

In this issue

This edition of the English-language version of our quarterly Turkish-language theoretical journal *Devrimci Marksizm* is somewhat special. For this year on May Day the journal will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of its launch with a special issue (number 62). Before the usual process of hand-to-hand distribution and bookshop sales, issue 62 will be distributed on May Day on the streets of Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Gebze (the city that we have named "the proletarian capital of Turkey"), Lüleburgaz (European Turkey) and wherever else our comrades may be marching for May Day. The first issue was first distributed during the May Day march and demonstration in Istanbul 20 years ago, to bring home to friend and foe that this is no "neutral" instrument of knowledge and discussion, but a militant journal that unambiguously takes the side of the working class in the struggle of the classes, working to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat in unabashed manner and this not only in Turkey and our region but the world over.

Through a lucky coincidence, this year is also the 10th anniversary of this journal *Revolutionary Marxism*, the English-language annual edition of the same journal, for the first issue came out in 2017, which makes this issue, *Revolutionary Marxism* 2026 our issue number 10. We are very happy that through the tireless efforts of our Editorial Board and our Collective and the contribution of many well-equipped authors from Turkey and from around the world, we have established a sound and well-structured centre for Marxist discussion and intervention in Turkey and abroad and wish to share our consequent exuberance with you. Many happy returns!

The new issue of *Revolutionary Marxism* finds the world inching ever closer to a third nuclear world war, with one provocation after another by US-led imperialism. As this issue goes to print, in the wake of an unprovoked aggression by the US and Israel against Iran in the midst of negotiations – once again, following the same script

as June 2025 – the latter has been fighting a righteous defensive war. *Revolutionary Marxism* as a journal, and the true followers of revolutionary Marxism as a political tradition, stand unwaveringly by Iran in its war of survival against imperialism and its proxies in the Gulf.

Aggression against Iran comes on the heels of the imperialist aggression against Venezuela. While things still can take a different turn, at least at this first stage, the US imperialist strategy consisting of kidnapping the country's legitimate president, Nicolas Maduro, and counting on another faction of the Venezuelan government, led by Delcy Rodriguez, acting as Quislings, achieved notable success. The relative success of this imperialist aggression, against which we stand firmly by any resistance that might develop from within Venezuela, seems to also further encourage US President Donald Trump and his administration. Almost two weeks into the war on Iran, it should be painfully clear to those overly confident imperialist bigwigs that Iran is no Venezuela and the world is not their oyster.

But the impact of the outcome of one imperialist aggression in encouraging another one should also make another point clear for us, revolutionary Marxists, who are the jealous defenders of the workers' state in Cuba, that sacrosanct legacy of Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. The success of the resistance by Iran and its allies against imperialist encroachment will directly inform the following steps against Cuba, which has already been openly named as their next target by US officials. So, to paraphrase the Palestinian communist Najati Sidqi who, upon joining the Spanish republican forces during the civil war, once stated that he "came to defend Damascus in Guadalajara [*Wadi al-Hajara*], Jerusalem in Cordoba, Baghdad in Toledo, Cairo in Cadiz, and Tetouan in Burgos", it is also, in practical consequence, Havana being defended in Tehran.

Whereas the war in West Asia (the Middle East) is at the forefront of world politics, the dynamics of crisis and imperialist aggression progress on other fronts, too. In Ukraine, the war waged by NATO against Russia through its Ukrainian proxy continues unabated, with multiple rounds of negotiations yielding no results. Russia's slow but continuous advance grinds forward, with Ukraine finding it more and more difficult to convince its imperialist overlords, particularly the US, to provide it with arms while imperialist armies and munitions are bogged down on other fronts.

The bid of the Kurdish population, living under the rule of four different West Asian countries, for national liberation also faces a moment of steep challenges. Encouraged by the imprisoned historical leader of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) political tradition, which has been leading the Kurdish struggle in Turkey and Syria, in addition to being a considerable actor in the Kurdish political scene in Iran, the disarmament of the PKK in Turkey is still officially on the agenda, even if it has hardly advanced in a year. Yet the turning tides in the region for the Kurdish struggle were

laid particularly bare in Rojava, a semi-autonomous region in Syria that has been led by Kurdish forces. The Turkish-backed Syrian government, at present controlled by the Takfiris of Ahmad al-Sharaa, moved its forces on Rojava, now deprived of US protection, and quickly scored military victories that forced the Rojava leadership to accept the integration of the region into the new Syria, yielding to less-than-advantageous conditions.

Under these circumstances, it should come as no surprise that *Revolutionary Marxism 2026* dedicates a sizeable space to political statements as well as Marxist analyses on the imperialist war against Iran, the Kurdish question, new developments in West Asia, as well as the trajectories of various imperialist actors from the US to the European Union.

First, in a statement that we are republishing, the Revolutionary Workers Party (DIP) of Turkey shows its full support for Iran against imperialist and Zionist aggression, emphasizing that there is no room for neutrality in this war. It urges all anti-imperialist forces to mobilize for the defeat of the U.S. and Israel, framing this as an essential quest for the freedom of all peoples in West Asia.

This declaration by the Revolutionary Workers' Party (DIP) intervenes sharply in the debate around the so-called "Turkey without terrorism" process by rejecting both the state's official narrative and the Kurdish movement's presentation of the initiative as a path to peace and democratization. Arguing that the process is neither a genuine peace initiative nor a democratic opening, the text characterizes it instead as an "oil opening" shaped by the expansionist interests of the colonial bourgeoisie under imperialist auspices. From this standpoint, it analyzes the dissolution of the PKK, the role of secret diplomacy, the function of authoritarian rule within the process, the debates on a new constitution, the question of the "right to hope," and the regional context defined by Syria, Iraq, Iran, NATO, and Israel. Against both colonialist bourgeois politics and opportunist adaptations on the left, the declaration defends an anti-imperialist and internationalist restructuring of Kurdish-Turkish relations on the basis of full equality among peoples, opposition to NATO and imperialist bases, and the revolutionary struggle for a Socialist Federation of West Asia and North Africa.

Then comes an appeal by the Editorial Board of *Devrimci Marksizm/Revolutionary Marxism* to Kurdish workers, labourers and intellectuals. Originally published in Turkish in 2025 in issue number 60 of the journal *Devrimci Marksizm*, our Turkish-language mother publication, the call takes objection to the postmodern line of argumentation that Abdullah Öcalan developed in his call in 2025. On the basis of concrete examples of the Kurdish struggle for liberation, this call serves as a timely reminder that newly-found postmodernism and the strategy that was developed on this basis brought nothing but unfortunate defeats for the Kurdish people.

Passing on to the articles in this issue, Alp Yücel Kaya, in his article titled "A cen-

tury of Kurdish rebellions and insurrections: the Sheikh Said Insurrection (1925),” examines the bourgeois fractions that set sail toward a new world on the road to 1923, the provincial bourgeoisie that remained in the minority and opposed them, and the struggle that emerged among bourgeois classes after 1923. In this context, he focuses on the development of the Kurdish bourgeoisie and the Sheikh Said Insurrection. First, this article analyzes the classes in the Eastern countryside from the Tanzimat period, 1839 onwards to the Republic, their transformations, and the class struggles that arose as a result. It then examines the relations between the Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisies during the National Struggle period. Finally, while discussing the rupture between the Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisies, it addresses the Sheikh Said Insurrection, where the struggle between bourgeois fractions reached its peak, and in this context debates, the so-called “revolutionary laws”, the 1924 Constitution, the abolition of the tithe in 1925, the Law on the Maintenance of Order of 1925, the 1926 Civil Code, and their social impacts. While the insurrection is commonly associated with Sheikh Said, it is important to acknowledge the significant role played by the oppressed classes, despite their subordinate position. In the aftermath of World War II, the nature of Kurdish uprisings and revolts underwent a transformation, shifting towards movements rooted in the exploited classes. Consequently, the struggle evolved from a conflict between the Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisies to increasingly embody the characteristics of an uprising by an oppressed nation.

Our rich dossier on world politics is kicked off by Sungur Savran’s relatively brief article “What Is Trump’s Final Goal: Ten Brief Theses”. The author has been writing on the Donald Trump phenomenon for exactly a decade now, since before his first election victory of 2016, doggedly insisting, in the face of almost universal denial until the storming of the Capitol by MAGA hordes, that the man stood, even from that early stage, for a different kind of politics in the US and world contexts, which placed him in the same league as the so-called “right-wing populists” of Europe and elsewhere. According to Savran’s own characterization, those European movements were proto-fascist in their overall make-up, meaning that although possessing all the other characteristics of the classical fascism of the 1930s, they nonetheless were not fully-fledged fascist parties because they lacked the violent paramilitary dimension. Trump was different from them only by his lack of a disciplined party. He now has overcome that disadvantage, thanks to the MAGA movement and his firm hold on the Republican party. In this piece, Savran takes another step and situates Trump’s international strategy within the overall quagmire international capitalism finds itself in as a result of the Third Great Depression that is the result of its historic decline. The depression has shown that capitalism is not able to overcome this quagmire through its own regular methods of capitalist commodity production, i.e. the market mechanism, and that therefore the mightiest capitalist nation is now undertaking to bring all

nations under its political supremacy, by force and coercion every time this is needed, in order to save world capitalism from the inextricable quandary it has been thrown into. No part of Trump's strategy is independent of this overarching grand objective.

The dossier continues with Mehmet Tevfik's analysis of the new tendencies in the West Asian (Middle Eastern) political scene. Written before the start of the latest episode of imperialist-Zionist aggression against Iran and Lebanon, Tevfik's text underlines a range of new dynamics that will come into play in the upcoming years. First, Tevfik contends, without underestimating the military potentialities of Iran and its allies, that the 2024 defeats served as the beginning of a decline in the Axis of Resistance's role as the hegemonic force of anti-Zionist politics in the region, comparable to Nasserism's trajectory after 1967. He then observes the tendencies for rising competition among the allies of US imperialism in the region, mostly ranged as Israel-UAE on one side, and Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt on the other. Plus, he asserts that a Zionist strategy around the so-called Periphery Doctrine is making a comeback in the region under a different form and with the backing of the UAE. While soberly observing the combined effects of these dynamics in the region, Mehmet Tevfik posits that the only way out for our region is through anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist politics led by a coherent socialist leadership based on the laboring classes.

Burak Saygan's article deals with the European Union as an imperialist project. Saygan historicizes the development of the European Union and its precursors as a push for imperialist survival in a context where the US and Soviet Union were rapidly replacing the old continent as the center of world politics. Objecting to a range of myths about the EU as a project of democracy, Saygan illustrates that from the very beginning, the European Union was a colonial project that remained loyal to its origins. In addition, through the recent tendencies in European politics, Saygan shows that the European Union is inherently compatible with fascist politics, which could soon be the leading force of this imperialist body.

In his article, Ertuğrul Oruç, General Secretary of the Istanbul Medical Chamber, exposes the shameful silence of international medical institutions in the face of Israel's genocidal destruction of Gaza's healthcare system and its deliberate targeting of hospitals, ambulances, and healthcare workers. He argues that the World Medical Association's initial position of so-called neutrality, by equating oppressor and oppressed and rendering Israel's responsibility invisible, effectively functioned as a cover for a pro-Israeli line. Against this silence, the struggle initiated on the one hand the British Medical Chamber and, on the other by the Istanbul Medical Chamber Solidarity Working Group with Palestine and carried onto the international plane by the Turkish Medical Association, opened up a real breach through the unanimous adoption of the Porto resolution at the World Medical Association General Assembly. The article shows that this outcome was won through organised pressure, internation-

al solidarity, and anti-Zionist political intervention. It insists, finally, that solidarity with Palestine in the field of health must be sustained, organised, and expanded into a lasting line of struggle.

The next article in this issue is, in a certain sense, on how a communist life should be lived. There is an exceptional Russian communist, now living and struggling in the city where the Great October Revolution occurred, Petrograd by its name at that time, later to become Leningrad, and today officially St. Petersburg. Iosif Grigorievitch Abramson is on the verge of becoming 100 years old and has been a communist during his whole conscious life. In different periods in his life, he went through a lot of soul searching because of the Stalinist terror that shook both the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet state to their roots, but he never confounded the gains of the revolution and the bureaucratic repression and always stayed faithful to the programmatic objective of communism and a classless society. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, he remained a solid communist, struggling as one of the prominent leaders of the Russian Party of Communists, one of the three Russian organisations now members of the International Socialist Center “Christian Rakovsky”, to which we at the DIP (Revolutionary Workers Party) in Turkey, as well as our Greek sister party the EEK (Workers Revolutionary Party), also belong.

Comrade Iosif very early on corresponded with the world-famous Turkish communist poet Nazım Hikmet, who was then living, from 1951 on, in exile in Moscow. He wrote to Nazım Hikmet apropos his play *Did Ivan Ivanovitch Exist or Didn't He?*, which contained an honestly outspoken critique of the rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy, written even before the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, during which the new Secretary General of the party Nikita Khrushchev condemned Stalin’s “excesses”. The Turkish-language version of our journal, *Devrimci Marksizm*, a quarterly publication that has now reached its twentieth anniversary, published the correspondence between Iosif Grigorievitch Abramson and Nazım Hikmet in its issue No. 20, a special issue that was devoted to the great poet.

The English-language edition of our journal, *Revolutionary Marxism*, has also published several articles by Iosif Abramson in the past: “Marx’s Forecast Has Come True, Science Has Become the Leading Productive Force” in the 2020 edition, “Systematization of the Reasons for the Failure of Most Socialist Projects” in the 2021 edition, and “The Dialectics of Proletarian Revolution and the Creation of the Union of Europe and Asia Soviet Republics” in 2024. There is also a brief introduction to Iosif G. Abramson by our comrade Savas Michael-Matsas in the 2020 edition.

We are publishing here, in celebration of his approaching centenary, his 100-year long life devoted to communism, an article from his own pen that surveys his life and times, together with his struggles as a communist. In this article, Abramson revisits the Soviet experience not as a closed chapter of the twentieth century, but through the

memories and reflections of a life shaped by its upheavals. He traces the contradiction between the revolutionary promise of October and the Stalinist terror and the bureaucratic degeneration behind that terror that led to its degeneration. Abramson argues that the Soviet Union's historic achievements were rooted in the emancipatory energies released in 1917, while its degeneration and eventual collapse were bound up with the destruction of workers' democracy and what he describes as unresolved Stalinism. What emerges is not only a memoir of a vanished world, but also a historical and political reckoning with the fate of the Soviet project.

As already mentioned, Abramson's party is a member of the Rakovsky Centre, where we are all together, Marxists and communists of many different countries, working towards the regeneration of the revolutionary International of Lenin and Trotsky. We wish our comrade Iosif a long, long life and hope to see him among us as we move closer and closer to that noble objective.

One of our *hors dossier* articles, that of our Romanian comrade Ana Bazac, is on a topic very relevant to today's world of rampant weaknesses on the left around the world: the question of how to pursue electoral day-to-day politics without falling into the traps of "parliamentary cretinism", to use a concept admirably coined by Friedrich Engels in the heat of the German and European revolutions of 1848, or, in other words, how to pursue a discourse and tactics through which we can wrest gains from the ruling classes while at the same time raising the consciousness of the workers rather than limiting that consciousness within the boundaries of the existing society, within the limits of what is possible at every given moment, as the inconsistent left does systematically. Bazac starts out with an exciting poem by Mihai Eminescu, the "greatest Romanian poet" (her words), a poem that was first composed in 1871, even before the Paris Commune, but bore the title of "Emperor and Proletarian", nakedly posing the question of class struggle, without a corresponding knowledge of Marxism. Drawing lessons from this, she then delves into the methodology of a realistic policy that resonates with the people but never lets itself be suctioned into the capitalist system, never permits assimilation into the mainstream maze of political life. Bazac's contribution is one that joins a long process of reflection on this difficult question in a philosophical and methodological fashion.

Since the disintegration of the USSR, it has become an almost sacrosanct tradition of Soviet Marxism to hold international conferences in Leningrad (nowadays officially St. Petersburg) on different aspects of Marxism and communism every year in November, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Great October Revolution. For a certain number of years the central part fell to Plekhanov House, National Library of Russia, Saint-Petersburg Branch, but over the years many different organisations joined in a collective effort to sustain this tradition. Last year's conference was organised, along with Plekhanov House, by three other organisations, i.e. the Institute of

the History of Natural Science and Technology Center for Modern Marxist Studies, Lomonosov Moscow State University and the Association for Marxist Social Science, on the topic of “Socio-Philosophical Ideas of Historical Formation. Marxism Today: Condition, Problems, Contradictions, General Directions of Evolution, and Prospects”. The four articles in this dossier were presented to that conference and are therefore necessarily concise and brief interventions with little to no reference to the literature.

In his article titled “Marxism in the Epoch of Capitalist Decline,” Savas Mikhail-Matsas stresses that today’s global turmoil reflects not just the decline of US hegemony but the deeper historical decay of world capitalism as a whole: the breakdown of the postwar order, repeated economic crises since the 1970s, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the unstable aftermath, escalating conflict among major powers, climate disaster, pandemic shocks, and rising social polarization all signal that capitalism has entered an advanced stage of systemic decline. Rejecting surface-level analogies such as the “Thucydides trap” or simple comparisons to pre-World War I rivalries, the author insists that Lenin’s view of imperialism as the epoch of capitalist decay remains the key framework, and that the decline of the United States, as the center of global capitalism, expresses the exhaustion of the entire system rather than the fall of one nation alone. Drawing on Marx, Hegel, and Lenin, the article presents capitalist decline as a contradictory, non-linear, dialectical process in which capital increasingly collides with its own limits, making global chaos the visible form of a self-dissolving system and of an emerging higher social possibility. For Michael-Matsas, the transition beyond capitalism will not happen automatically but requires conscious revolutionary struggle, led by the working class through independent mass organizations and an international revolutionary party, so that humanity can resolve the crisis through world socialism rather than sink further into barbarism.

In his paper published in the Leningrad dossier, Sungur Savran casts a brief glance at the possible question of how and to what extent different traditions of Marxist thinking of the twentieth century will have an impact on the formation of a more universal and internationalist Marxism in the twenty-first century. Savran’s point of departure is that the end of the bipolar world of the twentieth century, despite all the negative consequences of the collapse and disintegration of the bureaucratized workers states, eliminated the almost insuperable barriers that existed between Marxist currents in the world system. This makes it possible to imagine a fruitful process of crossing, cross-pollination, hybridization and a possible synthesis, in the present century, of the different currents of Marxism of the previous century. Savran admits that the candidates to be considered are numerous, but selects four of them for scrutiny: Western Marxism, national liberation Marxism, Soviet Marxism (minus the “national communism” represented by Stalinism and its offshoots), and finally

revolutionary Marxism, which the author succinctly defines as the internationalist Marxism of second-generation figures such as Lenin, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg and Gramsci. In concluding, Savran makes a plea for a Marxism that never swerves away from the following principles: class struggle, the historic role of the proletariat, the necessity of revolution, unbending anti-imperialism, and proletarian internationalism.

In his article titled “Evolution of the Concept of Economic and Social Formation to World History,” Yuri Shakhin examines the development of the Marxist concept of economic and social formation, tracing its origins from the Enlightenment and the works of Marx and Engels to its contemporary state in post-Soviet scholarship. Shakhin contends that although Marx and Engels provided foundational outlines of historical stages, they did not establish a comprehensive, systematic “universal passport” for world history. He elaborates on how Soviet historical scholarship in the 1930s institutionalized a rigid “five-stage” linear framework (primitive, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and communism), which eventually evolved into a political dogma that struggled to accommodate empirical evidence, particularly concerning non-European “Oriental” societies. Shakhin investigates alternative frameworks proposed by Soviet and Russian scholars, such as Kobishchanov, Ilyushechkin, Krylov, and Semionov, who developed more complex models. The article concludes by addressing the current crisis of the concept of economic and social formation in the former USSR, noting that while the field has experienced stagnation for decades, the development of a global perspective on human progress remains an essential task for Marxist theory.

Michael Konashev explores the historical trajectory of Marxism under its different guises. Focusing on Marxism as an object, a subject, and an instrument of research – a combination that Konashev names the trinity of Marxism – he asserts that different Marxist traditions are the result not simply of misunderstandings but rather of different developments of these three aspects of Marxism in different contexts. Distinguishing between an authentic and deformed Marxism, Konashev contends that “the failures and defeats of Marxism are primarily and mainly related to the violation of the trinity of Marxism.”

Antonio Negri is no doubt one of the most influential left-wing thinkers of the last half century. As Volkan Sakarya makes clear in the next article in this dossier, his thinking evolved quite substantially over the years. His latest period has been marked by almost constant collaboration with Michael Hardt. The paradigmatic work of this pair is no doubt *Empire*, published in 2000. The year we have left behind, 2025, thus marked a life of a quarter of a century for the book. Sungur Savran presents a two-dimensional view of *Empire*, on the one hand refuting each and every major thesis put forward by its authors on contemporary capitalism on the basis of clear and systematic theoretical argument and, on the other, comparing the propositions put

forward in the book with respect to the fundamental traits of our world today, a quarter of a century later, and showing that this is a work that accomplishes a feat rarely possible to see in the history of ideas: in Savran's own words, "no book has been so thoroughly refuted by practical life as *Empire*."

Then, Volkan Sakarya reconstructs Antonio Negri's intellectual trajectory—from *operaismo/autonomia* through the Spinozist turn, biopolitical synthesis, and the globalist architecture of Empire–Multitude–Commonwealth to the late organizational writings—as a systematic liquidation of Marxist dialectics. Sakarya argues that Negri progressively dissolves four categorical dimensions indispensable to revolutionary praxis: stratification (collapsing Marx's differentiated levels into a flat plane of immanent productivity), negativity (replacing determinate negation with affirmative overflow), mediation (erasing the organizational and institutional articulations through which fragmented struggles acquire strategic coherence), and grounded agency (abstracting the revolutionary subject from its determinate position within exploitative relations). Deploying both immanent and transcendental critique, Sakarya demonstrates that Negri's flat ontology generates performative contradictions while removing the categorical preconditions for any coherent communist project. Against this dissolution, the article defends the irreplaceable necessity of dialectical materialism—stratification, determinate negation, institutional mediation, and grounded collective agency—as the condition through which revolutionary transformation becomes materially thinkable and strategically executable.

As we always place book reviews at the end of our issues, we reproduce the important piece by Charles Post, published originally in the *Spectre* Journal, as the final piece of this issue. The book he reviews, *In the Tracks of Marx's Capital: Debates in Marxian Political Economy and Lessons for 21st Century Capitalism*, is a collection of essays written by Sungur Savran and E. Ahmet Tonak. According to Post, *Capital's* main arguments generally inspire continuing debates on the origins, dynamics and future of capitalism but especially in times of a world economy with longstanding depression and secular decline in profit rates, its inspiration for further theoretical and empirical research on capitalism becomes more important. Post emphasizes that this collection of essays, leaning on critical appropriation of Hegel's dialectical method as Marx did, not only presents an excellent and timely contribution to our understanding of Marx's work but also a forceful defense and elaboration of his method, theory, and ability to explain the concrete history of capitalism. Although in disagreement with the authors' reception of the formation of a revolutionary subject, the working class and the role of productive forces in human history, Post however insists on the importance of this book by highlighting the central argument of Savran and Tonak that *Capital* provides a firm theoretical basis for understanding and analyzing capitalism as a historically specific form of social labor.