

In this issue

In the last forty years, left liberalism and postmodernism have stamped their marks both on the intellectual milieu and on the workers movement.. Those currents, including post-Marxism, post-structuralism, post-Fordism, and globalization theory, albeit being predicated on the separate theoretical bases, have common characteristics. Exponents, overwhelmingly ex-Marxists, of those currents argue that the global-scale “information revolution” dislodged the working class as the agent of change, and that the nation-states lost their privileged position in organizing and maintaining the world market. In a fully-integrated world, they preach, imperialism is to be replaced by inter-dependency, and thus no more wars.

The main problem according to that optimistic perspective is then how to realize “radical democracy”, which is said to confer equal rights on different identities, in the face of neoliberal policies that strengthen the “magnates” and dismantle the networks of social solidarity. However a conspicuous agnosticism is noticed in the statements by the postmodernist luminaries, from Žižek to Negri, when it comes to on what common ground those different identities can be gathered and how they can achieve a more democratic society.

In a speech supportive of the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations, Žižek was supposedly encouraging as follows: “We are not dreamers. We are ones being awakened from a dream-turned-into-nightmare”. We are not sure if the Žižekians are awakened from their dreams, but it is clear that *the real* world is a true nightmare shattering the postmodernist optimism. The third great depression of the world economy going on since the 70s and being deepened by the financial collapse of 2008 has debunked all postmodernist arguments and foresights, whether they be related to economy or politics.

New technologies expected and touted by postmodernism to be harbinger of the end of inequalities have even exacerbated them; space rivalry among the billionaires versus forty one million people facing starvation. Oxfam recently released a report

Revolutionary Marxism 2022

stating that 3.3 billion people of the world population to reach 8 billion in near future will be earning less than 5.5 dollars on daily basis. The assertion that we live in a global world based on inter-dependency, which has diminished the importance of the nation states, has been rebutted by the protectionist policies and tariff wars in the post-2008 crisis period. The state interventions, which are accompanied by the international economic and military blocs taking different forms, have reached an unprecedented level. It has also been peddled that war is no longer a possibility in a globalized world. We witness, on the contrary, that imperialist states wage local and regional proxy wars against the unyielding regimes. Furthermore, as is seen in the case of the Ukrainian war, the risk of nuclear war threatens the world. Many have harped on the “farewell to the working-class”. The last pandemic crystal-clearly showed, however, that the production and reproduction processes and international supply chains would come to a halt without the working-class. Last but not least, the dark clouds of racism, misogyny and fascism loom ominously over the fancy projection of a “global and more democratic society” built on equality among different identities. In the U.S, for example, the anti-abortion laws are passed; the racist attacks on black people escalate; genocide-prone anti-Semitic sentiments become rampant among the supporters of Trump.

On the other hand, class struggles intensify and spread from one country to another. A wave of unionization has taken place in the U.S. The United Kingdom witnesses a string of strikes in many sectors, especially in the transportation services after a forty year long lull. European people, from the U.K. to the Czech Republic, takes to the streets against the rise in the cost of living induced by Russia cutting off gas supply to the continent as a retaliation against the military aid to the Ukrainian regime. The slogan “we can’t afford” is also echoed in the streets, factories and workplaces of Latin America, Southeast Asia, Middle East and Africa, and of Turkey as well.

We start this issue and the first dossier “Imperialism and War”, with the final statement of the *Emergency International Anti-War Conference against NATO’s proxy war in Ukraine* (25-26 June 2022), which was called by the International Socialist Center Christian Rakovsky and the RedMed web network. This political event, attended by a large number of participants from all continents, aimed to urgently call the international working class to action on the basis of an anti-war, anti-imperialist revolutionary policy against the aggression of imperialism and to organize a line of struggle step by step. In this direction, at the conference, participants from many countries of the world exchanged views on the character of the Ukrainian war, the direction of imperialism and what kind of an anti-imperialist struggle should be waged against it. We can say that the basic determinations and predictions of the final declaration published at the end of the conference have already been confirmed by the steps taken by NATO within the framework of the new strategic concept announced at the Madrid summit at the end of June, and by the USA’s provocation of China on Taiwan in this direction.

In the second article of this dossier, Sungur Savran provides an in-depth study of the Ukraine war, which he sees as the harbinger of a new world war. Having characterised the Ukraine war from day one a NATO-Russia war with Ukraine as

a proxy for imperialism, Sungur Savran tests this through a meticulous scrutiny of the evidence that has been accumulating since the beginning of the war and finds that the hypothesis derived from the pre-history of the war proves to fit the characteristics of the war in perfect manner. Savran then moves over to an analysis of the *NATO 2022 Strategic Concept* document adopted at the Madrid Summit and finds the same tendency towards a new world war inscribed in that document. He castigates the majority of the international left for siding with imperialism and predicts a radical restructuring of the international left, in which process the position taken on the Ukraine war will be a major criterion.

Savran's analysis is followed by Levent Dölek's article, written in the first months of the war in Ukraine. In a moment when a tendency of neutrality became apparent among the left in Turkey and around the world, Dölek's article puts forward that this war is a war between NATO and Russia in itself. Dölek's analysis confutes the "Russian imperialism" thesis, which is the main justification for a neutral position regarding the war.

The second dossier of *Revolutionary Marxism 2022*, is on the fierce battle between Marxism and post-modernism. An introductory text on the leading motives for preparing such a dossier from the issue No.50 of our Turkish edition is the first article of this dossier also here.

The second article of the dossier is a piece by Sungur Savran. His article on postmodernism is not really a philosophical/theoretical critique of this school of thought, but rather a critical history. Savran rejects out of hand the major claim of this current to the effect that we have entered the age of postmodernity as opposed to the modern age. Rather than this fashionable fiction, the article looks at the much more palpable question of the material-practical preconditions of the rise of postmodernism as an ideological construct. It looks for answers to questions of the following kind: The article seeks answers to the following questions about post-modernism: What do postmodernists and the spokespersons of related movements say and represent, not in terms of philosophical arguments, but in terms of a concrete approach to the problems of the world we live in? In what ways and through what stages did the dissemination and popularization of these ideas take place as a concrete process? Why did this development occur precisely after 1968, when there was a great revolutionary upsurge? Why did these thoughts not remain specific to a limited period of time after 1968, but on the contrary, left their mark on an entire era, a whole half century for the time being? What kind of developments in the political field accompanied this earthquake in the field of thought? At the opposite end of the impact of political life on the ideological sphere, what kind of effect did this development in the ideological field have on politics? More generally, it can be said that with the materialist method, Savran examines the socio-economic and political foundations and class character of the currents of thought criticized in this issue and the identity politics rising on them.

In the third article of the dossier titled "The closing of the age of Post-Marxism", Özgür Öztürk argues that the material conditions for socialism to make a new breakthrough are maturing, but the dominance of the political-ideological patterns specific to the neoliberal period still continues. He discusses the necessity of a

Revolutionary Marxism 2022

class-centered hegemony strategy against the forms of “identity politics” that have become prevalent on the left over the past decades. In this respect, he criticizes the theory of Post-Marxism put forward by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in detail. According to Öztürk, this approach, which calls itself “Post-Marxist”, argues that politics (conflict and antagonism processes) is ontologically primary, and turns to the idea of “the impossibility of society”. It goes beyond denying the thesis of the decisiveness of the economic infrastructure and advances to the claim that there is no economic “instance” as a separate level. From this point of view, Post-Marxism rejects the “exclusive” role of the working class in the anti-capitalist struggle. Öztürk shows that this theory cannot suggest a “socialist strategy” at all, but can only reflect a state of lack of strategy. He argues that today’s enlarged working class will provide the most natural and logical starting point for a new project of socialism that will go beyond capitalism.

Hasan Refik’s article, the fourth text in this dossier, “Stalinism as the meek enemy of the bourgeoisie,” draws attention to the miserable track record of Stalinism in the field of class struggle through four topics and four case studies. It warns against the prospect of giving this zombie of an ideology a second lease on life by recalling how it stood as an obstacle, time and again, to workers’ quest to topple capitalism. Highlighting the fact that stymying revolutionary surges was not a bug but a feature of Stalinism, this article should be read as a plea for embracing Revolutionary Marxism to lead the revolutions of the 21st century.

The last article of the issue is Savas Matsas’ analysis of Trotsky as philosopher. According to Matsas, a close examination of every step of Trotsky’s long, epic and tragic itinerary demonstrates his constant attention to philosophy at the service of revolution: from the years of his youth in struggle against Czarism, in prisons and in exile, to his involvement in the 1905 Russian Revolution as Chairman of the first Soviet in history to his leading role in the October 1917 Revolution, in the Red Army, in the first period of the Communist Third International, as well, later, at the head of the Left Bolshevik Opposition and at the founding of the Fourth International up to his assassination in Mexico in 1940. In his article, Matsas, focuses on some of the major turning points of this remarkable trajectory, where crucial philosophical issues were raised to guide historical-political orientation, perspective, and strategy. This article is presented in a “flowing dossier” on “The Legacy of Marxism” that we started in our previous issue, Revolutionary Marxism 2021, with articles on Engels (including one by Matsas himself), Lenin, and Rosa Luxemburg. We intend to continue publishing articles under this title in our future issues.

International Anti-Imperialist and Anti-War Declaration

International Socialist Center Christian
Rakovsky and Redmed

The Emergency Anti-War International Conference against the NATO proxy war in Ukraine called by the International Socialist Center “Christian Rakovsky” and RedMed.org web network on June 25-26, 2022 was undoubtedly an important international political event.

The decision for the Conference was taken in the Preparatory Meeting of the Rakovsky Center on May 22, 2022, and consequently, the Invitation issued by the Rakovsky Center on June the 1st addressed a large spectrum of the revolutionary left and communist Parties, organizations, movements, Marxist theoretical journals and independent militants from different traditions from all over the world found an impressive response. It is reflected in the large number of dozens of participants from all the Continents (Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia) and from 26 countries that joined the Conference in two days of intensive work.

*First of all, those Marxist parties, organizations and militants in countries involved or affected directly in the current war front of the international conflagration dramatically changed the political configuration scene of the world: **from Ukraine and the Russian Federation**, as well as **Belarus** and countries of the former Soviet space and bloc, from Central/Eastern Europe **Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria**, to the Caucasus and Central Asia, **Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan**.*

*From **Europe** as a whole, **Finland, Italy, France, the Spanish State, Britain,***