INTRODUCTION
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Our century abounds in ideological - political myths. The most prominent of them - the myth above myths of our age - is the statist myth of socialism. With the degeneration of the October Revolution a new system of dominance was created which stubbornly pass itself off as socialism. Supporters of pre-perestroika Soviet type societies operate on the assumption that the construction of socialism and communism can be based on an omnipotent state.¹ And this system is based upon a powerful bureaucracy. The Soviet bureaucracy was an organic product of the October Revolution. It constituted one of its social bases.

There have generally been few ideas in contemporary social science which have not had their roots in the past. The idea of a new form of dominating social starta after capitalism originated with Jan Waclaw Machajski. In The

Evolution of Social Democracy (1899) he claimed that after the socialist revolution the intelligentsia and the people controlling the state-owned administrative apparatus would become the new dominating section of the society. In a letter written in 1930, Khristian Rakovsky contented that a new ruling starta was already being created in the USSR. Toward the end of the 1930's there was a long discussion in the press of the 4th International on the nature of the bureaucratic despotism in the USSR. In 1939, in his "Le Bureaucratization du Monde", Bruno Rizzi called this society "bureaucratic collectivism". As Svetozar Stojanovic suggested this privileged bureaucratic - statist section is composed of the entire state apparatus, having itself transformed from the representatives of the working class into the collective owner of the means of production. For him, the degradation of the socialist revolution is not at all inevitable. Two possibilities are there as a consequence of the crisis of capitalism: bureaucratic statism & socialism. In one view Stalinist bureaucratism is a form of state capitalism; however, the difference between state capitalism and the Stalinist bureaucratic despotism is rather obvious, as in the latter capital does not exist as a determinant of social relations.

2. Ibid., p. 39.

3. A Group of Marxist in the West, including Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse suggest that the Soviet Bureaucratic system is exploitative and do not call it socialist. But since Marxist theory places only for capitalism and socialism in its portrayal of contemporary society, they find the way in the notion of "state-capitalism."
Marx and Engels often referred to the possibility, or even the inevitability, that a revolution would degenerate if it occurred in objective historical conditions that did not correspond to its aims. Plekhanov also aired it in his arguments with Populists. If the people, Plekhanov declared, approach power when social conditions are not ripe, then the "revolution may result in a political monstrosity, such as the ancient Chinese or Peruvian empires, i.e., in a tsarist despotism renovated with a Communist lining."\(^4\) Some argued that the system created after the October Revolution was based on outright dictatorship, on force, to an excessive degree. Disregard of certain elementary rules of democracy and lawful order inevitably had to degenerate into bureaucratic dictatorship. Stalin and his circle developed its latent possibilities to the maximum degree. The whole problem was that a socialist revolution in a country like Russia that had not gone through a period of bourgeois democracy, where the people in its majority was illiterate and traditional, in such a country a genuine socialism cannot be built without the support of other more developed socialist countries. By prematurely destroying all the old forms of social life, the Bolsheviks released such forces that inevitably called for some form of administered society.

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However, if one look a bit deeply one would see that various possibilities exist in almost every political system. The triumph of one of these possibilities depends on both objective and subjective factors, some of which are obviously accidental. Even the tsarist regime in early 20th century Russia could have developed in various ways, and the fragile system of bourgeois democracy that existed in Russia from February to October 1917 was not inevitably doomed. Of course, a question always arises about the degree of probability that events will take one turn rather than another, but even the smallest possibility should not be dismissed.

As Soviet historian A. Ya. Gurevich has written:

The path of history is not a course or route that has been laid out beforehand once and for all. History is not programmed or pre-determined by any one. Historical development is an open system with the widest possibilities & a limitless set of probabilities and variants... That which has transpired seems to us inevitable, but only other possibilities were not realized. Naturally, the historian seeks a basis for events that have occurred and proposed an explanation of them... When certain potentialities have been realized and all others by the same token have been excluded, there arises the concept that the path events have taken was the only one possible... The realized variant of historical development receives its explanation and is declared to be a
regular law-governed process. However, the historian who portrays the historical process as something irreversible and proceeds from the conviction that what has happened was the only possible result of all preceded, wrongly excludes other unrealized possibilities and fails to study the various perhaps even diametrically opposed tendencies that are always present in society.  

From this point of view the rise of the Bureaucratic Thermidor was not at all inevitable. Its true that the political conception the Bolsheviks brought to the October Revolution was not free of defects, but it had many merits as well. For the young Soviet state the role of development was not determined in such a way that it necessarily had to grow into the bureaucratic system.

Socialism, even the ideal conception of it, does not guarantee full equality of material possibilities or an equal position in society to everyone, because people differ individually. Socialism must, however, ensure substantial progress toward equality of rights.

5. See A. Ya. Gurevich's article in the collection Filosofskie problemy istoricheskoi nauki, (Moscow, 1969), pp. 74-5; cited in Ibid., pp. 615-6
and obligations, just treatment of all, and equal opportunity for all to discover and develop their talents and abilities. It must reduce the flagrant material inequality that exists under capitalism. The Soviet bureaucratic socialism was little concerned about the achievement of such goals.

The social pressures for the rise of Soviet Bureaucratism will be discussed below. At this stage, we must clarify that the use of the term bureaucracy as applied to the Soviet socio-political system. Probably the most widespread usage in this century derives from the definition given by R. Von Mohl in the 19th century. This led critics to regard any system of administration as bureaucracy. In view of the vague origins of the word, it is hardly surprising that in the mouths of the Bolsheviks and all of their opponents, it became an all-embracing term of abuse in the sphere of administration.

Weber's usual view of bureaucracy as rational organisation may be set aside, since it deals with an ideal type and maintains a non-referential approach. The second definition of bureaucracy, as organisational inefficiency, concentrates too heavily on political and

economic causes while ignoring the social reasons for inefficiency.

The other definition of bureaucracy are rule by officials and administration by officials. Whereas these two definitions can ideally be kept apart, in the Soviet context they become fused, since the party apparatchiki who ruled the country were also its chief administrators in the state commissariats. The fifth definition of bureaucracy is organisation as a whole, conceived mainly in terms of large-scale structure. In its sixth metamorphosis bureaucracy appears as a complete system which characterises a whole society, and so is used as a blanket term like democracy or capitalism. This method was not adopted by Marx or Lenin who did not ascribe a dominating role to bureaucracy. Nevertheless, it enters into our considerations, because Djilas and many non-communist observers of what they called "Stalinist Bureaucracy" used these definitions. What interests us particularly from social angle is to what extent these analysts mean a whole society which has itself become a bureaucracy, and in what degree a society is permeated by a ruling class.

In yet another concept public administration is treated as bureaucracy without reference to the possession of power. This approach has some purely methodological advantages in this context, since it permits us to lay stress on the historical and social reasons in Russia for the growth of Soviet administration.
In this notion of bureaucracy as administration, the citizen is seen to be closely and actively associated in the management. Bureaucracy is no longer thought to be a barrier between the people and the state. In this context, Sydney Webb believed that "Every increase in the political power of the proletariat will most surely be used by them for their economic and social protection". J.S. Mill found that the dangers of bureaucracy were the most important reason for protesting against government interference in society. As a government enveloped more functions, that would eventually enthrone the ruling elite in a position of permanent dominance.

Paul Gregory argues that bureaucracy theory, like organisation theory has evolved in the direction of greater emphasis on human motivation and information flows. Max Weber, the most prominent student of bureaucracy, portrayed the bureaucrat as a professional dispassionately following well-defined orders. Weber saw no reason for the interests of


bureaucrats to diverge from those of their superiors. The Webrian bureaucrat had no room for discretionary action.

Critics of socialist resource allocation, Ludwig von Mises, Friederich von Hayek and Abram Bergson argued that the socialist bureaucracy's informational burden would be unmanageable and that, without market allocation, socialist managers would make poor decisions.11

The writers who formulated the theoretical foundations of planned socialism—Enrico Barone, Oskar Lange, Karl Marx and Lenin—failed to lay out the design of its bureaucracy.12 They paid little attention to bureaucratic matters, information or motivation. These thinkers felt that the elimination of class struggle would allow socialist bureaucrats to work in harmony. In effect the socialist writers had in mind a Weberian bureaucrat schooled in socialist principles.


12. Enrico Barone, The 19th Century Italian economist who laid the theoretical framework for socialist resource allocation, gave little thought to its bureaucratic requirements. Barone demonstrated that, in a world of perfect information and computation, planners could allocate resources efficiently. Barone's solution required conditions that would scarcely be met and he despaired of a real world socialist economy ever creating a planning bureaucracy that could produce his efficient solution. Oskar Lange's well known model of market socialism was conceived as an answer to the informational and computational problems of planned socialism. In Lange's model, most resource allocation decisions are made by the market, and the market assist planners in setting relative...
Socialist bureaucrats operate in a hierarchy of superior and subordinate organisations. At each level, bureaucratic agents take actions that serve their own goal. Subordinate organisations typically have more "local" information than their superiors. If the interest of the subordinate organisation differed from those of the superior, the subordinate organisation can take advantage of its greater information. A principal-agent relationship exists between bureaucrats at different levels. The subordinate bureaucrat acts as the agent for the superior bureaucrat, or the principal.

It is imperative in the Soviet context never to divorce the problem of power from that of administration of society. There was a gradual and almost inevitable accumulation of authority in the hands of a minority through the onerous task of managing a backward society, merely served to tighten the political strings which manipulated the bureaucracy and helped to turn an authoritarian system into a totalitarian one. It is a common knowledge that when a bureaucracy in the sense of

prices by trial and error. Lange devoted little attention to the bureaucratic arrangements required to implement his planning scheme. Lange wrote of a central planning board that would carry out the trial -&- error pricing, make investment decisions, and correct externalities.

Marxist-Leninist writings also fail to spell out the institutional details of the bureaucracy of planned socialism. Lenin did note that state planners would control only heavy industry, transport, banking during the early years of the socialist state and that this would limit their administrative burden. Contemporary Marxist-Leninist writers use vague notions such as "scientific planning", "proportional development", and "harmonious interests" to demonstrate the manageability of the bureaucratic problem.
rule by officials amasses enough power to pursue its own interests, it often tries to mould the social environment to its convenience. This what happened in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s.

The Soviet bureaucracy was a fusion of rule and administration by the same officials in a combined party-state system. From 1919 on, a full-time party apparatus greatly increased its administrative scope, infiltrated Soviets and other administrative structures, and subordinated both local party and government agencies to strong central control. By the 1930s, even in those areas where state administration survived as a distinctive structure it was penetrated and supervised by the party apparatus. In Nazi Germany there was a similar fusion of government and party offices. In fact, party-state bureaucracies have been identified as typical byproducts of totalitarian regimes.14

As Michal Reiman said Bolshevism certainly contained quite a few elements that contributed to the unfavourable direction taken by the Soviet governmental and social structure. The main problem was that in


the thinking of the Bolsheviks, the question of reaching socialism became increasingly separated from the question of mature economic, social and cultural preconditions, so that achieving socialism became almost entirely a matter of using the mechanism of state power. The political dictatorship of the party over society became a principle in itself. The socialisation of industry, finance and commerce was stripped of an essential part of its original social meaning; it was transformed into the construction of an independent economic base for the state.

More importantly, the revolution was accompanied by three years of destructive civil war and foreign intervention, which brought an unparalleled intensification of social antagonisms. A new plebian social stratum came to power, mainly an urban and military social group in which the substratum of Bolshevism was diluted. The group did not possess the necessary knowledge, experience or culture to administer. Moreover, the general concept it tried to introduce was not socialist, but the utopian and ultraegalitarian idea of "War Communism", which reflected the backwardness and immaturity of its environment. The normal mechanisms of the market, of money - commodity relations were rendered inoperative and social distinctions dropped to the common denominator of extreme poverty. Society functioned, but, almost exclusively through the use of force and administrative fiat.

The conditions of War Communism, for more than the influence of any theory, shaped the conceptions of the new ruling stratum in regard
to governmental structure and social life, which gave the new rulers a taste for the unchallenged use of power and violence. Concepts and methods were created that would last for many years, producing a moral and psychological mind-set that served as a highly favourable medium for the later growth of bureaucratic despotism. 15

The key consideration in any attempt to understand the bureaucratisation in the Soviet Union is that it was more a result of a deep and all-embracing crisis; it evolved as a special kind of instrument for finding a way out of this crisis. Such situations generally do not lead to favourable changes in social relations or bring out the positive aspects of political and social systems.

The problem of Stalinist bureaucratism must not be formulated simply as a problem of society taking the role of accelerated development toward industrial civilization and therefore using the instruments of state power on a very large scale. It was far more the problem of a people's revolution and its consequences in a country of semi-industrialization.

The October Revolution was essential a plebeian revolution that, despite the powerful role played by remnants of traditional socio-economic order, resulted in the implementation of a whole series of popular demands and aspirations which the previous forms of industrial civilization had obliterated. The result was that the magnitude of unsatisfied needs grew enormously, becoming the main cause of the crisis and demanding an exceptionally intense mobilization of social forces and resources.

But these circumstances were complicated by another aspect of the consequences of October 1917. In carrying out a programme of social change, the revolution not only destroyed the old mechanisms of industrial growth but, along with them, the social preconditions for those mechanisms. Here one must mention too pertinent problems. First, ties between the Russian and world economies were sharply curtailed because of the October Revolution. This substantially reduced the resources available for financing industrial growth. Foreign resources had to be replaced from within the Soviet Union, which significantly increased the burden on an ailing society and economy.

A second factor, no less important, was that the entire structure of agrarian relations was reorganised after the revolution which threw off the balance between the industrial and agrarian production. Significant disparities arose between industry and agriculture in their methods of functioning and rates of growth, making cooperation and coordination between them difficult.
The crisis in the USSR exerted a powerful pressure to mobilise the forces and resources of Soviet society and also to reorganise existing economic structure and social relations. Because of the general state of the productive forces and social labour, the reorganisation became secondary to the administrative mobilisation of resources, intensified growth in purely administrative forms of economic management, contributing to the emergence of an all-embracing system of state control over society.

The content of the crisis determined its possible consequences: excessive force and command and control system which were used in order to surmount it, undermined the essential gains of the Revolution. There arose a growing danger of social counterrevolution. The thermidorian bureaucracy arose from social background and this post-revolutionary crisis, was unfolding in a country emerging from an actue social upheaval and the new order was still clothed in tenuous forms that could easily be torn apart.

The accumulation of negative features in the social and political system of the USSR was hardly avoidable, but prompt political intervention could probably have reduced their severity. Intensive efforts to solve the crisis were undertaken only when it had entered its most severe stage. This created fertile soil in which most extreme and unhealthy solutions could thrive. The social pressure exerted on the broadest sections of the population far exceeded all imaginable limits, bringing all the negative
tendencies to a head.

During the rise this bureaucratic thermidor, social terror was an instrument of violent change, imposed the very worst forms of social oppression. Indeed political repression only supplemented social repression.\textsuperscript{16}

The implementation of this socio-economic and political programmes required the existence of a ruling stratum, separated from the people and dominating over them. In this regard, a certain aspect of the political struggle within the Soviet Communist Party necessarily deserves attention. Elements within the ruling stratum that tried to represent the interests of the people were suppressed.

The picture that can be reconstructed on the basis of the available material does not confirm the argument that Stalinism was accidental. Once it came into existence this bureaucratism acquired its own internal dynamic. The blocks laid in its foundation served as preconditions for its functioning and produced similar results for many years.

\textsuperscript{16}Within this framework, political terror was aimed at individuals, opponents of the system in general as well as opponents of Stalin's regime or Stalin himself. Political terror continued to have significance as a social instrument even though the functions it fulfilled differed from those of mass terror: it was used to reorganise the power structure, change the composition of the ruling stratum as a whole.
It remained a system with a unique and distinctive structure: an all-embracing totalitarianism; a system of extreme command and control, defined by the mechanism of the economy; a system of violent suppression of all contradictions in society, ruling out any expression of ideological or political disagreement.

Leaving aside serious social problems that accompanied Soviet economic growth, Soviet industrialisation was, on the whole, quite dynamic. This bestowed a certain authority on a whole series of bureaucracy's decisions, providing a basis for reproducing them. One may, however, seriously question whether such a reproduction by itself could cause the replication of the Stalinist system.

This does not mean that there is no substantial basis for questioning the role of socialist theory and ideology in the history of this bureaucratism. Socialist theory played a significant role in the development of the outward forms of the economic, social and state system in the USSR. Present-day anti-socialist views reflect only the negative sides of Soviet history. However, one cannot necessarily prove that the roots of Stalinist bureaucratic authoritarianism are found in the extremely destructive consequences of the application of socialist theory, or in the socialist movement itself. Neither could it be proved that in the development of the Soviet Union, socialist theory had priority over pragmatism in regard to the aims and tasks pursued by those in power.
However, today, it is hard to deny that socialism, with its theoretical and ideological constructs, suffers from a number of weak points. Socialism's main weakness is that no matter how strong it might be in the realm of social criticism, it has shown itself to be somewhat helpless and utopian in its positive programmes for attaining its social ideals. This weakness apparently, was one of the main reasons for the strong influence of the October Revolution and later of Stalinist totalitarianism on the ideological and theoretical conceptions and politics of radical socialists. Socialism, in its original meaning, should not be confused with Stalinist bureaucratic authoritarianism. This two systems of ideas are not only different, in many respects diametrically opposed.

For the success of the socialist system, there should be proper democracy at all levels, decentralisation, freedom of expression, workers' control over the means of production. However, in the Soviet Union, right from the 1920s, all remnants of independence were lost by the trade unions, which were supposed to be a bulwark of democracy, defending workers against the bureaucratic encroachments of the state apparatus. Opposing the view that trade unions should be made part of the state, Lenin wrote:

The trade unions cannot lose such a basic function as

non-class "economic-struggle", in the sense of struggle against bureaucratic perversions in the Soviet apparatus, in the sense of protecting the material and spiritual interests of the toiling masses by ways and means not available to that apparatus.¹⁸

However, the trade unions were rapidly transformed into a simple appendage of party and economic agencies.

Even the Soviets, both at the centre and in the provinces, originally organs of democracy and direct instruments of the people's rule, were made mere appendages of party committees, mute executors of directives coming from party agencies.

The party also suffered from violation of democracy during these years. Party leaders were in fact appointed "from above" after being hand-picked by higher party bodies. Naturally party leaders considered themselves responsible not to those below them but only to those above them. Gradually, many of them turned into simple executors of instructions. Thus, while a democratic system was preserved in form, in fact a bureaucratic hierarchy arose, with privileges for the functionaries increasing at each higher level.

Lenin often made the point that the workers' state derived its strength from the consciousness of the masses. It was strong when the masses knew everything, could pass judgement on every thing and do everything consciously. Of course, such consciousness can only be the result of prolonged education of the people to independence and a sense of responsibility to democracy and love of freedom. Unfortunately, the Soviet people did not have the chance to go through more than the beginning stages of such an education.

Marx and Engels, who foresaw the possibility of the bureaucratic degeneration of a proletarian state thought two measures would provide effective protection: the right to universal election and to recall all officials; and a level of salaries for officials not exceeding workers' wages. But, the degeneration of the Soviet state made those measures utopian, for in the Soviet social mechanism there were no means, no organisation, no institution, to guarantee the exercise of the people's democratic rights.

The political passivity of the people, the absence of real democracy, the high salaries, the extreme centralisation and lack of any popular control over the officials - all this generated an amazingly rapid growth of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy was not only a product of personality cult, it provided fertile soil for its continued growth.
Marx put it very well:

Bureaucracy considers itself the ultimate purpose of the state... The higher circles rely on lower in everything involving in knowledge of particulars; the lower circles trust the upper in everything involving and understanding of the universal, and does they lead each other into delusions... The universal spirit of bureaucracy is mystery, sacrament. Observance of these sacrament is ensured from within by hierarchical organisation... Authorities therefore, the criterion of knowledge, and the deification of authority is its manner of thought.

The lack of effective controls, the passivity of the masses and bureaucracy destroyed the masses belief that they were the real masters of their country. Under these conditions it was impossible to effectively instill in people a communist attitude toward labour.

The basic bureaucratic degeneration of the socialist system all over the world was caused by flawed political and institutional approaches. Today in the Soviet Union, Perestroika, or restructuring of the Soviet socio-political and economic system, is facing its toughest barriers from the bureaucracy. Alan Kassof describes the Soviet society as an administered society. As Alfred G. Meyer says that the communist systems are sovereign bureaucracies: a communist state becomes one single bureaucratic system extended over the entire society.
Gorbachev conveys to us that the fears expressed by Marx and Lenin regarding the possibilities of degeneration of a socialist state have proved to be true. "The bureaucracy", wrote Marx, "Possesses the substance of the state..., the state becomes its property". Lenin expressed the same viewpoint when he said that "Ours is workers' state with a bureaucratic twist to it". Marx was apprehensive of the possibilities of the administration becoming the monopoly, the speciality, the profession of one particular social group even in a socialist state and of an administered society arising in consequence. The braking mechanism of the bureaucracy is a by—product of the historically formed mechanism created by the administrative - bureaucratic usurpers of class-power, and of the deformation of economic-political system.

Lenin thought that a Soviet Russia had first to go through a stage of "state capitalism". This brought into being New Economic Policy. But with the coming of Stalin it was suddenly abandoned and came rapid industrialization and mass collectivization in the disguise of "socialism is one country". According to Daniel Bell, what actually emerged could not be socialism in any classic sense of the term. It could only be "raw communism" or a bureaucratic despotism, complete with new elite and a privileged class, yet disguised by a quasi-religion—the march of history.  

Here, the proposed study will try to explore the nature and causes of the development of bureaucratic despotism since the days of Lenin and Stalin. The party-state apparatus has been the chief brake on every structural reforms in the mechanism. Attempts to ease the path of economic reform proved to be futile in the presence of this rigid dominance of a party-state bureaucratic set-up. The main deformation of the political system took place due to three major lapses. First, a power structure was built after Lenin's death that ensured the emergence of authoritarianism and personalised rule. Secondly, the system of command and control stifled the logic of democratic centralism and eliminated the possibility of control either by the rank-and-file party members or by the legitimate constitutional bodies. Thirdly, the state became an elaborate instrument of centralised authority. The system handed over powers and functions to the bureaucratic structures.

For decades the apparatus sought legitimacy by introducing new programmes into social life, thinking about their correlation with the situations emerging in reality. It resulted in overstating and ideolisation of the programmes' aims, transformation of them into the system of appologetics of the "uninterrupted" ability of such type of socialism for new stages of development. As a result, a huge grotesque system for imitation of activity appeared in society, discrediting
intellect. The tragedy of the existing socialism is that it has never known any other forms of historical existence but for the bureaucratic-hierarchical system. That's why the formative years of Soviet bureaucratisation needs to be explained. The discussion on Marxism and its modifications by Lenin, Trotsky, and others for the construction of a socialist state in the specific context of Russia formed the ideological roots of bureaucratisation. The socio-economic condition of Russia at the advent of the Revolution and the situation in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution constitute the historical roots for the growth of the Bureaucratic Thermidor. The struggle for leadership, after Lenin's death, abrupt end to NEP and wholesale statisation of industry and trade and finally forced collectivisation and terror, firmly established the Soviet bureaucratic state.

As said Bell, Socialism, in the classic sense has not failed, for it was never tried in its healthiest character. It remains, like all ethical creeds, an ideal, a measure of potentiality and possibility against reality. That has always been the function of utopia. The mistake was to assume that utopia could come down from the mountain and assume human forms. The sociological problem today is the creation of viable social and political entities that give people some control over their policy, in the workplace, in the community.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 188.