

Klaus Weber:
Courage, Intelligence, and a Radical but Realistic Policy – the Breakdown of a Democratic Project

With his review of the Bavarian People's Councils' Republic (»Räterepublik«) and the historic events in the city of Kolbermoor the author attempts to explain the political conditions under which the People's and Worker's Councils in the aftermath of the First World War had to function. Using the example of the Revolutionary Workers Council of Kolbermoor and the mayor Georg Schuhmann he describes local political decision-making as part of a strategy known as »revolutionary realistic policy«. Courage, intelligence, and radicalism are the most important political attributes that are prerequisites for a true change in social relations.

Thomas Gerlach:
**The Making of the »Omni-disposable« Human.
On the psychological creation of subjects in
neoliberal capitalism**

The effects of neoliberal ideologies have influenced the lives of many people in ways they themselves would not even concede. The deterioration of living standards is being felt everywhere. This is precisely what provokes the question of why those affected simply submit to what is happening to them. Thomas Gerlach attempts to answer this question by undertaking the »psychoanalysis« of neoliberalism. In view of the predictable deterioration of real living standards, neoliberalism has had to resort to, what is known as »endowment of life with meaning«, which emphasises identity and identification – i.e. vigorous creation of political awareness – in order to ensure loyalty to its policies and structures. The result is a »submissive attitude to the situation« which, at the same time, is not reluctantly accepted but apparently voluntarily and without resistance. The ultimate target is to create the omni-disposable service economy human being, who personally (and without a murmur) expends his energy making ends meet. Not only is this strategy accompanied by the destruction of welfare-state systems but also by an attempt to transfer the contradiction between capital and labour »onto« the individual. Humans are being made to conform, in every respect, to the expectations of capital.

Bernhard Walpen: Deliberations on the History of Neo-Liberalism

Neo-Liberalism (or neo-classical economics) is presently, despite all fundamental criticism, the predominating economic theory, enjoying tremendous influence in all economic spheres of policy. A closer appraisal of the historical background of this school of economic thought reveals, surprisingly enough, that public opinion is characterised by myths and ignorance. Therefore Bernhard Walpen attempts, first of all, to explore the roots of Neo-Liberalism and the evolution of its doctrines over the past few decades. His conclusion is that for more than half a century, neo-liberal theories have produced various (even contradictory) versions that can be reduced to the common denominator of anti-etatism in economic policy and a plea for unbridled competition. Their remarkable political influence results, not least of all, from the fact that neo-liberal protagonists are internationally organised in the Mont Pèlerin Society.

Rainer Rilling: Internet and political education

If power is not everything in politics but still constitutes the essence of politics, then democratic political education should render the individual capable of recognising and handling power in his own interests to reach democratic objectives. This political education views power from the perspective of the rank and file. It signifies empowerment. Mass media, including internet, are both the subject and the means by which political education processes take place. With internet, new learning locations and environments have become possible (telelearning). There are special problems of implementation and it becomes necessary to develop new competence in its utilisation. Whether the social and political gap that currently characterises the use of internet can be overcome, as well as, if the internet can become more than simply a democratic political education tool used by a social minority, are open questions - and therefore realistic options.