder receiving a profit.

In this second form, the kolkhoz, who is a collective entrepreneur, would also be a landowner (or enjoying perpetual enjoyment, which is equivalent) if he simply did not pay a rent to the State, master of all agricultural land. But we have just seen that the State receives such considerable sums from the kolkhoz enterprise that they have the character of high taxation. Since in bourgeois countries private landowners pay a tax to the state, it must be said that the kolkhoz, in addition to being a collective capitalist entrepreneur, is also a collective landowner. If the tax reached very high values, such that one could qualify it as a rent, one could say that the kolkhoz is a farmer of the State and that it pays him an rent for the land of public property.

But in the relationship between the peasant economy, where the kolkhoz represents a bank for the rural mass, and the central state apparatus (if we leave aside the usual phantasm of the bureaucracy as an exploitative class), we must compare the charges of the kolkhozes to the benefit of the state in addition to the compulsory deliveries, those of the state in favour of the kolkhozes, not only with regard to public works but a thousand services: transport, energy, press, schools, libraries, countless state aids, etc. ...; the assured result is that the State, in all this relation, if it is not in deficit, is at most remunerated by a tax at a very moderate rate that the associated peasant pays for the whole of the state supervision.

The State, (which was) in theory the political force of the industrial working class, presides, by its function, over a transfer of value and goodwill from the working class of the cities to the peasantry owner (twice owner, in individual form and in associationist form), just as the bourgeois State directs the transfer of goodwill from the proletarian class to that of the capitalists and landowners.
A state inspired by peasant interests dominating those of the proletariat is the natural class ally of the historical capitalist states of the whole world, even though its industrial capital seemed locked up in a closed compartment in relation to international financial capital.

Of the three classes of Marx’s bourgeois-model society, the working class continues to be the exploited class and the capitalist class is represented by the administrative state, not as a college of its high-ranking officials but as a channel of emulation for the external forces of bourgeois capitalism. The class of landowners has taken on a non-minority but "populist" form and presents itself as a consortium of peasant cooperatives to which a high land rent flows from the goodwill created by the dominated and exploited proletariat.

31. Russia's poor agricultural record
To the noisy passage of Soviet industry which, with its staggering growth rates has signed - as we have demonstrated in the Dialogue with the Dead - its nature of juvenile manufacturing capitalism, initial and impetuous, perched on the shoulders of an underpaid proletariat, corresponds a claudicant historical and economic approach of the Russian countryside. Let us complete here the table drawn with general outlines in the Dialogue, third day, afternoon.

In the cycle from the First World War to today, let us consider the table of quantitative data relating to the geographical and agricultural area, to the population and finally to agricultural production. And in doing so, let us take the figures provided by Soviet sources during these years.

We will come to an easy and obvious conclusion: there has been no increase, either in volume or in yield, in agricultural production. This is despite the fact that considerable capital has been invested in the campaigns, practically on a non-repayable basis. This drama reproduces that of the modern bourgeois civilization which, while increasing the satisfaction of the new needs, which itself has aroused, in manufactured objects and services of infinite variety, has neither known nor been able to free human food significantly from its millenary limits as regards essential subsistence needs, even though large fractions of humanity are still below the natural subsistence minimums in terms of food. This is the central condemnation that Marx pronounced against it.

From the point of view of geographical area, 1913 and 1957 are equivalent; the Empire of the Tsars and the Soviet Union camp satellates aside - on the same borders encompassing 22.4 million square kilometres. The figures are tired and we will adopt Italy as a concrete standard for the reader: 75 Italys.

In this 44-year interval, the territorial area decreased and then increased again. Between the two World Wars, as a result of the loss of Poland, the Baltic States and another area, more than one million square kilometres had been taken from it, or more than three Italys. But the controlled area had decreased significantly in the years of civil war, between 1917 and 1924, and this must be taken into account when comparing with those years of economic depression and serial food shortages.

Within this space, the population stood at 159 million; today the census result gives 200 million (1955) whereas everyone thought it had reached 220 million.

With this official figure, Russia is worth 4.5 Italys today.

In Russia, the population density in 1913 was 7.1 inhabitants per square kilometre. It is now 8.9. Today the Italian population density is 162 inhabitants per square kilometre, 18 times higher.

It is now important for us to establish that the Russian population, and with it its density, has increased by 25.8% in 42 years. This gives an average annual increase of 0.55%. But in recent years, according to Khrushchev, there has been an increase of 16.3 million in 5 years. If the population of 1955 was 200 million,

15 In Latin in the text: here, the walk, the class.
that of 1950 was 183.7: the increase is 8.9%, or 1.7 per year. This incredible rate is about double that of our very prolific Italy. A certain mystery remains as to the total Russian population according to the statements of the Soviets themselves. From 159 million in 1913, it fell to 147 only in 1926 - the effect of the first war and revolution. In 1938, it was 171; the Second World War undoubtedly caused another decrease, and with the ensuing recovery it reached 180.5 in 1952, given that at the XIXth Congress of the party was announced an increase of 9.5 million compared to 1938. But this figure does not fit with the 183.7 of 1950 deducted above!

32. The social composition

If higher sources fall into such contradictions, even less reliance will have to be placed on the announced urban-rural distribution. In 1913, the first would have been only 28 million against 131 million in the countryside. During the depression of 1926, we find 26 in the cities and 121 in the countryside. In 1938, the urban population jumped to 56 and the rural population dropped to 115. Finally, in April 1956, there were 87 million urban dwellers against 113 rural dwellers. Hence the much-vaunted evolution of Russian society from an agricultural to an industrial country: but does an emerging capitalist society, with its most horrible monster, urbanization, have better to offer?

Soviet sources themselves have compiled statistics by class. In 1913, there would have been 17% of workers and employees, 66.7% of peasants, 16.3% of owners and traders: this is a statistic of the "active" population excluding inactive family households. In 1928, the bourgeoisie represented 4.6%, individual peasants 74.9% and only 2.9 those of cooperatives, workers and employees 17.6%. The increase in peasantry does not seem to correspond to the well-known increase in farms, from 18 to 25 million, under the effect of the revolution.

The current social composition of Russia would be as follows: workers and employees 58.3%, associated peasants 41.2, peasants still barely independent ½%.

Today, as we know, there are only two classes! In the working population, workers and employees increased from 17 to 58%, peasants decreased from 67 to about 42%.

Assuming for a moment that these figures quoted in major political speeches and proven propaganda publications are correct, we will only note that in 1913, 67 peasants worked to feed 100 inhabitants and today there are only 42. In 1913, peasants were overexploited and the 33 non-peasants, very heterogeneous in truth, ate their product sufficiently; today the 42 peasants produce for 100 inhabitants but eat a large part of the product and the 58 non-peasants, which it would be too beautiful to consider homogeneous, eat little.

Only this explanation can stick to the serious fact that agricultural production has not increased significantly more than the consuming population.

What is the composition of peasantry in modern bourgeois nations? According to data from the UN Yearbook (1955) concerning the active population, the one devoted to agriculture represents 39.4% in Italy, 12% in the United States, 5% in Great Britain, 23% in Germany.

Russia must make some way, with its current 42% of peasants, to be able to "compete" with Western industrialisation, that is to say to become completely capitalist!

But each time the tenors of the Kremlin spread their eloquence by magnifying the steps they would have taken towards the realization of "socialism," they only bring us strong historical evidence of the eminently capitalist nature of their way and their task. They want to show a victory in the drastic - and exaggerated - reduction of the peasant population that they boast to have reduced from 78 to 42% of the total in 27 years, from 1928 to 1955, and this thanks to the great breakthrough of Kolkhozian socialist property. But are there clearer symptoms of the growth of a capitalist society than this historical disease of the rural economy?

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17 Ital.: *emulare*. 
In preparation for our study for future meetings on the western and American economy, data is being provided from a paper by S. Kuzness of the National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, 1946. This is the change in the share of the agricultural population in the United States from 1870 to 1940. Here is the ten-year series of the percentage: 51.6, 48.8, 42.5, 37.7, 30.7, 26.7, 21.3, 16.9. Today, as we have just said, it is 12.5.

In the heat of their competition with capitalism, the Russians have reached the level of American capitalism, circa 1890!

33. Endowment of agricultural land

Russia has a huge population, but a large part of its territory is not able to feed it. The agricultural area, excluding forests, is today (data from the official Soviet yearbook for 1954) only 6 478 000 km², or 29% of the territory (22.4 million square kilometres). We can add the immense forests, about 43% of the total surface, but only 5 850 000 square kilometres of them, or 26.2%, are accessible to man, we will not go so far as to say, to the farmer.

On the surface of Italy, however very mountainous, 301 000 square kilometres, arable land plus forests reach 92.2%: the former, 73.2 (22 million hectares), the latter, 19 (5 million hectares).

Russia is equivalent to 75 Italys but only sows 224.7 million hectares (including grasslands) against 18.3 million hectares for Italy; thus, only 12 times more. The agricultural area, without forests, is only 29 times larger. But there are the "virgin lands" that no longer exist in Europe.

Population density influences this ratio. We can say that in Italy one hectare sown must feed 2.6 people, for only one in Russia. Obviously, given that a comparable proportion of consumers work in agriculture, it is the higher productive potential of the land that is responsible.

If we consider the total agricultural area, each hectare must feed 2.2 people in Italy and 0.37 in Russia; but the difference in fertility of tree plantations in both cases, in addition to that of ploughing, is much greater, the proportion of land at rest and fallow land, etc.... smaller; the role of virgin land is in our opinion nil.

Once established this low yield, well known, of Russian agriculture, let us see the historical course of the total area sown and the part that is sown in cereals.

Following the two extremes of the series under consideration, 105 million hectares were sown in 1913, under the tsar, 94.4 of which were cereals. Today, in 1955, the year that the 20th Congress described as a great agricultural leap, 186 million hectares are farmed, 126.4 of which are cereals.

The increase in sown area was therefore 77% and only 34% for cereals.

It should be recalled that at the same time the population has increased by 25.8%, if the figure of 200 million, which has taken the place of 220, is accurate. So we have taken a step backwards.

34. The production of cereals

We are well aware of the answer, in particular the one given by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress: the yield of the harvest per hectare has increased and therefore the production of cereals, in this case wheat, has increased. Very doubtful are the data relating to the five-year plan of 1950-55 which, while it was to report an increase from 60 to 70% of this production - which Bulganin started again to promise for the sixth plan - began with a decline to restart in the last two years following "extraordinary measures". These were indeed good harvests and there are serious doubts about the 1956 figure.

Combining the official data for the period 1950 to 1955 would produce the following series. In million quintals of cereals: 1160, 1125, 1310, 1170, 1450, 1500.

Before making any comments, let us draw up a small table reproducing only part of the variations. Usually,
these are cleverly hidden in the case of disastrous times and especially in the aftermath of the second war when the "almighty" bureaucracy lost control of statistical instruments. For the years 1942, 1943 and 1944, we do not know what to say about population, crop and harvest figures or, for example, the second catastrophic decline in livestock numbers. Here is this little summary table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territory</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Area sown</th>
<th>Land for cereals</th>
<th>Cereal harvest</th>
<th>Quantity of cereals per inhabit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in millions of km²</td>
<td>in millions of inhab.</td>
<td>in millions of ha.</td>
<td>in millions of ha.</td>
<td>in millions of q.</td>
<td>per inhab. in q.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>22,3</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>94,4</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>92,2</td>
<td>733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>135,3</td>
<td>104,5</td>
<td>1203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>150,4</td>
<td>110,6</td>
<td>1118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>22,4</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>146,3</td>
<td>102,9</td>
<td>1160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>22,4</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>185,9</td>
<td>126,4</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At first sight, according to these figures, the ratio between today and the tsarist era certainly shows a total increase of 87% which, taking into account population growth, falls to 50, which would give an annual average of 1%.

Basically, this rhythm has also been maintained, on the same area, by Italian agriculture which cannot extend over virgin lands and has a technique turned towards more intensive and modern crops.

It should be noted, on the historical level, that we do not have the data concerning two abysses, or rather three: those of 1920, 1932 and 1945.

The table shows that per capita output fell sharply not only after the revolution but also as a result of the Second World War, although the recovery was already there in 1950. The higher volume claimed for 1954 and 1955 is attributed by the Soviets themselves to the cultivation of new virgin lands, i.e. an area of 33 million hectares (Khrushchev), while the same rate is expected for 1956.

The total increase in the area sown to cereals, and that of their harvest, must therefore be attributed to the new lands conquered for cultivation and not to the advantages of the agricultural social reform, in its kolkhozian form, from 1928 to 1955. It is, as we know, the exploitation of a tantum\(^\text{18}\) of the geochemical energy stored in the virgin earth of any human intervention.

But as regards the history of Russian agriculture, other observations must be made.

In tsarist times, the population consumed smaller quantities of less rich cereals, rye and millet, and wheat was exported. After the revolution, farmers conquered wheat and gave up only a small part of it to the cities, first under duress and then at commercial prices. With the kolkhozian reform, the direct consumption of wheat, and even more precious commodities, disappears from the statistics because it is part of domestic management, while the share consumed by urban workers is quite obvious. We derive a very simple verification: we look for consumption by city dweller and proletarian by dividing the total harvest no longer by the total population but by that declared urban. We will obtain an index higher than the true one, it is certain, but its variation in time will be enough to indicate how the kolkhozian reform has repercussions on

\(^{18}\) That is, in one go, in one fell swoop.
the conditions of the proletariat, which is, according to our thesis, the class exploited and dominated by a power born of the compromise between internal peasant class and world bourgeoisie culminating in the second war.

In 1913 we had 801 million quintals and an urban population of 28 million, an index of 28.5.

In 1928, on the eve of the "agrarian collectivization", we have a ratio of 733 million quintals to 29 million inhabitants of cities, an index of 25.3.

The city - countryside ratio is slightly in favour of the latter. With the five-year plans the "construction of socialism in one country" begins.

In 1940, the harvest was 1 188 million quintals, but the urban population was 61 million: the index fell to 19.5. Compared to 1913, for an increase in cereal production of 50%, the rural population remained unchanged (131.1 million), the urban population was multiplied by 2.2.

In 1955, we are given 87 million for the urban population: the index drops to 17.2 with a harvest of 1500 million quintals. It loses 11.8% compared to 1940. Compared to 1913, the additional 87% of cereals correspond to a rural population reduced by 13.7% and an urban population that has more than tripled.

In other words, in 1940, as much more so in 1955, the city-country ratio deteriorated considerably in cereals. The "construction of socialism" in the USSR (which is nothing other than capitalist industrialization) and post-war reconstruction constantly deceive the urban proletariat, and this to the advantage of the Kolkhozian class.

For the working class, Khrushchev's boasted increase from 6.8 to 7.5 on the board, i.e. an increase of 10.3%, is therefore fictitious. The subjection of the urban proletariat has become heavier. To the childish conception according to which the meals of the oils of politics and the great bureaucrats are too well served, we substitute the Marxist explanation according to which the bonus to consumption, the orgy of goodwill, goes to the kolkhozian class: egalitarianism in the city or in the countryside is an anti-Marxist nonsense story which does not interest us.

35. Weight of the kolkhozien system

It is indisputable that in Russia the kolkhoz form largely prevails over any other, ancient and modern; and let us even admit on the basis of government statistics that individual management has disappeared and that that of the State is in a minority compared to cooperative management.

A more delicate question that we ask ourselves is the relative weight of the economy of the family plots of the kolkhozians and that of the lands of the kolkhoz. It can only be approached through broad inductions. Before the revolution, the distribution of Russian land was about the same. Farmers managed about 150 million hectares, more than a quarter, sown or not. 110 million were private bourgeois properties, one fifth; 160 million belonged to churches and convents, three tenths; another fifth belonged to the domain of the State and the Crown.

Peasant dvor ranged from less than 5 hectares to about 50 hectares, forming various social strata. In 1913, of the total 540 million hectares, 105 were sown, 94.4 of which were cereals.

In 1928, 96.2% of the former and 96.7% of the latter were in the hands of individual farmers. The state sovkhozes have only 1.5 and 1.2%, the cooperative forms 2.2 and 2.1%.

In 1955, out of 185.8 million hectares sown, the sovkhozes had 15.8% and the kolkhozes 83.3%; the private individuals (?), factory gardens and others, had a very small share. Of the 126.4 million sown to cereals, the kolkhozes have 84.4% and the sovkhozes 15.5%.

The management of Russian agriculture is thus state for a sixth and cooperative-plot for five sixths.
In the Dialogue with the Dead\textsuperscript{19}, we questioned the meaning of development on the occasion of American information on a future nationalization of the kolkhozes (only a revolution could achieve this and not a new "reform" from above) and on the basis of Khrushchev's communication according to which the sovkhozes had gone from 14.5 to 24.5 million hectares in two years. Let’s compare it with data from the official Soviet yearbook. For sovkhozes: 1940: 13.26 - 1950: 15.93 - 1954: 19.98 - 1955: 29.37. Let be the series of indices: 100, 120, 151, 221. For kolkhozes, the series is: 122.22 - 126.91 - 144.61 - 154.85. That's 100, 104, 118, 127. It is clear that the sovkhozes tend to expand more than the kolkhozes: in 1940, the latter had nine times more land than the former; today, as we have said above, only five times more.

In the case of cereal soils, the phenomenon has more relief. Between 1954 and 1955, those of the kolkhozes increased by 5.7%, those of the sovkhozes by 77.4%, the latter representing 18.4% instead of 10.9% compared to the kolkhozes.

The phenomenon can only be explained in one way: the kolkhozes are concerned about raising their chickens and goats, and the discontent of the cities that demand bread forces the State to intensify the production of the famous "wheat factories" thanks to extensive and mechanized large-scale farming under direct management.

We do not know enough to say how much wheat is produced by the sovkhozes on the one hand, by the kolkhozes on the other, and the same is true for cereals in general.

36. The two faces of the kolkhoz

We will have few results if we compare the potential of plots and cooperatives based on land area. It is clear that the plots provided to families are by far the most fertile and profitable of all the areas of the kolkhoz cultivated in extensive sowing, meadows and pastures. Statistics will tell us that of the 154.85 million hectares sown by the kolkhozes and the "individual farms auxiliary to the kolkhozians", the families' allocation covers only 5.79 million, or 3.9%. As far as cereal land is concerned, it is simply 1.5%. Indeed, wheat can be taken from the cooperative's stocks, but the best is sown on the plot.

One could oppose us that the thesis of the predominance of plot farming in Russia is contradicted by the figures: what are these miserable 5.79 million hectares against 185.85 million sown, or 1.64 million cereals against 126.4 million for all Russia? But not everyone likes the numbers.

Let us first consult another official statistic, the census of land on November 1, 1954. It covers the entire 22.4 million square kilometres of the territory, 12.8 million of which are available to the State, with forests, barren land, steppes and tundra unaffected. Of the remaining 947.3 million hectares, the sovkhozes hold 136.8 and the kolkhozes 809.2, six times more exactly. If we move on to farmland, the figures are 88.7 and 396.6; ratio: 4.5. Concerning arable land, including fallow land, 30.5 and 188.3 ; their ratio is always 6. For sown and cultivated land, 28 and 175.9 ratio: 6.3.

Following these four categories in descending order, it appears that the ratio of family endowment land in the kolkhoz is from 7.5 to 801.7. 0.9% ; 6.9 to 389.7 - 1.8% ; 6.3 to 182 - 3.5% ; 6.3 to 169.6 - 3.71% (effective sowing).

It is therefore well established officially that 96.1% of the land of the kolkhozes and kolkhozians is cultivated jointly and 3.9% on a plot basis. Can we be sure? Can we be sure that no kolkhozian, in addition to the plot that he holds under his close control and full ownership, more absolute than under Western and Roman law (he does not pay taxes, is not subject to any mortgage for debts), would not risk beyond it by being given some other field to exploit, if only temporarily or seasonally, as in the tradition of nadie? That it would not be appropriate for the administration of the kolkhoz to leave it in tenant farming or sharecropping, as in the

\textsuperscript{19} Op. cit., p.61-64.
past against obrok or bartschina? We believe that this is done a lot and on a very large scale, it being understood that, in the statistical survey, these lands remain social property managed by the Kolkhozian unit.

Still, 7.5 million hectares of excellent land represent a third of the Italian agricultural area that is home to 20 million farmers. How many are the Russian kolkhozians? Here again, we are not very explicit.

We have collected some useful data. In 1938, the plan for sowing kolkhozes covered 11.5 million hectares. There were 18.5 million families with an average composition of 4.8 members, so that the Russian population was 89 million: 52% of the total and 80% of the peasant population.

According to the Statute, each family had to hold from a quarter to a half hectare and up to a hectare in some regions. The surface area of the usád’ba should be between 4.65 and 9.25 million hectares. And, taking into account the special regions, no less than 10 to 12 million hectares in 1938. The first statistic used gives only 4.5 million for 1940. What is more likely: that the kolkhozian is fooled despite the status of the artel that defends its unfathomable selfishness or that the statistics have been made to lie?

On the other hand we have recent data from April 1956. 149.06 million hectares sown in kolkhoz; population of 82 million divided into 19.7 million families: an average decline of 4.2 members per family. Statistics indicate that the allocations of the kolkhozians cover 5.79 million hectares, which would give 0.30 hectare per family.

Our induction is as follows: private plots were not surveyed, but the total area was deduced from their number on the assumption that they would slightly exceed the constitutional minimum of a quarter of a hectare. But they cannot cover less than 20 million hectares, one seventh of the Kolkhoz lands.

37. The tragedy of livestock
The cereal index of which we followed the course above is the one which accuses the least the poor Soviet agriculture. In his September 1953 speech to the Central Committee, Khrushchev stated that there were enough to export (especially to satellite countries in exchange for industrial capital and labour!). and his lamentations target potatoes, vegetables, and especially cattle, meat, milk, eggs, etc.....

It is the livestock index which will show us, much more than that of the land, the high potential of the plot function in relation to the collective function, in the kolkhoz and in Russia, even if we observe it according to the data of 1955 and not those of the disastrous year 1953.

Indeed in 1953 cattle, including cows, were still well below the figure of 1916, and only pigs and sheep had slightly exceeded it. There remained the collapse of horses: in 1953 they were 15.3 million against 38.2 million in 1916, less than half! They were thus still at the level of 1934 when the slaughter of these animals took place, at the time of the "Stalin famine".

Here are the overall figures for 1956 compared to 1916. Cattle: 67.1 million against 58.4, i.e. 29.2 million cows against 28.8. Pigs: 52.2 to 23.0. Sheep and goats: 142.6 versus 96.3. Horses were not mentioned in 1953 and the emphasis was placed on the sheer number of tractors. But we know that the real index of agricultural progress is livestock farming. Between 1911 and 1954, milk production doubled in Italy, meat production increased by one and a half times, as did eggs, butter and cheese.

But as far as Russia is concerned, it should be noted that all the statistics do not start, as usual, from 1913, under the tsar, but from 1916. We have no further data and hope that the gaps will be filled through the collaboration of readers.

It is obvious that the livestock of 1913 was more numerous than the current one, while today the population has increased by 25.8%!

It is not only the serious decline of Russian agriculture that interests us, insofar as it nullifies any apology for the much-vaunted kolkhozian form of rural society. What interests us, in order to demonstrate that it suffers
more from the fragmented nature of the crop than from the large farm character, is the distribution of the livestock between collective farms and family micro-enterprises.

Well, according to 1956 cattle figures, private kolkhozians own 42.9% of kolkhoz cattle, 34.4% of the total cattle in the country. And we do not add to the livestock plots, as would be justified, that of small worker and employee stables, 11.4% more, nor that of "individual peasant farms", or 0.2%, so that the large estates, sovkhozes and kolkhozes combined, obtain only 54%.

Of the total number of dairy and breeding cows, only 43% belong to the large enterprise and 57% to the parcel enterprise. In the kolkhozian sector, the kolkhozians themselves hold 53.1%, or 41.7% of the total.

Concerning pigs, the kolkhozians hold 39.2% of the kolkhozian sector and 28.8% of the total. As for sheep, the percentage is 22 and 18.6 (this is due to the industrial type of breeding which, in such a cold country, feed the wool factories: it is the only case where the sovkhozes constitute 66% of the total. State wool).

The large companies own only 17% of the goats, the kolkhozians 78.7% of the kolkhozien sector and 54.7% of the total.

Concerning rabbits, hens and hives, we have no statistics but only the heavy complaints of Secretary Khrushchev in 1953. But it is remarkable that, while encouraging the kolkhoz-enterprises to produce much more meat, milk and eggs, he repeats at every moment that, to achieve this, it is necessary to encourage the interest of private kolkhozians who would otherwise sabotage work in the kolkhoz. To this end, he cites Lenin's 1921 words that, in the time of transition, the peasantry, because of its lack of culture and class maturity, had to rely on subjective economic interest and not on enthusiasm. So here are the results of 35 years of Kolkhozian socialism: that we are still here because of the asocial nature of the small producer! There, of course, Khrushchev told the truth. The difference is that he talks about a socialist campaign, while Lenin explained that it was much less than capitalist! Just like today.

We conclude in any case that if we were looking for a general index including cows, pigs, goats, sheep, hens and rabbits that would be - tractors aside - the index of control of agricultural capital of exploitation, and therefore of land, and therefore of the best, we would find that the index of small plot management, i.e. reduced to family dimensions (tiny compared to the old hierarchy between rich, middle-income and poor countries) crushes the index of cooperative management - whereas even the latter stinks of antisocialist individualism20 both because of the "kolkhozian spirit" and the opposition of the egoism of each company.

The theses we have demonstrated are two in number. The Russian campaign is not socialist but individualistic in the sense of enterprise and sub-capitalist. As a result, Russian agriculture is miserable and is proceeding in great setbacks, worse than the reactionary tendencies of all Western capitalist regimes, with the exception of very few areas of the globe. In short, a rural competition of bankrupts.

### 38. Review of the figures

The fundamental data that we have developed regarding the Russian population and the change in its social composition, insofar as they relate directly to the deep reasons for the apology of the USSR, deserve to be returned to, before continuing with them more carefully, which will spare us and the comrades who read us one of the so many errata used to correct any incongruity left in the mass of figures. Above all, it is necessary to show how dubious some results are, despite a not inconsiderable central planning, which are put forward in every respect: as for us, we cannot do otherwise - it would not be useful - than work on the data of the "official" Russian statistics summarized in particular in the last Yearbook, without dwelling on their difference compared to the figures given or assumed by the various non-Russian directories of States or international organizations.

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20 Ital.: privatismo.
The configuration of classes has changed so markedly in Russia in the space of forty years (this is the Kremlin's thesis) that there is nothing comparable in the world, or even in any forty-year period of a great country of the world. This giant leap is a quantity that becomes quality, it is revolutionary victory, it is socialism.

We know the answer we give in this work: change there is, revolutionary victory there is, but it is socialism that is lacking and it is not there.

We are therefore at least obliged to prove that all these miraculous leaps renew those that accompanied a phenomenon that has already filled the world and history: the capitalist revolution of the great countries. In some sectors, there is even much less than that and more backward. These movements that animate the figures are not those that will be experienced not by an isolated nation but by an international community when the structural revolution shows what consists in the socialist overthrow of capitalism, as our doctrine knows in advance.

The main historical leaps in figures put forward by Russian apologetics are the following: population increase - increase in the rate of population growth - drastic decrease in mortality - higher birth rate than in other countries - absolute and relative increase in the working class - increase in the urban population and decrease in the rural population - absolute and relative decrease in peasantry.

Our intention is to examine with serenity these quantitative variations in relation to those of the past and present of countries which - by all accounts: bourgeois parties, the Kremlin and... us - are indisputably capitalist. Also in relation to the Marxist theory of the socialist society for which we venture to prophesy, for didactic purposes, what - or else we are fools - statistical meteorology should be: indices of agricultural and industrial production are substantially constant and identical to those of the population - increasing index of labour productivity and decreasing index, in inverse proportion, of working time - low mortality tending to a better balance between youth and adult age, limited annually to 10 per thousand - birth rate at the annual level of 15 per thousand - low population growth rate, around 5 per thousand annually.

This imaginary society where the biological end of life is close to that of productive capacity and which is therefore neither too old nor too young, is not an ideal deduced from the complicated calculations of mathematical demography, but serves to give an idea of the renewal of generations in a demographic flow supposedly normal and which would follow the period of disasters. The result is that after 30 years, 1000 inhabitants become 1 160, 1 350 after 60 years and 1570 after 90 years. From then on, 1,740 will have been born and 1,140 will have died, in other words there will be no survivors of too great an age.

Moreover, migratory phenomena from one point to another of the globe must be of such magnitude that the local density approaches the optimal density determined by the capacity of the earth to shelter living human beings.

Bourgeois society needs a "proletariat" because it needs to create and kill multitudes, to make the population grow resolutely between long intervals of compensatory destruction.

39. Russian demographic curve
Let us therefore see the variations in the Russian territorial area by reviewing the figures once again.

In 1914 it was 22.3 million square kilometres. The First World War resulted in the formation of various independent states at the expense of Russia: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland (the former Russian part) and the area was reduced to 21.7 million square kilometres. Of course, we do not take into account the ephemeral foreign occupations that followed the 1917 revolution.

Recoveries began in 1939 with the annexation of part of the Polish territory shared with Germany and the incorporation of the three Baltic republics, Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina removed from Romania.
Western Ukraine and part of Finnish Karelia the area then increased to 22.2 million square kilometres. The war having broken out with Germany, vast territories were invaded, but after the final defeat of Germany in 1945, the Russian territory became almost what it was at the time tsarist: 22.4 million square kilometres.

The increase is due to the consolidation of annexations to the west at the expense, again, of Germany (East Prussia) and Poland, and some minor annexations in the Far East (Sakhalin and the Kuril). Compared with the pre-war situation, Poland gave up 0.19, the three Baltic republics 0.16, Finland 0.05, Romania 0.05 and Japan 0.05. Other territorial advantages have been gained at the expense of Turkey and Central Asia.

It is difficult to determine the minor reductions made in 1919 and 1943. Two commissariats of the Hitlerian Reich managed to administer more than one million square kilometres (Ostland and Ukraine).

With area in mind, population changes can be summarized as follows. In 1913, under tsarism: 159.2 million inhabitants. It is worth noting that of this population, at least 120 million resided in European Russia. Consequently, then as now, the density was highly variable; whereas the average density was 7.1 inhabitants per square kilometre, it reached 21.6 in Russia in Europe and barely 2.3 in Asia.

The first demographic data after the destruction of the World War and the Civil War are those of 1926: 147 million, but this was certainly not the lowest figure. Population growth offset the enormous losses: as we shall see, it is estimated at 16.8 per thousand in 1913 and 23.77 in 1926, which would mean between 2.7 and 3.5 million additional inhabitants per year! We will be content with two million: in 1926, the population on the same territory should have amounted to 159 + 26, or 185 million. Assuming that the territories lost in the west had 15 million inhabitants at the time, we reduce this figure to 170 million. The loss of human lives would be 23 million: but the figure, as we can see, is quite uncertain.

From the 147 million of 1926, a rise occurs. In 1939, before any annexation, according to the Russian directory, it was 170.6, an increase of 23.6 million in 13 years: average less than approximately 2 million per year, which justifies the deduction made above.

The annexations are the occasion of a leap: 12 million in Poland, 3 in Romania, 5.5 in the Baltic republics, little elsewhere; one can admit 21 million in all, which brings the population to 191.7 at the beginning of 1940.

This conquest of populations will be paid dearly with the terrible haemorrhage of the Second World War which is estimated, outside Russia, at 17 million men. The Russians give figures only on 21 December 1949: after several years of total reoccupation and the subsequent addition of territories, they indicate 180.2 million. In ten years, 11.5 million people have been lost. But as the subsequent annexation to the west brought 1.4 million compared to 1940, the loss amounts to 12.9 million. If we assume that the population growth is not 2 million but only one per year, ten million more would be missing and, in total, the war has made 22.9 million (at least) disappear, much more than the 17 million admitted to the West.

We therefore ignore the other minimum, that of 1945, which, immediately after the reannexion, must have been about 170 million. The Russians give a population growth rate for 1950 of 16.9 per thousand, or 3 million per year; in four and a half years from the end of the war, we obtain 13.5 million which, deducted from the 180, even give 166.5, less than the estimate above.

And the progression resumes. At the end of the 1950s - 51 - 52 - 53 - 54 - 55 - 56, the figures provided are: 183.2 - 186.4 - 189.6 - 192.6 - 196 - 199.4 million and finally 200.2 in April 1956. The increase is between 3 and 3.4 million per year.

40. Birthrate and population
Since any comparison between the extreme terms of this series of 43 years would be unfair to Russia, since not taking into account the collapses of 23 million men twice thrown at the stake of human glory and infamy,
we will only say in passing that the population growth of 159 to 200 million in 43 years, or 25.8%, would, counting these 46 million deaths, be 54.7%.

This 25.8% in 43 years is by no means a new phenomenon. In Italy these same 43 years have seen (for the same territory) a growth of about 35%, and the 43 previous years, from 1860, of 45% outright. In America (USA), over 40 years, we observe these demographic floods: 1910-1950, 64.2%. 1870-1910, 131.6 %. 1830-1970, 209.3 %. 1790-1830, 230.8 %.

Let us now look at Europe's Russia itself going back in time from 1914; 1850-1910, 70%; 1815-1851 (36 years only), 50%; 1762-1796 (34 years), 89%.

We have chosen countries where the conditions are the most diverse: countries of immigration, emigration or closed in on themselves. The real 25.8% and the well hypothetical 54.7% tell nothing wonderful and even less than modern Russia, to impress the bourgeois would have put socialism under their noses. As for us, she amazed us by spitting on us.

In order to exclude the effects of wars, revolutions, positive and negative migrations, let us examine the demographic appearance, the excess of births over deaths and see if the miracle is there.

From 1913 to 1955, we are told, the Russian birth rate declined but maintained a high rate compared to the capitalist world. Let's take the Russian data. In 1913, the number of births per thousand inhabitants was enormous: 47. 1926, 44. For 1940, we are given 31.7; for 1950, 26.5; since then, it has remained stationary today it is 25.6.

Let's compare with the Italian data. In 1902, it's 33.4. In the war years, you drop to 18. In 1920, it goes back to 32.2 then, again, slow decline; 1938: 23.8. In 1945, the war dropped to 18.3 then it resumed: 23 in 1946 with a further drop to 17.5 in 1953. 1954, 18. The difference between 1913 and 1954 (31 to 18), which is 100 to 56 in Russia, was 100 to 58 in Italy. What's so great about the Russian case? The fall in the birth rate is a phenomenon of the modern bourgeois world as a whole.

A similar decline was observed in all countries. England, between 1920 and 1954, fell from 21.7 to 15.6. France has not fallen much, because it had started before. German data are lacking. Spain went from 30 to 20. Switzerland from 20 to 15. One could say that today in Europe few countries exceed 25.6 of the Russians in fact, there is only Yugoslavia with 28.4 and... Malta with 28.1 (UN directories). And the United States? That's where the strange phenomenon is, not in Russia: it certainly won't occur to us to find socialism there!

From 1920-24 to 1930-34, the general law reigned: from 22.8 to 17.6. But then there is a significant increase: in 1950-54, from 23.5 to 24.9. Effect of an overflow of prosperity, and a typical prosperity of a redneck. In any case, the birth rate is equal to Russia's much-vaunted birth rate: while in these five years, the latter fell by 3%, the American rate rose to 6. Another year or two and the "Emulation Cup" crosses the Atlantic. Perhaps this was already the case in 1956.

What about Asians? From 1920 to today capitalist Japan goes from 35 to 20: papers in order. And China? Alas, we only know that the "feudal" Formosa goes from 41.8 to 44.5. A figure worthy of tsarist Russia. India: from 33 to 24.8 in 1952. South America brings nothing new. Another example of international cheater: Venezuela, from 29.9 to 46.8. Australia, from 24.4 to 22.5. New Zealand, a singular and rich country, from 18.1 to 25.8, which contradicts the rule. Canada follows the American curve, not the British one.

Which civilized states nowadays exceed Russia in terms of absolute birth rate? Canada already cited with 28.7, Central America (by many), Mexico, almost all of South America (generally low-density countries such as Russia), all Asian states excluding the Middle East.

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22 Ital. Cafona. Pejorative term for a person from the south
41. Death retreats
Mortality data is touted as the most impressive. Certainly, it is not nothing to go down from 30.2 per thousand in 1913 to 8.4 in 1955. In 43 years, mortality has declined by 27.8%. By 1926, the annual rate per thousand had already fallen to 20.3. In 1940 it was 18.3, in 1950 it is already 9.6. Good evening, this data excludes periods of ruin.

What are the corresponding rates for Italy? In 1901, it was 22 per thousand. In 1913 by 18.7. In 1954, in the order of the Russian rate, 9.1 per thousand. In those 41 years, the reduction was 48.7%.

The decline in mortality due to medical progress is another universal modern phenomenon which is naturally also influenced by the climate and the economic situation. Another factor that undoubtedly aggravates mortality is the high territorial density and urbanization if there is no corresponding high economic level (examples: southern Italy, Spain, China).

In tsarist Russia, the population was struggling against an unfavourable climate and an incredible poverty. But there was only one advantage: the low population density. Its effects were felt in urban and rural areas: in 1913, the urban population represented 17.6% of the total.

It is undeniable that the formation of a modern capitalist social structure in Russia has made more progress in the field of public services than in the strictly economic and technical field, and it must be admitted that the following boasting is justified: the number of doctors is well twelve times higher than in 1913. This is a direct effect of any state economy and state capitalism; it is the same for similar sectors. And this factor has also thwarted the effects of urbanization and housing shortage that Russia has in common with Italy, which has overcome it.

But what about mortality in the rest of the world? In Europe, various countries have a mortality rate lower than Russia's 8.4, and few exceed the Italian rate, about 9 per thousand, and not many. Holland has 7.5. Norway 8.4. The worst result among the large countries is 12 for France, however better than its 17.4 of 1920.

White populations residing in Africa have the most favourable rates: up to 4.6, 4.7, 4.8 in the South African Union. In America, Canada has less than Russia: 8.2, like some Central American countries. Argentina has the same rate as Russia. Asia has low rates almost everywhere (there are no figures for China). Japan has 8.2, less than Russia and... Formosa, 8.1. Japan, starting from 23 per thousand in 1920-24, has gone from the index 100 to 35.4 in 32 years - it is better than the increase from 100 to 27.8 in 43 years alleged by the Russians. The Middle East as a whole has very low rates: around 5. In Oceania, the main countries have the Italian rate of 9 and some white populations of coloured countries are at very low rates, as in Africa.

Consequently, the low mortality rate and its rapid decline - which it would be easy to find faster rates by probing the statistics of the past century, which we do not have - are by no means sufficient to establish that they were obtained in Russia by moving to a profitable, original and particularly fertile economic form. Russian demography follows the laws of historical modes of production and is based on those, well known, of the most typical capitalist form.

42. Demographic growth
In the statistics, we will examine only natural increase, i.e. the excess of births over deaths, bearing in mind that, as far as Russia as a whole is concerned, migratory phenomena have not played a role, even if we must think that some groups of inhabitants have been transferred from neighbouring countries of "popular democracy".

In any case, the official Soviet version clearly adapted the population growth rates to the total population figures for the different years.
Natural increase is still high. It was already in 1913: 16.8, almost identical to what it is today: 17.2. Therefore, it is not with this "piece" for fireworks that Russia today can boast of having gone from black to white!

Anyway, the phenomenon is too interesting not to talk about it. We want to establish that these are the anti-socialist factors that, in a social structure, maintain a high rate of natural increase. Among them, the existence of family economies and, in general, the family connection - the enterprise on which the whole Russian countryside is based, as well as the reign of the monogamous family institution that once was - but who remembers it today? Even a small-time socialist described as outdated in his new society and which the Manifesto shows gnawing from within in a purely capitalist economy. Then there is the tendency to "produce producers" that arises from the impulse to accumulate, inescapable in any market economy, and from the race to over industrialisation that follows.

Generally speaking, any economy whose structure stimulates individual interest at the expense of social interest has the effect of population growth. The proprietary instinct leads to that of sexual possession (not in the physiological but economic sense) and to the institutions of inheritance and family that promote prolificity; all this goes in a direction that the socialist revolution, according to our expectation, will begin to reverse, once the codes of states and churches are torn to pieces. It will be accompanied by the rational limitation of reproductive mating, in relation to age, health and a planning of activities that is not a caricature and where, in the first place, the accounts will no longer be in monetary units, but in physical units, the first of them being the animal-man unit.

The Russian progression was as follows. From 16.8 under the tsarism one passes to the astonishing 23.7 of 1926 resulting from a birth rate which is strongly maintained and a mortality in decline. One can identify the cause, without risk of error, in the frightening and general propagation, before the so-called "collectivization", of the small family properties whose number, as we know, grew, after the revolution, from 18 to 25 million. The data concerning the favourable period from 1928 to 1938 are missing and we have only that of the year of crisis 1940: 13.4, which is weak. We know nothing of what happened during the 1939-45 war and we arrive at the indices of 1950-55: about 17 per thousand. Considering the current population, 1956 should have seen natural Russian growth of 3.5 million.

Let's compare with Italy. The excess of births over deaths was 10.5 per thousand in 1901. A maximum of 14.2 was reached in 1912. One can then measure the consequences of a real war: the excess of the dead over the living is 6.5 in 1917, 16.9 in 1918! In 1919, a new start at 2.6; in 1920 one returns to the maxima, with 13.2, and the only effect of the natalist campaign of fascism is to increase the surplus to 9.7 in 1938 and 10.2 in 1939!

Here, if we stick to the results of a study that is not made for the trestles of the theatre, is the value of the political instructions that fascism bequeathed to the silly contemporary Italy. The birth rate was 30.7 in 1921 and 23.6 in 1939. We know from Marxist determinism that sexual reproduction does not depend on royal or republican decrees. This whole policy consisted in closing the door of emigration from the inside after slamming it in our face from the outside, just as today it is held open to us after having given us the gift of anti-fascism, much more handsome speaker. If we are forgiven for this digression "from home", we will say that the positive surplus (which in 1939 had returned, as we said, to 10.2) was not reversed by the war waged by our bellicose fascists, as was tragically the case during the war waged by our peaceful liberals. 1940: 9.9; 1941: 7; 1942: 6.2; 1943: 4.7; 1944: 3; 1945 (with a tiny something more): 4.7. All this positive, without going below zero as in those damned years of carnage in the East, 1917 and 1918.

And now everything is fine, Madame Marquise. There are too many of us, but when it comes to filling the gaps, we are unbeatable. The series of surpluses begins with a vigorous 10.9 in 1946 (416,000 marriages; maximum reached in 1947 with 438,000; interesting minimum in 1944 with 215,000 and in 1917 with 99,000

23 As they say a piece of artillery.
24 In French in the text
; it is necessary to go and study the functions of demographic change and the development of life tables in the bourgeois era! Surplus, therefore, of 10.9, which falls until 1954 as follows: 10.8 - 11.3 - 9.9 - 10.3 - 10.0 - 9.9 - 9.1. Looks like it's still dropping.

Let us conclude: we have the Pope, we have Togliatti, Nenni and Saragat, and yet it seems that the construction of socialism is more advanced here in Italy than in Russia!

So, after comparison, we want to admire this country that has been able to slow natural growth more than does Russia with its imposing 17.2.

We only have to go back to the UN data to find the right students. United States: 15.7. Russian anti-socialism is almost caught up. Japan: 11.9: Italian-type rate. Israel: 21! They invented the one god and the monogamic family. Formosa: 36.4 (damn it!). Argentina: 15.7; that's the Russian dose of socialism: ah Peron! Venezuela: 35.7. Australia: 13.4. New Zealand: 17.8: Russia, always Russia! France: 6.8. England: 4.2. These are the countries of industrial capitalism with which Russia does not yet compete. West Germany: 5.3.

Developed capitalism plus density close to the maximum: this is what slows down natural growth. In North America, we have a powerful capitalism but a low density.

The density in the United States is only 21. In the USSR of 8.9 but 28.1 in Europe's Russia: emulation does take place in terms of territorial density and, logically, natural increase. In both cases, socialism has little to do with it.

A simple look at the advanced but not over-industrialised European countries, at least in volume: Belgium 4.8 - Holland 14.1 - Norway 10.2 - Sweden 5 - Switzerland 7 - Spain 10.9 (Italian type) - Yugoslavia 17.6. The latter as little socialist as Russia: all the former are more advanced.

43. Density of population
To close this purely demographic part, we had to take into account the distinction between Russia in Europe and Russia in Asia. Let us recall the figures and the parallel with Italy. Russian area in million square kilometres: 5.57 for the European part; 16.83 for the Asian part; total 22.40. 18.5 Italys - 56 Italys - 74.5 Italys.

Russian population in million (1955): 156.7 for the European part; 43.5 for the Asian part; total: 200.2. 3.2 Italys - 0.9 Italys - and 4.1 Italys respectively.

Russian population density per square kilometre: European part 28.1; Asian part 2.6; total 8.9. Italian density: 160. That is 5.7 times the Russia of Europe, 61.5 times that of Asia, 18 times the USSR.

It should also be noted that even in European Russia the densities vary greatly. In 1939, while the whole of Russia in Europe is around 25, the table by regions is as follows (according to the division of Peter the Great): center 89, southwest 65, west 43, northwest 30, north 3, south 72, southeast 40, east 33.

The degree of industrialisation necessarily follows the population density, although in this field the capitalist state obtains different results from liberal capitalism as regards the choice of places to build its facilities; in return, we are dealing here with a unitary capitalism, but until now with a purely national and internal extension; elsewhere, with a multiple capitalism but whose field of action is the whole world.

We have to make another point. The figures provided to us for everything within the limits of the USSR link the demographic curve - and, broadly, the production curve - to natural growth. Indeed, the exchange of goods with foreigners is secondary, and that of populations, zero.

This explains its stunning and irrevocable defeat in the confrontation with the North American state. The latter expanded at an extraordinary speed, thanks to powerful immigration from all countries of the world, even if its population growth rate was only equal to that of Russia (but in the 1920s and 1930s, it was much

25 Numerical tables showing the number of individuals remaining alive beyond a given age.
lower). It thus joined England and then surpassed it by snatching supremacy in capitalist production. It has been able to do so because it has caused the growth of its population density to skyrocket. Between 1790 and 1950, the initial figure was multiplied by 40. At the same time, Russia (of Europe) has only quadrupled it. The American pace is ten times that of Russia. Only in this way can we compete and finally triumph. In the period when Russia has withdrawn from the world, we know that its population has only gained 25.8%; the American, we have said, 64.2% in 40 years, which is equivalent to 70% in 43 years. The rate, 1.70 and 126 being in the ratio of 1.35 to 1, is 35% higher. To compete is out of reach and the gap must necessarily widen with time.

The reason for this indisputable phenomenon is the closure that the revolution imposed on itself (and it was deadly) from the moment when Stalin’s isolationist doctrine struck to death the internationalism of Trotsky-Zinoviev-Lenin.

Another terrible blow to Russia’s passage, not from socialist Russia, a meaningless expression, but from the nascent industrial Russia, with its capitalist form, was that of the appalling loss suffered by praising the mass of the militarised Russian population to the imperial capitalism of the West.

The Czar sacrificed 23 million lives to the Entente, Stalinist politics sacrificed as many to the same alliance, clipping the wings of any hope that the Russian capitalist revolution might one day catch up with the American. Russia is even condemned to do nothing more than lay the industrial "foundations" of socialism, if a revolution does not come, from outside or inside, to open and force all the gaps of the "curtain", or if an imperialist war does not take charge of it, in line with today’s imperialist peace.

46 million men, compared to 200, represent an additional 23% potential. Or even more. The 23 million lost in 1916 would be 44 today considering the natural increase of 17% common to both opponents. The 23 million lost in 1943 would be 28 at the end of 12 years, that is 72 million and on 200 that makes 36 %. To catch up with such population growth, with an annual rate of 17%, it takes about 18 years.

The Tsar’s first double miss, then Stalin’s, gave Western capitalism an 18 years head start on Eastern capitalism.

44. Urbanisation

Another phenomenon on which the entire pro-Soviet press dwells with force, with the constant aim of demonstrating that sufficiently profound and innovative changes have taken place that they can only be explained by the appearance on earth of integral socialism, is the increase in the urban population in relation to the total population.

This argument must be distinguished from that of the change in the social composition of the Russian population, which leads us to an even more delicate field in the interpretation of statistics of diverse origin.

It is not easy to find a way to distinguish urban from rural populations, and this distinction does not always correspond to the distinction that can be made between populations engaged in agriculture on the one hand, industry and public economic and administrative services on the other.

What is the minimum population for a community to be considered an urban area? Russian statistics seem to set the limit at 10,000, which is rather the limit... zero. But it is also doubtful whether the entire population living in centres with more than 10,000 inhabitants is engaged in non-agricultural activities. This may be the case when all the peasants lived in small houses or cottages scattered here and there in the countryside, and this was the case in some Russian regions. It is possible that this was the case in the French countryside, at the time of the great revolution, with its constellation of small villages. But, to take the example of a country with secular capitalism (which later stagnated), with a great capital and a unique state centre, such as southern Italy, which presented itself under this aspect since the time of Frederick of Swabia, in the twelfth century, peasants already lived there in large manufacturing cities from which they spread every day to work
in the countryside, and it is always so. According to this criterion, southern Italy, Puglia and Sicily in particular, have a large urban population and a small rural population, which is contrary to the truth.

So far, we are talking about the real population - including women, the elderly and children - and not about the later category of the working population, where only those who work are registered, which immediately gives rise to new distinctions that we will examine later.

If we stick to the breakdown between rural and urban populations and accept the figures as they are given to us in the documents consulted, we are confronted with the following picture. In 1913, the urban population was 28 million, compared with 131 million in rural areas, or 17.6 and 82.4 per cent respectively, out of a known total of 159 million.

In 1938, the figures are: 56, 115 and a total of 171 million; we went to 32.7 and 67.3%. The urbanization index has almost doubled in 25 years: 186 against 100. In 1940, after the annexations, they would be respectively: 61 and 131, or 192 million. So 31.8% and 68.2%, with a slight decline. In April 1956, we were told 87 and 113 with a total of 200 million, or 43.5 and 56.5%. In 43 years, the urbanization rate has risen from 17.6% to 43.5% and has thus multiplied by two and a half, an index 287 against 100 in 1913.

Would this be such an unprecedented phenomenon in quantitative terms and without historical precedents that socialism must be summoned to explain it?

We have an American statistic whose source is the 1953 US Statistical Abstract published by the Federal Census Bureau. From 1790 to 1830, the urban population was small and slowly growing: it was a colonization of rural pioneers and not industrial entrepreneurs; which gives in percentage: 5.0 - 6.0 - 7.0 - 7.2 - 8.7. From then on, the phenomenon began and in 1870 the percentage was 25. In 40 years, therefore, the variation from 8.7% to 25 is in a ratio from 100 to 287, higher than the Russian evolution over 43 years: from 100 to 247. Of course, the phenomenon continued for the next 40 years but the increase was smaller: from 25% in 1870 to 45.1% in 1910, from 100 to 180. From 1910 to 1950, it went from 45.1% to 61.5%, from 100 to 136.

Moreover, the level of urbanization in America (certainly measured by more stringent criteria than the threshold of 10,000 inhabitants) is higher today than in Russia: 61.5% against 43.5% for the city's assets.

45. The active population
Where is the amazing phenomenon that can only be explained by socialism? Or by the same kind of socialism that reigns in America?

If we chose from these statistical series an American year with the same urban percentage as 1913 in Russia (17.5), we would find 1855. 43 years later, in 1898, it was significantly higher: 38.5. The curve of the phenomenon is not far from the Russian, the Russian 43.5 not much different from the 38.5 American. In fact, the current Russian percentage would correspond to the year 1906 in America. Therefore, depending on the evolution of this aspect of society, around which one leads great fuss, it may still take exactly 50 years of inexorable capitalism in Russia before it reaches a level equivalent to that of America today! But always by laying the "foundations" of socialism.

Another example of the bankruptcy of the "construction of socialism". Lenin said that communism is not built by communist hands. Strong words. The hands of the communists (those from a distant past) can, at most, construct statistics.

For Italy, we have the ISTAT statistic which gives the population of all municipalities with more than 30,000 inhabitants in 1951, which then accounted for 35.1% of the total population. In 1901, they accounted for 26.8%; in 50 years, the index had risen from 100 to 131.

We cannot compare this statistic to that of the Russians which includes the very small centres of 10,000 inhabitants, also because of the ancient origin of the "bourgeois" cities in Italy which dates back to the year
one thousand, a fact well known to Marxism from the Communist Manifesto. However, we do have Russian data on the current situation, according to which the 84.6 million who, in January 1955, resided in cities of 10,000 inhabitants or more, are distributed as follows: less than 10,000 inhabitants, 11.9 million. From 10 to 20,000, 9.3 million. 20 to 50,000, 13.3 million. So we can subtract 11.9, 9.3 and maybe 5 million from the 84.6 million to get to the cities of 30,000 people. That is a total of 26.2 million, of which 58.4 million would reside in cities with more than 30,000 inhabitants. The Italian percentage would be 31%. Therefore, according to this overview, the course of capitalist urbanization in Russia has joined that of bourgeois Italy where it began so many centuries earlier.

We also have figures for Russia taken from Lino Capuccio's Manual (1940) published, at the time fascist, by the Institute for International Political Studies. The percentage of urbanization in European Russia would have been 2.5% in 1724, 4.1 in 1796, 7.8 in 1851, 12.8 in 1897, 18.1 in 1910. The evolution had thus begun well before the revolution of 1917 and the phenomenon was already obvious: in 59 years (1851-1910) the index passes from 100 to 232, which is considerable in the pre-capitalist political regime.

Yet another boast, another bluff that deflates. When socialism penetrates the social structure, a fundamental symptom will be that on which Marx and Engels insisted so much: the cities will gradually break up into smaller built-up areas, the urban territorial density will fall and the urban masses will spread, to reside there, on the whole of the territory that we call today rural territory: it will be the real reversal of the phenomenon we are witnessing in Russia and elsewhere.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Owners, bourgeois, merchants and kulaks</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workers and employees</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperative members and kolkhoziens</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent farmers and artisans</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Owners and assimilated</td>
<td>dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workers and employees</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kolkhoziens and cooperative members</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent peasants and artisans</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1928, the percentage of free farmers increased from 66.7% to 74.9% and, in 1937, collapsed to 5.9%. The kolkhozians and assimilated appeared in 1928 with 2.9%; in 1937, they represent 57.9 % then fall until 41.2% declared today. It was not collectivization, but "ex nihilo creation".

In what precedes, we have criticized this evolution and its statistical translation. Let us now give some important details.

We will analyse, according to our own criteria, the relationship between the percentages of the active population and the figures of the total population. But the tables in the Soviet directory operate this correspondence in an unacceptable way: 117 million workers and employees, integrated into their family homes - 82 million kolkhozians with their families - 1 million free peasants. Total rural population: 83 million; grand total: 200 million.

The size of the labour force and its percentage of the total cannot be derived from these figures. We have affirmed that they give a false idea of the distribution by economic sector: in Russia, peasantry, which represented 77.8% in 1928, still occupies an important place, not less than 58%, leaving only 42% to the non-peasants, and not the opposite as the Soviet yearbook shows (we will demonstrate). Then we showed that
in Italy the rural population was smaller, and considerably larger in other countries of advanced capitalism such as England and America.

Indeed, it did not highlight, and we deplored it, the population affected to the sovkhozes and other state agricultural activities, outside the kolkhozes.

It is possible to conduct a more extensive survey, not to correct Soviet data by others (who would be completely missing) but by better analyzing those in the government directory.

The proportion of "workers and employees", i.e. what is called dependent workers in the other countries, even if in Russia they almost all depend on the state, expressed in these crude and hypothetical 58.3%, is then broken down into subgroups comprising 57% of the working population.

31% work in industry. 6% in transport and communications. 5% in trade. 9% in education and public health. Finally, 6% are state employees or members of liberal professions. More detailed statistics on this large group are now available, giving actual figures instead of percentages. The total is 48.4 million, roughly corresponding to the 57% and representing all the sectors of economic activity mentioned, which allows us to establish that the entire working population, which is our starting point, amounts to 84.9 million and represents 42.5% of the total population.

Having this first data, confirmed by other comparisons, we can compare it with others concerning foreign countries. In Italy, the active population, representing 41.3% of the total in 1951, is estimated at 19 639 000. In 1955, the figure was 21,547,000, or 45%, significantly higher than the Russian rate.

In the very successful 1936 census, the labour force was 17,943,000 out of 42.9 million, or 41.8%.

In the United States, in 1954, the active population was estimated at 60 million out of 162.4 million, or only 37%.

According to other sources, in 10 years it had risen from 55 million in 1943 to 60 508 000 in 1953. In 1950, it amounted to 59 757 000 out of 150.7 million inhabitants, a percentage of 39.7.

In Europe, the percentage of active population is around 45%; therefore, no particular significance should be attributed to the Russian proportion estimated at 42.5%. Bourgeois society in good and due form.

46. Economic sectors

The labour force is classified by first dividing it among the sectors of the economy. In the Italian census of 1936, the following groups were created: agriculture, hunting and fishing, industry, transport and communications, activities and liberal professions, public administration.

What is important here is the distinction between agriculture and all other activities. In 1936, agriculture employed 8.689 million people, 48.4% of them. In 1954, only 39.7 per cent, according to the United Nations Yearbook: 8.468 million out of 21.342 million.

If, therefore, we followed, without further examination, the Russian classification, Italy would be at the same degree of evolution that transforms an agricultural country into an industrial country, given that its percentage of peasant population, on which the Russians insist, is 43 % of the active population and 41.7 % of the total population.

As already mentioned, in the category of all workers and employees who constitute 57 per cent of the active population and number 48.4 million, only 2.8 million are assigned to sovkhozes and 3.1 million to machine and tractor stations. With this addition alone, one would arrive, between the kolkhozians, the free peasants and the two groups quoted, at a number of agricultural assets of 42.4 million out of 84.9, or almost exactly 50% (49.9), which far exceeds 40% of Italy.
It is not fair, in fact, to exclude workers from the sovkhoz and SMTs from the agricultural labour force for the sole reason that they are workers or employees. They participate in agricultural production and carry out their activity in the countryside.

If, in the case of Italy, one wanted to deduct from the agricultural active population those who are salaried employees, one would have to take into account the fact that there are considerable numbers of agricultural and daily workers there. In 1936, there were 2 178 000, or 25.1% of the active agricultural population which, without them, would have been reduced not to 40, but to 30% of the total active population, and it would therefore be the latter figure that would have to be compared with the famous 41.7% Russians.

According to 1954 figures, there are 1,957,000 agricultural workers, who are deducted from the 8,468,000 agricultural population, reducing the latter to 6,511,000, or 30.6% of the total active population. In spite of the exalted reform, here, by the gobbler of Russian jokes, the glorious agricultural proletariat is alive and well!

Let us not insist on the "meagre" balance sheet that Russia presents in its evolution from agricultural country to industrial country if we compare its agricultural population, in its ratio to the total active population, with that of the other States of Europe and America.

But we believe that it is not enough to raise this rate from 41.7 to 49.9 per cent, as we have done, nor that the figure of 36.5 million collective farm workers, divided, according to Russian statistics, between 31.8 million working in the collective part of the Kolkhozian economy and another 4.7 million family members working only on small farms, would be insufficient.

In the statistics of the families kolkhoziennes, their number remains stable (!) for the years 1953, 1954 and 1955: 19.7 million, down from 20.5 million in 1950 and up from 18.1 million in 1937. How can it be explained that in 1937, the percentage of active kolkhozians was estimated at 57.9% and decreased to 41.2 in 1955? There should be fewer active members of the Kolkhoz family to explain how the number of families growing by 8.8% and the number of active workers would have fallen by 28.8%! It is claimed that the rest works outside the kolkhoz and has therefore been registered under the category "workers and employees": but it is difficult to admit that such a mass no longer lives in the kolkhozian houses and is no longer counted in the rural family with its kolkhozian head.

The exact count can be established as follows: we know that the kolkhozian family comprises on average 4.8 persons; consequently, the invariables 19.7 million kolkhozian households comprise an agricultural population of 94.6 million. Free farmers are estimated at 1 million; given the rate of 0.42% of the total active population, they should be 1.2 million and, depending on the composition of the peasant family, 2.4 million. Let's put 2 million. If the 5.9 million non-Kolkhoz agricultural workers (sovkhoz and SMT) are, compared to the total population of this sector, as 42.5 is at 100, we obtain 14 million additional. The total is 94.6 + 2 + 14, or 110.6 million people employed in agriculture, which is in line with the 113 million non-urban population already mentioned. So we were not wrong in granting 58%, close to 56.6, to rural people and 42%, or 43.4, to city dwellers, thus rejecting Russia towards the agricultural and non-industrial model.

47. The traditional snake bite

Let us suppose for a moment that the non-rural population really conforms to the much-vaunted proportion of 58.3% of workers and employees, whose number is claimed to have risen from the index 100 in 1913 to 433.

As far as we are concerned, we are not on the lookout for gossip about the minority of leaders, engineers and civil servants with high salaries, with the aim of reducing the number of those who have been proletarianized and poured into the industrial army. We are faithful to our method centred on the production relationships that have settled between the kolkhozian and the city worker.
Let us return to the table in paragraph 34 which records cereal production and our method of dividing the mass of the harvest by the number of non-kolkhozians who receive their wheat from the season. In 1928 city dwellers accounted for 22.2% of the working population as well as the total population - if our previous reasoning is correct. The cities had 32 million inhabitants who shared the 732 million quintals of cereals: 23 quintals per capita.

In 1937, the harvest amounted to 1,203 million, but city dwellers represented 36.2% of the 171 million Russians, or 62 million: 19 quintals, approximately, for each. First reduction.

In 1955, the harvest reached 1 500 million quintals. But the urban population, with its famous 43.4%, stands at 87 million. Each receives only 13 quintals. And if the kolkhozians have become so few in number, the best thing for them is to share, in addition to bread, the increased production of chickens, eggs, milk and pork meat.

Gentlemen, it is useless to try to make us swallow that Russia has proletarized at an astounding speed. By piling up the agricultural population in cities and factories, one does not increase the share of socialism already achieved, but only the exploitation rate of state employees, whatever their place in the hierarchy of remunerations, by the family entrepreneur class; this, because of its hybrid character which one would like to consolidate as a form of the future, concretely defined, becomes the basis of a new privileged minority on which the decisive factor of concentration in a few hands no longer has any control, which undermines any possibility of victory of the social interest over the individual, the only non-charlatan way towards socialism.

Source: Il programma comunista, No. 25, December 1956 – No. 2, January 1957