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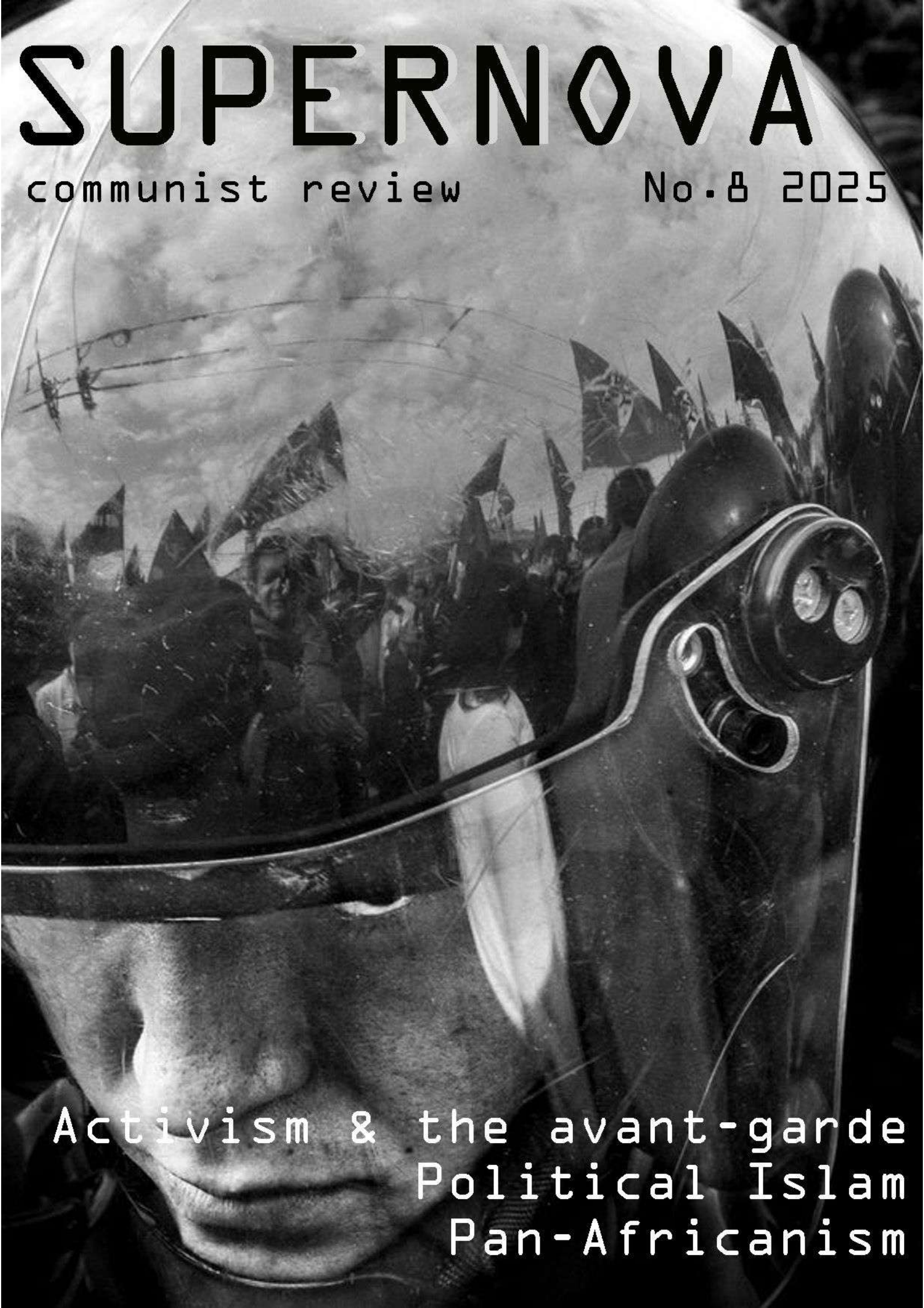

Activism & the avant-garde
Political Islam
Pan-Africanism

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"dream, but seriously" Lenin

A tool for investigation, work and liaison between comrades. To link the need for a revolutionary party to proletarian autonomy. If you're in a group, a collective, a trade union, a movement, etc. and you'd like to distribute Supernova and collaborate on it, please contact the editorial team.

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International campaign to denounce enforced disappearance. The family are members of the Paraguayan Marxist Leninist guerrilla group: Ejército del Pueblo Paraguayo (Paraguayan People's Army, EPP).

Editorial
for the proletarian left...

People will only support you if you respond to the issues that concern them, if you contribute to them in a positive sense. The first thing the enemy tries to do is isolate revolutionaries from the masses, caricature us as horrible, hideous monsters, to make our own people hate us."

Assata Shakur

To build organizations, networks, and political frameworks, we need a scientific analysis of the reality around us. Terms such as crisis, metropolis, imperialism, resistance, counter-revolution, class struggle, socialism, etc. must be placed in a specific context. We cannot deny that today, we are far from being able to impose this political terminology, given that when class struggle manifests itself, it's primarily that of the ruling classes against the ruled. However, to think that we can act without adequate scientific and class analysis is to concede defeat before the struggle begins. The theory we use is that of Marxism, which is not an idea, but a science, the science of classes.

Crisis and the organization of labour

We live in a world marked by crisis, a crisis which pervades all aspects of our lives. In Marxism, one of the main laws of the crisis of capital is that of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall:

"It is in the very nature of capitalist production that its progressive development transforms the rate of surplus-value into ever-declining rates of profit. Since living labour becomes continuously diminishes in relation to the materialized labour (means of production) it employs; it follows that the amount of unpaid living labour—the amount of surplus-value—must also diminish in relation to total capital. And since the ratio of surplus-value to total capital expresses the rate of profit, the later must therefore steadily fall." - Capital, K. Marx

The tendency of the rate of profit to fall does not automatically lead to the collapse of capitalism, but it does push capital to transform itself. Consequently, the crisis of the 1970s radically transformed the capitalist mode of production and the automation of labour control. As control mechanisms intensify and the predominance of dead labour (machines) over living labour (workers) takes a leap forward, The result is a sharpening of the antithesis between the development of the productive forces and the social relations of production. *Effectively, this marks the end of work 'where humans act with agency, allowing tools to assist rather than dominate them'.*

Labour power remains the only commodity whose consumption creates value. This contradiction imposes on capital new forms of command over labour, which are expressed in a system of ever increasing authoritarian social relations, or '*fascisation*'. This process a mechanism linked to the imperialist phase of capitalism, and its tendency toward war. The result of these processes is, on the one hand, a new social polarization and, on the other, the formation of a vast, highly mobile metropolitan proletariat, which brings together sectors of the "traditional" working class and the various compartments of the *de-integrate* [1] proletariat *without reserves*[2]. In a sense, we are witnessing a return to the *formal subjugation* [3] of real production processes which, by their very nature, transcend the capitalist mode of production. In the current phase of capital accumulation, the warehousing of labour-power in metropolitan peripheries and the authoritarian extension/intensification of labour control are reflected in the quantitative expansion of a proletariat without reserves.

Meanwhile the boundaries between the active and the reserve industrial army [4] are becoming increasingly fluid and fragmented. The world has become increasingly smaller, metropolises have grown larger and are increasingly interconnected through transport and communication networks. The density of the urban population is enormously higher than the average population density across the entire ecumene. Fourier and Marx called factories a 'life sentence'; today, this life sentences extend to the entire metropolitan area. These are the conditions for flexible industry to grow its value production while decreasing its level of employment. These forms of industrial slavery are the driving force of capitalism. We must consider how the intimately social character of wages, as a necessary form of the capital relationship, its collective, class dimension, cannot be reduced to a pay slip, to the money directly received by the individual worker, but to the *total cost* of reproducing the labour force.

The metropolis is the machine that breaks down these reproduction costs. The metropolitan machine is wired; it has a nervous system which is connected to the global market and based on the automated control mechanisms, flexible demands and factory rhythms. The nervous system of the

[1] 'De-integrated' proletariat ie. Those that capital has been unable - or unwilling - to absorb into its system.

[2] 'Proletariat without reserves' those whose safety net - whether in the form of personal savings or inherited wealth - is virtually non-existent.eg. this can often manifest as those living on debt.

[3] Formal subsumption of labour under capital occurs when: (1) capital appropriates pre-existing labour processes (e.g., artisan workshops) without altering their technical basis; (2) workers continue using traditional tools/methods; while (3) the social relation transforms into wage-labour, extracting surplus-value through prolonged workdays (absolute surplus-value) rather than technological change.

[4] The active industrial army refers to currently employed workers, while the reserve industrial army consists of unemployed or underemployed laborers who can be tapped when production expands. Together they form capitalism's flexible labour supply—workers move between these groups based on economic conditions. The reserve industrial army can be used to put pressure on active workers through replaceability and the threat that "you can fall further", but when it grows too large it creates a crisis of public order for the bourgeoisie.

metropolitan machine is well protected, at least from traditional forms of class struggle and short-lived revolts. Its weak point is time. If information technologies are the nervous system of the metropolitan machine, the road network and the transport network as a whole (railways, airports, etc.) constitute its skeleton, its backbone. The urban tissue gathers an overabundance of labour around this skeleton, shaped by the hierarchy of industrial zones and residential neighbourhoods, business centres, ghettos, prisons, etc. Flexibly organized production finds the right environmental conditions for its maximum decentralization, to the point of mobility and total fluidity. Parallel to the flexible organization of labour, we have the rigidity of the state form, of control that is becoming increasingly "heavy," just as war today is taking on increasingly direct and explicitly military connotations.

We cannot hide the fact that the proletarian left in the imperialist metropolises is lagging far behind in the search for an effective strategy to create and organize proletarian autonomy and communist organization (the party) in this context. The changes in the organization of work and the processes of crisis and war in the imperialist phase require a qualitative leap.
There is a widespread conviction among militants and activists that to ignite revolt among workers and the popular masses, it helps to focus on exposing the harsh realities of the present and shedding light on their causes.

We disagree. As far as denouncing the bad present is concerned, the workers and the popular masses are already perfectly aware of the consequences of the general crisis and the winds of war that are spreading. As for explaining the causes of the bad present—as well as identifying those responsible—this is very useful work, but it is not enough on its own.
We believe that, in addition to explaining the causes of the present evil and denouncing those responsible, it is necessary to work to promote the organization of the workers and the masses, to provide answers to the problems that hinder their mobilization, and to offer the prospect of a future that can be won by fighting now, without waiting for "better times" or for the solution to fall from the sky.

Better times will not come on their own, and under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, the situation can only get worse.

We believe that in order to counter the rampant mistrust and resignation, we must speak clearly about the goals we are pursuing and how we are pursuing them, the difficulties we face in achieving them, and the forces we still need to build up in order to advance and gain ground.

Finally, we believe that we must always consider and show the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy so as not to fall into the error of underestimating them, but also so as not to overestimate them: the idea of an invincible and omnipotent ruling class is as widespread as it is harmful.

To this end, it must be understood that the "program" must combine the necessity of communism with the proletariat's concrete capacity for autonomy

Dream and reality

The militant constantly experiences a discrepancy between the pursuit of the future and the reality of the present. The proletarian left, when it has been up to the task, has always debated the question of the "minimum program," rejecting the voluntarist and spontaneous illusion of a 'revolution around the corner'. This debate was—and remains—a necessary and unavoidable starting point for any reflection on the transition process that follows: upholding the minimum program under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; which is clearly distinct from the transition program carried out under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This debate treats the history of socialism as a long and twisting process, with, on the one hand, the energetic 'movementist' approach driven by a need for communism "right here right now," and, on the other hand, the immobility of reformism. Moreover, for a brief historical reference, one need only look at the economic and political corpus of minimum programs understood in the Marxist sense, with their various anticipations and developments. The debate on the problem of the minimum program has ancient Marxian roots. Marx constantly kept in mind [letter to Bracke, May 5, 1875] that "*every step forward, every real movement is more important than a dozen programs*." But it was precisely for these reasons that Marx pointed out in the same letter that a serious program was needed, adapted to the political situation of the moment, and that it had to be "*prepared by long common activity*" in order to identify concrete and achievable goals, whereas the wordsmiths and reformists "*on the contrary, fabricate a program of principles*" that is strictly useless. Marx (in his instructions to the delegates of the 1867 Geneva Congress of the First International Workingmen's Association, formed in 1864 as the national and trade union federation) drew up a draft program, which also took up some of the objectives set out in the Manifesto. This prototype was used several times thereafter, beginning with the program of the German Social Democratic Party, drafted by Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht following Marx's outline for the Eisenach Congress (June 23, 1869). Later, Marx himself drafted the preliminary "considerations" for the minimum program of the French Workers' Party in 1880, also drawing on this old project. Later, the Spanish Party program and the Erfurt program (one cited and the other revised by Engels) also took up these criteria.
Today, many points of the "minimum program" set out in the Communist Manifesto have been "resolved" within the framework of imperialist democracy. However, we must not believe in the myth of progress, that is, in a gradual and continuous progress and improvement of 'the system'. On the contrary, we must grasp the uneven dimension of imperialism and the evolution of social relations through the class struggle itself.

A victory can be a defeat, and likewise a defeat can be a victory; yet the same gains achieved by workers or 'the people' can be seized and reversed by imperialist hegemony. If this is true, it is also true that imperialist democracy, the best guise for capitalism, is a bourgeois dictatorship. Friedrich Engels, in the Introduction (1895) to The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850, had already clearly indicated that the evolution of the political situation in European countries was such that the bourgeoisie, in order to prevent the peaceful conquest of power by the working class, would inevitably break the legality of the bourgeois democracies created during the century. In *State and Revolution* (1917), Lenin analyzed the militarization of the political power of the bourgeoisie in all imperialist countries. After the triumph of the socialist and anti-colonial revolutions in the first half of the 1900s, the imperialist bourgeoisie pushed even further the process of defending its power to the bitter end and at any price, using "preventive counter-revolution." It was not content with using violence "*against the popular regime after the people had established*

revolutionary power," but created in all countries a policy and apparatus to "*repress the revolutionary people as soon as they organize to take power* ." During the 20th century, we witnessed the deployment of a wide range of instruments of preventive counter-revolution: restrictions 'justified' under certain pretext to restrict: freedom of information, demonstration, association, and organizations; trade union rights reserved for collabourationist organizations; exclusion of minorities from elected institutions; psychological warfare, propagation of fake news, disinformation campaigns, slanderous fabrications, monopolization of information; creation of political police and espionage corps for use against the masses; secret political operations and secret associations that work against the people; infiltration of working-class and progressive organizations and corruption of their leaders; implementation of diversionary, provocative, and blackmail operations; creation of organizations 'of the people' that controlled by the bourgeoisie; registration and persecution of members and sympathizers of working-class and progressive organizations and their exclusion from public office; creation of parallel, extra-legal or para-state organs of repression to terrorize the masses; combination of the state apparatus with organized crime; elimination of representatives who cannot be corrupted; dirty war; strategy of tension; preventive coups; mass extermination campaigns.
This evolution of the political regime of the imperialist bourgeoisie has also given rise to a subgroup of bourgeois thought whose characteristic is to denounce this evolution, to deplore it, to terrorize the uncertain layers of the population by describing it, to hinder the development of revolutionary thought with it, to proclaim that because of it, the "evil " power of the bourgeoisie is now unbeatable.

In reality, the crisis processes driven by intensifying global competition are stirring increasingly strong winds of war. These are manifesting themselves on the external front: in increasingly direct wars (Ukraine, the Middle East, the South China Sea, etc.) But also on the internal front; with the militarization of civilian life and an increasingly direct attack on spaces of political and social movements, as well as increased repression of grassroots resistance. etc.) The tendency toward war is the structural orientation of capitalism in crisis of overaccumulation. Its transformation into "war" capitalism is a solution for the financial oligarchy to compensate for the decline in profits and capital valorization on the one hand, and to reaffirm and defend its hegemony on the other.

However, these are all signs of a ruling class losing its grip on consensus, as exemplified by the governmental instability in France. Small but real spaces are opening up for direct intervention by the proletarian left. A proletarian left that must be capable of waging the political battle by placing proletarian autonomy and anti-imperialism at the center, overcoming the two classic deviations: the adventurism of those who detach themselves from the masses, convinced that they are advancing more quickly toward the goal, and the cowardice of those who blend into the masses and reduce themselves to illustrating what the masses are already doing. Take the example of support for the Palestinian cause[1], where it is necessary to link Palestinian anti-imperialist solidarity (external front) to the class struggle (internal front), linking it to the battle against *our* imperialism and the command structures of the Atlantic pole (NATO). Opportunists and old and new reformists, on the contrary, place support for the ongoing struggles of the Palestinian people as the primary focus, to which the political development of our country is subordinated. It is a line that fails to energize the class struggle on the domestic front and inevitably leads to a compromise with the bourgeois left (who are complicit with the overall system) thereby contributing to the weakening of the proletarian left itself. The main characteristic of opportunists is that they do not link support for Palestine to the struggle against war, just as they do not link economic struggles to the struggle against imperialist war policies[2].

Past and future

To move forward, the proletarian left must take stock of its history, without making any concessions to the enemy. A comrade with no political identity is a blind comrade. We have a past, we must build a future. 1989 saw the end of the phase of the world communist movement that was articulated around the experience of real socialism, that is, the USSR as the leading state of the socialist camp and the communist parties of the Third International as the leaders of the workers' movement. Twentieth-century communism theoretically produced a "institutionalised" Marxism — that is, a fully developed ideological system whose function was to legitimize parties and states born of revolutionary experiences, but which degenerated into deeply conservative and conformist institutional apparatuses aimed at their own perpetuation. Communists must now engage in a major creative effort, because Marxism must be a "constituent" theory — a living movement of thought that is continually enriched by expanding experiences of struggle and by the deepening of concrete analysis of the concrete situation.

This is why we need the perspective of the proletarian left. As a journal, we seek to participate in this process of redefining and organizing a proletarian left capable of facing the challenges of the present, aware that today no group or organization of the proletarian left in France can, without falling into ridicule, claim to be self-sufficient. To do this, we need to rebuild networks of militants, vanguards capable of grasping and intervening in the contradictions that run through the imperialist metropolises. We must start from a common foundation and be able to grasp the overall picture and be able to perceive the events clarify the role played by all actors that the current phase offers us, all with passion yet always with scientific lucidity.

[1] The same moral dimension that often prevails over the political dimension in solidarity movements with Palestine is weak: when we cry racism against a racist who claims to be "positively" racist, moral denunciation has no value...

Militant work today...

The wind doesn't stop even if the trees want to rest

"*Every collapse brings intellectual and moral disorder. We must create sober, patient people who do not despair in the face of the worst horrors and do not get excited over every trifle. Pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will".*

A. Gramsci

The title of our article may certainly sound frightening, because in the same sentence we use "work" and "militant," two concepts that are not always easy to understand. Determining how communists should organize themselves — politically and theoretically — in a historical moment like ours is undoubtedly a daunting task. The challenge is to understand which direction to take and what steps to adopt in order to adapt current forms of organization to the needs — and above all, the possibilities — emerging from reality. To begin with, we must start from the context in which we operate: France. This reality is characterized by certain specific elements:

– A crisis of the 'French model' on the external front (the loss of French imperialist hegemony) and a social crisis on the internal front, which renders the political framework very unstable.

– France is an imperialist democracy that maintains, even in the processes of militarization and war, a policy based on social compromise.

– It has a middle class and a labour aristocracy which, although affected by the crisis, now find their natural political alignment in reactionary mass movements.

- France has massive urban concentrations, where the class composition consists of the parasitic sectors of the proletariat being numerically hegemonic: services, logistics, health, catering, etc.

-With a portion of the younger generation being '*de-integrated'* by the French state, while at the same time being enslaved to the hedonistic, reactionary and individualist ideologies of imperialism.

– A unifying thread links the mass popular resistances of oppressed peoples against imperialism to the metropolitan proletariat. We refer in particular to the wave of solidarity that, in recent months, has surged through certain sectors of the French proletariat in support of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples' resistance. At the same time, however, opportunist forces — both secular and religious — have shown a strong ability to redirect that resistance into narratives and interests that ultimately serve the existing balance of power between classes and to uphold imperialist hegemony.

Within this general context, a new generation of activists is emerging, often seeking to oppose the present on specific fronts. However, this generation is overwhelmed by interconnected crisis processes: ecological, health, social, political, identity, etc.

History: Out of Ruins, Into the Future

There is no support base for the international communist movement today. China is light years away from the Cultural Revolution... and its international role is more linked to an inter-imperialist confrontation with the US than to propelling and supporting the anti-imperialist struggle. The end of the USSR inevitably set back most of the revolutionary left organizations around the world, but we must not forget that it was also thanks to the break with the conformism of the socialist bloc in the 1960s that the revolutionary left was able to experiment, develop, and, in some cases, win important battles in Latin America and Asia. The same development of proletarian left currents in the imperialist centers arose from a break with the old left.

More recently, we have seen rich experiences of resistance to imperialism, in some cases led by forces of the revolutionary left: India, the Philippines, Nepal, Colombia, Turkey, Kurdistan, Mexico, Peru. In addition, In Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen, anti-imperialist resistance exists or has existed, but it is clear that we are confronted with movements in which the weight and perspective of the revolutionary left are very weak.

Within the imperialist metropolises there is a total absence of an independent perspective of the forces of the proletarian left. This missing independent viewpoint

would be one capable of combining resistance to imperialism with the project for socialist transformation. A project, that links the class struggle with the struggle of oppressed peoples. But one that also recognizes that; despite deepening social divisions, the global reorganization of production — with its supply chains, urban logistics, and resulting class compositions — are flattened global differences, and are creating an increasing homogenised world.

The dedicated activism of new and old militants (social struggle, anti-imperialists, anti-racists, feminists, gender minorities, environmentalists, etc.) is insufficient. What is missing is a theory and practice capable of linking the action of the popular masses to social transformation.

In its absence, 'politics' does not disappear, but is occupied by reformist and opportunist forces that bring everything back into the binary legal and conformist frameworks of the bourgeoisie, or that are hegemonized by new reactionary populist impulses. These are forces that follow the old dictates of French leftism, with extremist declarations and reformist and conservative-liberal practices.

To many leftists imperialism is perceived as an invincible monster, where the only possibility is not resistance, but escape. Escape is conceptualized by thinking that it is possible to build 'free spaces' outside the grasp of imperialism. This has largely been the horizon that most activists in imperialist metropolises have set for themselves over the past thirty years. Though their approaches and practical forms have often differed, but this principle of 'subtraction' has been the common thread.

Alongside them coexisted conformist and conservative attitudes, which presented struggles as the defense of a past to be defended, mystifying the welfare state and imperialist forms of social compromise, without having grasped the significance of Keynesianism and the development of imperialism...

The protest movements that have swept France in recent years, were received with classic extremism by what remains of the proletarian and revolutionary left. From those who saw revolution just around the corner — believing that any confrontation was enough to speak of insurrection — to those who waited for the 'revolutionary purity' of working class protest movements while locking themselves away in their comfortable yet useless ivory towers.

Even today, we remain submerged in these currents and attitudes. Yet we are convinced that a new generation of young comrades and activists is emerging on the horizon — who, faced with the contradictions of the present, are beginning to formulate new hypotheses and engage in different practices. There are, of course, new reformist and conformist voices; opportunism[1] remains active and an unpleasant enemy to be driven from our ranks. We must clarify the categories of imperialism and colonialism, beyond a their liberal[2] and multi-polar[3] interpretations. The same contradictions that run through the imperialist metropolises – socio-economic precarity, policies of 'de-integrating' section of the masses, the energy crises, and environmental disasters - are the factors that are causing a crisis of social consensus, and are the foundation on which a new proletarian left is beginning to develop.

For this process to be based on solid foundations and well adapted practices, We must bring back to the forefront a theoretical framework that ties together past, present, and future. It is not enough to state that we are in the imperialist phase of capitalism. We must understand its specific consequences: developing an anti-imperialist front does not mean accepting the logic of geopolitics, but rather insisting on popular resistance, not through 'fantoms', but with the real contradictions of the classes and the contradictions of global capitalist competition.

What is the relationship between the urban metropolitan dimension and the newly emerging class compositions: the working class is our central reference class, but it takes on different social connotations (think, for example, of the development of social precariousness). Marxism is the only adequate theory for decoding reality, but it must be used in a forward-looking way. To evoke Marxism means using the theoretical heritage of the

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[1] Opportunism is the cultural and political influence of bourgeois ideology, of the ruling classes, within the ranks of the proletariat. For the "right-wing" opportunist, the bourgeois enemy is strategically unbeatable, and political action is therefore only possible at the level of winning partial improvements, paving the way for reforms and thus the abandonment of the revolutionary struggle. For the "left" opportunist, the bourgeois enemy is tactically unbeatable and, consequently, only actions and policies aimed at overthrowing the bourgeois system are possible, without taking into account the concrete stages of work among the masses, which leads to de facto "wait-and-seeism" or meaningless adventurism.

[2] This is the story of the "colour revolutions," the Arab Spring, and the establishment of socialist and libertarian experiments with the backing and support of the Atlantic imperialist countries led by the United States. We are far from conspiracy theories, and we do not deny that class contradictions exist in different countries and territories, but it would be embarrassing to deny that this narrative represents the cultural basis of the NATO left.

[3] They believe in a policy of harmony and balance between the different imperialist poles. Such a theory had already developed in the 1950s, within the ranks of the main Western communist parties and with the process of de-Stalinization in the USSR. It was to be one of the main points of criticism advanced by "Maoist" China against the USSR in the 1950s and 1960s, and by a large part of the revolutionary movement of the time.

international communist movement; and making it take the dialectical leap that reality demands (with one foot rooted in the past and eyes fixed firmly on the future). Our past, with the experience of the defeated socialist countries at its core, is our history. It is an example to build upon, but one that must be overcome.

Only in this way can we clarify our priorities and tasks, ensure the transmission of knowledge between generations of activists, and foster new networks of political cadres capable of intervening in and navigating the present. Here, the dialectical relationship between militant cadres, organization, and political project is inextricably linked.

Some key points on the question of organization

The forms of organization that have existed within the international communist movement have been many and varied. They developed over a historical period marked by significant social and productive changes.

Our categorisation should be seen as a simplification, intended to make the differences more obvious. In practice, we have had a whole series of hybrids that reflected and continue to reflect the capacity and revolutionary creativity of communists to propose strategies and tactics appropriate to different national and local social and political contexts.

The unifying factor remains the acceptance of Marxism as a theory-practice and program: the overcoming of the current capitalist mode of production through socialism, the question of political power (dictatorship of the proletariat), the revolutionary rupture (armed struggle against the bourgeois state), the centrality of the action and resistance of the popular masses, and the necessary interaction between legal and illegal political work for revolutionaries.

The main model is that of the *Leninist party*, a party of cadres (professional revolutionaries), where the party is placed at the top and directs all the different fronts (social, parliamentary, cultural, military). After the victory of the Russian Revolution and with the Third International, this form was taken as a model by the international communist movement until the end of the 1950s (although with the end of World War II this model was abandoned by the Western communist movement, which now turned towards social democracy, with a purely legalist and parliamentary dimension). This being the case, the Leninist party model continued to develop in terms of strategy and tactics. Thus, Maoist military strategy reverses the city-countryside relationship and places prolonged popular war (from the periphery to the centre) at the centre of its action, unlike the Leninist insurrectionary model (from the centre to the periphery). However, it maintains the central role of the party as a political-military force and as the vanguard and leadership of the various fronts of intervention. The main limitations of this model lie in its organizational rigidity, which in many cases has given rise to cumbersome and useless organizational formalism, often incapable of confronting the real social and political contradictions that cut across the class struggle.

There are also models where the form of the party is more nuanced, where in some cases the order was reversed from one of 'political → military' to that of 'military → political'. Here, centre becomes the *people's army*, the *guerrilla*, the *armed popular front*. The main successful experience was the Cuban revolution and the contribution of Che Guevara. This model will influence, through its various applications, different anti-imperialist and socialist movements in Africa, the Middle East, and South and Central America. It was taken up by groups and tendencies in the 1960s and 1970s in the West, which placed the question of clandestine work and revolutionary rupture at it's core (Red Brigades, RAF, etc.). Such a line had been completely abandoned by the "official" communist movement in the West. The core hypothesis underlying this model is that, paralle to the intervention of revolutionary political forces (especially in guerrilla warfare), there exists an organized movement supporting and organising proletarian and popular resistance and autonomy. The main limitations of this model were:

– The excessive weight given to the "military" at the expense of the political,

– The insufficient importance given to class composition.

The problems related to forms and methods of organization were and still are manifold. We present the main ones in the imperialist metropolitan dimension:

Mass party or cadre party

Mass socialist organizations had historically developed before the birth of the international communist movement (Third International), through the large European social democratic and socialist parties. This formula was based on the hegemonic capacity of the party to condition and organize large masses in the legal and parliamentary arena. This type of organization was also taken up by the communist parties after World War II.

The cadre party (although it had a mass function) was directly inspired by the original Bolshevik model and immediately positioned itself on two fronts (legal and illegal). Its "military-conspiratorial" dimension was accentuated. Its internal organization was more rigid and disciplined. The party was a group of active 'militants'. The importance of parliamentary action in this formula was less pronounced, although it could use "broad fronts" where it could exercise its hegemony.

The capacity for action of the communist movement, within the framework of bourgeois legality, must never obscure the importance of maintaining a network of

legal *and* illegal political work. Furthermore, imperialism imposes its preventive counter-revolutionary force, making it very difficult to envisage the homogeneous and progressive growth of the organization, with its own "red bases" (and the city-countryside relationship that goes with them). A model based on this form of city-countryside relationship is outdated in the modern imperialist metropolitan dimension . The urban belts themselves are certainly modern 'jungles', where militants take action, but the houses and streets and ghettos are not trees, caves, and mountains.... Just as the urban masses are not the peasant masses....

Similarly the continued instrumental use of bourgeois representative democracy is doomed to failure, because it proves the opportunist and conformist left right, who believe in the neutrality of the state.

A party on a territorial or corporate basis

Historically, the introduction of the 'company-based party' was intended to make the organization more 'working class' and less tied to parliamentary action (voting takes place on a territorial basis not on a company basis). In Europe, parties were structured earlier than constituencies.

However, this structure has fostered certain degenerative dynamics. Firstly, was the idea of the Communist Party is a workers' party, a trade unionist party. This formula, while retaining a vital interest in "the search for an effective presence of proletarians and workers in the party," fails to grasp the structural changes in the organization of work, with an increasing number of smaller production units (due to the increased importance of subsidiaries, subcontractors, platform capitalism).

It is necessary to start from the consideration that there are no perfect organisational forms, nor is there a kind of 'workerism' that would be defeated by a 'programmatism' which would reduce the organization to purely cultural, intellectual, or educational association.

We are not, either, seeing these contradictions resolved through the kind of 'fluid' form of organization typical of today's formations – formations which are mainly linked to electoral consensus.

The form of political organization must necessarily take into account the social and political changes of imperialism (metropolis, organization of labour, preventive counter-revolution), while promoting as much as possible the growth and adherence of militants from the popular sectors.

The same mechanism can be found with regard to the question of race or gender. Race and gender remain an excellent criterion — a sharp indicator — for assessing the political health of an organization.

Political action and military program

The difference between the communist movement and the old socialist currents was and remains the question of power. The capitalist state cannot be changed, it cannot be overthrown by legal means, which is why the class struggle must turn into civil war. The revolutionary communist movement has taken different forms of organization on this point. However, the definition of the military program remains central. For communists, violence is a necessary evil that must be used, but it must be organized. The resistance of the popular masses, their violent rebellion, are important signs of the expressions of autonomy on the part of the proletariat. However, to destroy the cage of the capitalist state, rebellion is not enough; a military program is needed. Political action must necessarily include a military program. But political action is not limited to this; it is the synthesis of different forms and degrees of resistance and revolutionary rupture (social, cultural, economic, etc.). Evaluations of strength , attacking, defending, retreating, hiding, building, destroying, running, slowing down—these are all situations that must coexist within strategy and tactics. Acting completely from above without any legitimation by facts on the ground, is political suicide and a mistake. But at the same time, waiting for the mythical hour of revolution while dreaming of disciplined masses who mindlessly follow orders is not only political short-sightedness but political cowardice. To learn how to wage war, you have to wage a war.

Independence and unity

In the communist movement, the question of independence and unity has always been raised. One must work with other political and social forces while maintaining one's own independence. In historical terms, we can say that all formulas have been tried, from the most sectarian to the most unitary. To assess their validity, they should not be taken as pure formulas, but placed in a specific historical context. Lenin was right to break with social democracy and create a new movement distinct from the others (the communist movement), but at the same time Lenin himself was right when he spoke about the defence and unity to be created around the USSR. The history of the revolutionary movement is full of examples of this kind. Today, it is clear that without a socialist base of support (the socialist countries) and with limited power of action or capacity to hegemonize, we must regain our political independence. This does not mean that we should give up participating in fronts of struggle and resistance. Take, for example, the role of Palestinian left-wing organizations as part of the resistance, where they participate but do not renounce their organizational autonomy.

Who is responsible?

The "perfect" formula for an organization is when it reaches an "organic" dimension, that is, a collective that moves forward in a cohesive manner. Any organization

that calls itself revolutionary must strive for this, but the reality is contradictory. This is why communists speak of democratic centralism. Communists are for freedom of criticism. But they oppose the coexistence of contradictory conceptions and lines within a revolutionary organization. Divergent conceptions cannot coexist; one cannot start from the idea that "everyone thinks what they want, does what they want," thus rejecting organizational discipline. An internal struggle is therefore necessary to seek unity and synthesis on the most advanced and correct revolutionary positions. The organization must encourage confrontation, debate, and verification. An organization that stifles contrasts, fears them, and does not encourage debate and verification is not a good organization. But opposing ideas are not only a means of seeking the truth, they are also the expression of contradictory interests. Differences of conception and line within the organization are not only the result of the advancement of knowledge (contrast between truth and error) and the emergence of new situations (contrast between new and old, between advanced and backward). They are also the result of the class struggle that runs through even the most revolutionary organization.

Identity and sectarianism

In general, all groups, collectives, or organizations present themselves as opposed to sectarianism, with learned analyses and statements, and then most often recreate closed groups, anxious to measure the growth of class movements by the number of new people joining their group.

This behaviour is not new and echoes the political racketeering typical of student leftism. Each group, rightly, sees its growth as a demonstration of the strength of its positions and practices, and tries to fight against the mechanisms of integration and passivity that bourgeois imperialist society imposes on us. A group is always caught between the desire to grow and the fear of losing its 'identity'.

Let's take two groups, A and B, with the same 'revolutionary' position. Group A, in order to increase its influence, modifies its position and moderates its content. As a result, it grows but loses its coherence and its revolutionary identity. Group B, on the other hand, "dogmatically" maintains its position, which remains revolutionary but becomes irrelevant and loses activists. Another variation is that group A decides to unite with other groups, increasing in number but losing its hegemony. Group B, on the other hand, wages war on everyone and thus remains incapable of developing political action.

It must be understood that in order to break the A and B pattern, a dialectical leap must be made and one must think like C (communist thought, dialectical materialism). Breaking sectarianism does not require declarations of principle, but concrete confrontation in common political work, finding from time to time common syntheses and projects capable of breaking the political isolation into which the proletarian left is relegated. It is clear that this is not a simple act of "will" or "faith"; we must have the ability to connect Marxist science with proletarian autonomy:

-Marxist science allows us to decipher the present and identify future trends.

-Proletarian autonomy because it is the masses who make history.

The political militant

"We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire. We have combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighbouring marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now some among us begin to cry out: Let us go into the marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: What backward people you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh, yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render you every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are 'free' to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh!"

Let us begin with this famous sentence from Lenin's text on organization; *What Is To Be Done?,* because it eloquently sums up the spirit with which a communist, a revolutionary, must live in relation to organization and struggle. However, it must be understood that in order to produce such a form of organization and life, it is necessary to start with a network of political cadres capable of combining theory and practice, research and action, science and passion, organizational discipline and creative ability.

A political cadre is an militant who does not stop at the partial understanding (i.e. an of a particular without linking it to the larger context) but manages to have a comprehensive overview of the bigger picture.

They are militant capable of overcoming social, racial, gender, and generational barriers.

They are militants who place the question of socialism and popular power at the centre, not as a divine mantra or a beautiful utopia, but as a concrete process that

manifests itself in the action and resistance of the popular masses. A militant who accepts the ideological battle, that is, the struggle against bourgeois and imperialist ideologies, seeking to be a direct example of this battle through a revolutionary ethic that rejects the conformism, hedonism, and individualism imposed by imperialist culture. A militant is one who rejects the feeling of powerlessness that strikes those who think that the enemy is invincible, but who manages to identify the enemy's weaknesses and their own, in order to make their own actions more effective. It is wrong to think that if the masses are not radicalized, there is no point in intervening; there is always room for resistance, struggle, and action. How can proletarians have confidence in their abilities if those who claim to be on their revolutionary side do not have confidence in the proletariat and the masses? If we do not act, if we do not assert our point of view, others will. No 'vacuum' exists in politics. It is only on abstract and superficial level that one can speak of being 'beyond politics' and rejection of the reality of politics from above: in reality, it is the ruling classes, opportunists, and reactionaries of various stripes who impose their politics on us every day. The opportunists ask them to go out and vote, to be confident and to hope for a new social harmony that will reunite the class and capital; the reactionaries ask them to tear each other apart in the war between the poor.

In order to have confidence in themselves, the workers and the masses must organize their strength and their capacity to exercise their proletarian autonomy. For Lenin, socialism must be brought to the working class from outside. The power of the bourgeois class and its regime is too strong for the workers and the popular masses to spontaneously find their own autonomous political program. At the same time, Lenin said that it is necessary to start from the concrete situation of the workers and the popular masses, emphasizing the strategic necessity of acting against the political control of the bosses and the state[1].

The isolation in which revolutionary left-wing militants have found themselves has often distorted their vision. Many older and younger comrades know the exact number of sections into which the Trotskyists are divided, as well as the internal personal polemics of an anti-fascist collective or the multiple interpretations of anti-authoritarian theories, but they are completely ignorant of the current conditions of workers and the popular masses and know little or nothing about the wages of precarious workers. Yet this is where we must start if we want to act on the 'enigmatic' consciousness of the proletariat. We must start from their specific problems, from their very respectable daily complaints, in order to understand the attitudes of the various enemies they face: liberals, the populist right, and the NATO left. We must be able to grasp, for example, the points of contact and empathy that the anti-imperialist resistance of oppressed peoples produces within the imperialist metropolises. We must be able to identify, for example, the empathy and shared common ground that anti-imperialist resistance of oppressed peoples generates in the masses of the imperialist metropoles.

It is therefore by starting from the concrete, everyday needs of the masses that resistance must be developed. And it is through the course of our resistance and struggle, that we must move from a limited and volatile consciousness to a historical consciousness of our class objectives, through the reciprocal interplay of knowledge and action. A militant who embraces the use of spontaneity yet is not *spontanist*. Spontaneity is an initial positive condition for growth: each individual first does more or less what others are already doing, then begins to think about how they can do what they are already doing better and what they can do better. Then they move out of spontaneity and begin to act more and more consciously: trying to anticipate the circumstances of the struggle, making plans, creating more appropriate conditions, forging alliances, finding the most practical methods, etc. Spontaneity, on the other hand, is the theory that we should remain at this primitive stage: doing what we are used to doing, what we do by chance, recreating the behaviour of those who do not want to think, who do not want to use their brains in the struggle, but only want only to *do* to *act*. A militant, a political cadre, is not a 'technician', or a trade unionist, or an activist. The 'technician' is useful, but she cannot have an overview of things because he only sees reality in a partial way: like a doctor who only knows one part of the body. The trade unionist is useful, but she cannot go beyond the legal and work-sector categorisation framework imposed by capitalism. For the proletarian left, there are communists who are trade unionists, but there are no trade unionists who are communists. The activist is useful, but often his action is based on rebellion rather than revolutionary action. The political cadre is someone who has a communist conception of the world, linking the development of proletarian autonomy to revolutionary organization and the revolutionary program. The militant is someone who breaks with the conformism of the present, and not only dreams, but gives form to those dream, an organized form[2]. The dream is the breath of a deeper reality!

Conclusions

All formulas and analyses must confront reality and can only find their confirmation there. And today, it is clear that within the imperialist metropolis, the weight of reformism, the middle-class labour aristocracy and the reactionary mass-movements effectively block the emergence of a new revolutionary left and the

[1] Lenin's interest in the struggle against authoritarianism and fines imposed on workers in factories

[2] "The contrast between dream and reality is not at all harmful if the dreamer firmly believes in his dream, if he observes life attentively, if he confuses his observations with his fantasies, if, in a word, he works conscientiously to realize his dream. When there is contact between dreams and life, everything is for the best." Dmitri Pissarev (1840-1868)

development of proletarian autonomy. The absence of organization and the difficulty of linking revolutionary subjectivity and proletarian autonomy (i.e., the ability of the layers of the proletariat to give themselves an independent and antagonistic political program) must not frighten us and, above all, must not distract us from the immediate tasks we can set ourselves as communists.

1) The development of a revolutionary theory in the metropolis (which does not currently exist, even if numerous key indications are contained in the theoretical heritage of Marxism), which firstly, has the capacity to analyse and contextualize the imperialist dimension, the urban question, and class composition. Simultaneously, it must begin analysing what the imperialist state is today, where its heart lies, and what the main contradictions running through it are. To do this, it is necessary to start with investigative work and research in the Marxist sense, not in the sociological or geopolitical sense. In other words, we must put the question of relations of production back at the centre of class analysis and international analysis.

2) Militant action in proletarian struggles as an accumulation of experience and strength: The main method of work for communists is the 'mass line'. This method can also be described as guiding the movement of the popular masses by developing their initiatives from within, through the organization and development of proletarian autonomy. Patient militant work of reconstruction and organization at all levels—social, trade union, cultural—is necessary to enable the popular sectors and workers in general to develop proletarian autonomy.

3) The accumulation of forces and experience for militants: Building networks and links between communists, between political cadres (newspapers, organization of seminars and research, joint actions and campaigns). Act as a party even in the absence of the party, with the spirit of the party... not formally but in practice. Forces and experience must be accumulated in all areas and aspects of the class struggle.

These different projects are linked to each other; there is no before and after. They act reciprocally with each other. In this sense, working on the proletarian communist faction (creating political cadres and beginning to work collectively) is one of the conditions under which the need for a revolutionary organization can begin to be seriously posed, even if it does not yet exist. It is necessary to begin a process of transmission between the old and new generations of militants, and to overcome sectarian and infantile attitudes. Building and organizing a network of militants means grasping the need for research and perspective demanded by the most advanced militants, while at the same time demonstrating through practical work (adapted to the current relationship of forces) a real legitimacy within our class and among the popular masses. There is enormous work to be done, yet at the same time, unprecedented new spaces are beginning to open up before us.

The proletarian and revolutionary left must learn to build its own strength by combining its own independent program with the development of popular and anti-imperialist resistance. It is up to us to seize opportunities, exploit and widen the cracks in the wall of the ruling classes.

"*Those who do not take into account the changes in the political, cultural, and national conditions of economic development (imperialism), who are detached from the concrete historical situation and practice, and those who are fixated on a mechanical method of work based on the works of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao, may be good Marxologists, but they can never be proletarian revolutionaries*." - Mahir Çayan

- E.H

People's court or bureaucrat

Georges Lukacs (1940)

"Literature corrupts only to the extent that men become more corrupt. "

-Goethe

The general significance of the Leninist problematic

Lenin's book What Is To Be Done? served to unmask the opportunist philosophy of the "economists" who were influential at the time of its publication (1902). The latter protested against the theoretical and organizational unity of the Russian revolutionary movement; in their view, the only thing that mattered was the struggle of workers for their immediate economic interests and their spontaneous action against the reprisals of the bosses.

They reduced the role of the conscious revolutionary to merely supporting the immediate, local struggles of workers. The idea of recognizing each specific class conflict as part of the proletariat's broader historic mission—using socialist theory and political propaganda to shed light on these particular struggles, and uniting isolated acts of resistance into a unified revolutionary political movement to overthrow capitalism and bring about socialism—was seen by the so-called "economists" as a betrayal of the working masses. A betrayal that feared it would isolate the revolutionary intelligentsia from the people. According to the "economists," the spontaneous movement of the workers itself, simply through its natural development, would always lead to an awakening of class consciousness.
Lenin tore this opportunist 'theory' to pieces, and showed that "economism": diverts the proletariat from political struggle, naturally incites the workers to abandon the overthrow of capitalism in exchange for being content with temporary improvements in the situation of *certain* groups of workers. He, on the other hand, considered the overthrow of the autocracy, (which offered the capitalists strongest line of defence in Russia) to be the most immediate task of the revolution. To Lenin, the "economists" struggle against organizational unity and the praise of spontaneity, would pave the way for the influence of the bourgeoisie on the working class.

When he elaborated the ideological foundations of the Marxist party and exposed the bourgeois essence of reformist theory, Lenin contrasted two types of ideologists: that of the '*revolutionary tribune*' (i.e. the ideal revolutionary militant) and that of '*the bureaucrat*'. He observes that the type of trade union secretary, 'the bureaucrat', predominated both in the capitalist West and in economically backward Russia of his time.
The 'theory' of opportunism, both international and Russian, strives just as hard to perpetuate this backwardness and degeneration. It is against this double tendency—the theoretical opportunism of the "spontanists/ economists" and the practical opportunism of the bureaucrat, both of which had the same effect under the conditions of Tsarist Russia—that Lenin's book is directed. This was crucial, because the spontaneous development of a workers' movement in its early stages, in a country lagging behind capitalist development, inevitably encounters the manifestations of decay of the imperialist era: Bernstein's 'theory', Millerand's practice, and all the opportunism converging at the international level. Lenin's pamphlet, which destroyed all these tendencies right down to their core on a theoretical level, therefore marks not only a turning point in the Russian workers' movement, but also a milestone in the general history of revolutionary thought: the first ideological bulwark against opportunism worldwide. The opposition between '*the tribune of the people*' and '*the trade union bureaucrat*' as architypes toward which the antagonistic orientations of the workers' movement tend—the Marxist revolutionary spirit on one side, and opportunism on the other—carries a significance that goes far beyond the specific historical and national circumstances that gave rise to it. "*It cannot be emphasized enough*," said Lenin, "*that the Social-Democrat's ideal should not be the trade union secretary, but the tribune of the people, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth before all his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for all and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.*"

The concrete colours of this picture are taken from contemporary Russian reality. But the portrait of this figure is so strikingly general that it is still entirely valid today. Given the objective nature of this subject, it goes without saying that Lenin's research had to go beyond the working class and its organizations. The vulgarization of Marxism, whose political expression was right-wing and "left-wing" opportunism, led to a theoretical separation between proletarian life and the broader movement of society. This watering down even claimed, demagogically, to be 'authentically proletarian.' and to keep the workers' movement free from foreign influences. Lenin's argument sheds light on the real state of affairs, on the multiple and inseparable links that unite the destiny of the working class with the life of society as a whole.

On the one hand, the proletariat cannot liberate itself without breaking all oppression and all exploitation of all classes and strata of society as a whole. On the other hand, the life and development of the working class reflect *all* the social and economic aspirations that are of real importance for the further development of society, even the negative tendencies that hinder development, and in imperialism, even parasitic tendencies. In his critique of imperialism, Lenin repeatedly points out that the parasitism of this period should not be understood in a narrow or superficial way, but rather as a socially universal tendency; according to him, it also manifests itself as such within the workers' movement.

As a consequence of the increasingly reactionary nature of capitalism, the corruption of the "working-class aristocracy," the general demoralization of political life, the restriction of democracy, there also emerges in reformist workers' organizations a tendency toward bureaucratism, separation from the masses, and detachment from real life.

For capitalism, bureaucracy is a necessary phenomenon, an inevitable result of the class struggle. Bureaucracy is one of the first weapons of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the

feudal system; it becomes increasingly indispensable as the bourgeoisie must very quickly assert its power against the proletariat and as its interests come into open contradiction with those of the working masses. Bureaucratism is therefore one of the fundamental modes of expression of capitalist society.

For our purposes, it is the cultural aspect of this question that takes precedence. We have already become familiar with the general traits of these two opposing typical militants of the workers' movement that Lenin characterized based on a thorough analysis of capitalist society and the conditions for the proletariat's liberation—one as an ideal to strive toward, the other as a negativity to overcome. Let us now briefly examine the essential characteristics underlying this negativity in order to understand its social generality within capitalism as a necessary generality.

Lenin's analysis goes deep into the connection between bureaucratism and spontaneity. Spontaneity comes into play when the object of interest and activity is immediate and only immediate. The immediacy of the relationship with the object is, of course, the obvious starting point of all human activity. However it is specifically the phenomenon '*theory of spontaneity*' we are now examining —the ideological justification of bureaucratism—demands that one remain fixated solely on this immediate object and dismisses as false and inauthentic any effort to move beyond this stage—yet it is precisely by going beyond that true theory comes to light.
"Economism," the tendency at the time toward the bureaucratization of the workers' movement, masks this immobilization in immediacy, this glorification of spontaneity, by calling them "purely proletarian"; it curbs the combative activity of the workers to *only* resisting against immediate economic exploitation in the factory, to conflicts of interest between bosses and company staff. This "purely proletarian" viewpoint thus abandons to the liberal bourgeoisie all the great battlefields of democratic societal change, effectively renouncing—not in words, certainly, but in fact—its socialist transformation.

When the objective situation is immediate and pressing, people's responses tend to be confined to spontaneity. Everything that goes beyond this spontaneity—which is grounded in the knowledge of objective relations and the laws governing the movements of society as a whole—is rejected "on principle" as "non-proletarian," as a "foreign element." Theoretical knowledge of the whole is side-lined in favour of the primitivity of the spontaneous reaction to immediate stimuli which is seen as being a higher form of subjectivity and a more accurate reflection of reality. It is only through the full development of imperialism that the true depth of Lenin's critique of the theory of spontaneity has been revealed. Indeed, it is only in the light of this development that the real social and theoretical foundations of international opportunism can be truly understood.

While 'orthodox' figures like Kautsky attempted to present their disagreements with Bernstein as particular tactical issues. Lenin already saw very clearly that Bernstein's ramblings included a deliberate renunciation of establishing socialism through struggle and even the achieving revolutionary democratic demands, in favour for an adaptation of the revolutionary workers' movement to what pleases the liberal bourgeoisie. This liquidation of Marxism takes place within the imperialist context.

As the bourgeoisie ceased to be a driving force of social progress; the refusal to believe in the possibility of knowing objective reality, the contempt for all theory, and the ridicule of understanding and reason increasingly took a greater place in their ideology. The appeal to spontaneity, the glorification of pure immediacy as a last resort for the domination of reality, are consequently an essential cultural and ideological tendency of the imperialist period. The bourgeois form of spontaneity and attachment to immediacy is a direct consequence of the capitalist division of labour. The ideology it generates is entirely consistent with the bourgeoisie's narrow and selfish class interests.

The smooth functioning of bourgeois domination is facilitated by the division of the popular masses, by their *corporatist* ideology, by the satisfaction professed by each person with the particular work assigned to them by the social division of labour under capitalism, by the satisfaction each individual expresses in the specific work assigned to them by the social division of labour under capitalism, and by their conscious acceptance of these forms of thought, the limits placed on thinking and the modes of perception that arise spontaneously from this division of labour. The more reactionary the bourgeoisie becomes, the more clearly this ideological aspect appears. As long as revolutionary democratic tendencies have strong support within the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois intelligentsia, the 'spontaneous' influence of the ideology shaped by the capitalist division of labour—and its reinforcement by the narrow class interests of the bourgeoisie—are continually challenged. The reactionary parasitism of the imperialist period makes it the dominant trend within bourgeois society, including in the political movement and ideology of the proletariat.

It's easy to understand why the bourgeoisie finds such ideas appealing: spontaneity means the mental erasure of the complex web of social relations social evolution that are objectively present and active in every sphere of life. It therefore means the renunciation of the knowledge of the laws governing the movement of capitalist society, laws which clearly show the unresolvable contradictions of this society and the necessity of overcoming it through revolution.

The more that the intellectual and emotional reactions of humans remain firmly locked within the miserable abstract prison of spontaneity, the greater the security of the ruling class. This naturally applies to the workers' movement in particular, but it also holds true for all areas of cultural life.
Certainly, many spontaneous reactions to capitalism are from their origins expressions of revolt; and often — even if they do not rise above the level of spontaneity — they retain their oppositional or rebellious intent at a *subjective* level. But *objectively*, these spontaneous manifestations most often join the mainstream efforts aimed at maintaining the dominant regime. The spirit of revolt must rise to a well-defined awareness of objective relations to be able to effectively — and not only in intention — turn against the system of oppression and exploitation.

According to Lenin, the '*tribune of the people*' is the herald of such consciousness, a revolutionary consciousness. To understand this figure properly, one must not confine oneself to the external characteristics of the *tribune*'s behaviour. The brilliance of their speech and their eloquence and stirring rhetoric, are not enough to make a *tribune*; it was not the dazzling orators—Mirabeau, Vergniaud, or even Danton—who

were the true *tribunes* of the French Revolution, but the sober Marat and the stern Robespierre.

Only the level of consciousness with which, according to the stage reached by historical evolution, the objective determinations of the whole society are recognized in its movement, and the firmness with which the deepest needs of the liberation of the working people are defended (these are two aspects of the same thing), elevate a man to the rank of tribune.

It is only the level of consciousness—with which one recognizes (in line with the stage of historical development) the objective dynamics of society as a whole, combined with the firmness with which one defends the fundamental interests of the working class's liberation — that raise a person to the rank of the *tribune*.

It is as a *tribune* of the revolution that Lenin took up the fight against spontaneity. By overcoming immediacy, he attained a clear awareness of the movement of the whole—fuelled by a deep and broad love for the oppressed—and fully grasped the tragic nature of revolt and the fervent will for liberation, grounded in the adequate understanding that only materialist dialectics, Marxism, can provide. The superiority of reason — striving to achieve the universality of knowledge —over mere immediacy, has never been proclaimed so strongly.
But this strength contains, within it, the dialectical shifts of reality. The metaphysical distinction between spontaneity and consciousness is a general ideological weakness of the decadent bourgeois period. It is expressed not only by those who capitulate before spontaneity, but also by most of the archaic heirs of the Enlightenment who struggle for consciousness yet have not overcome their rigid distinctions between spontaneity and consciousness, and therefore limit themselves to mirroring decadent theory, only with the opposite meaning. To them, Lenin points out the dialectical unity of life.

He rejects spontaneity as an ideal, as a barrier, but recognizes it as an expression of life, as *one* factor, as a moment correctly understood of the general movement. He draws lessons from the strike movements in Russia and notes the interplay between spontaneity and consciousness and the incessant shift from one into the other. This shows us that the 'spontaneous element' truly represents nothing other than the embryonic form of consciousness of the goal.

Thus, for the first time in the history of social thought, the real interaction of these two categories was defined. And it is only this natural affinity, combined with the strictest distinction, that properly illuminates Lenin's conception of the relations between consciousness and spontaneity. Spontaneity, understood as the "embryonic form of awareness of the goal," the priority of '*being*' over that of consciousness is expressed. It strives at the formation of an accurate reflection of reality arising from *being* in reality's own movements.

But this movement does not happen automatically. The awakening of consciousness—to a real understanding of the world and the tasks humanity must fulfil to transform itself—does not simply happen '*on its own*', without conscious effort or awareness of the outside world and oneself. For this, a break with spontaneity is essential. Only through this break can we perceive the totality of active forces in society, their alignments, the laws they obey, and the possibilities for influencing them. This knowledge can then become the spiritual foundation of those who struggle for a better society. These two aspects of the relationship between spontaneity and consciousness must be clearly understood in order to appreciate Lenin's statement that revolutionary consciousness is brought to the proletariat 'from outside'.
But the exact meaning of this "pointed formulation," as Lenin himself called it, is as simple as it is profound and important: *"Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers only from without, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of all classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between all classes."*

The embryo of spontaneity only becomes fruitful through the conscious work of such a consciousness; the *class **in** itself* becoming a *class for itself* . It is the *tribune* who awakens this consciousness. The universality of his knowledge accelerates the growth of the embryo to its full blossoming. the *tribune* leads the evolution that she promotes and drives forward. On the other hand, those who glorify spontaneity, who, blissful and thoughtless, perpetuate it, must be content to record events after the fact: as Lenin says, they "*follow in the wake of the real movement*." And no matter how enthusiastic, 'revolutionary,' or 'proletarian' a tone they adopt, their activity remains a mundane fruitless bureaucratic. Bureaucratic in the most general and worst sense of the term: hindering the development of life. Because spontaneity, unable to reach fulfilment on its own, becomes wrapped up in a vicious circle where the fixation of the consciousness only sees its own projections and distortions, of which in turn elevates spontaneity to the status of the only guiding principle, and the degenerative echo chamber continues makings one's horizon narrower and narrower.

Political Islam

between resistance and conformity

Religion is too often considered by the left as a thing of the "past," 'reactionary' or "ethnic," or even as a secondary issue. In reality, religions have always been part of the movement for the emancipation of the masses. Catholicism has produced movements such as "liberation theology" on continents such as Latin America. This current influenced some of the Marxist-Leninist guerrilla experiences in the 1960s and 1970s and radicalized Christian workers in Europe. The same dynamic can be found in Islam. In this article, we will focus on the political role that political Islam has played and continues to play, highlighting its main contradictions.

There are approximately 1.5 billion Muslims in the world, of whom more than 85% are Sunni and the rest are Shiite. From these two major currents, a series of sub-currents, considered heretical, have developed, such as the Alawites, who are mainly found in Syria, Turkey, and Lebanon and are Shiite.

These two major branches share many religious foundations: the creed, the five pillars of Islam, and the fundamental obligations that every believer, according to Sharia (religious law), is required to observe: the testimonies of faith, ritual prayers, almsgiving, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca at least once in their lifetime, for those who are able to undertake it.

Sunnis and Shiites agree on the oneness of God and that Muhammad, who lived between 570 and 632 AD, is his prophet. He was the political initiator of the renaissance and expansion of the Arab peoples, which led them, particularly under the leadership of the caliphs who succeeded him, to build an empire stretching from Spain to the borders of India.

The ideology that accompanies this extraordinary political movement is that of Islam. It is a return to the pure monotheism of Abraham, against the tribal polytheism of the Arab peoples, who must be unified under one god and therefore under one political command. It also developed in opposition to Judaism and Christianity, accused of betraying the teachings of the prophets, thus justifying jihad, or holy war, against Jewish tribes and Christian powers such as Byzantium. The Quran, along with the words attributed by tradition to the prophet, is the main reference for all Sunni and Shiite currents from the origins of Islam to the present day. The sacred text of Islam combines spiritual doctrine, legal, social, and customary norms, as well as the political and military struggle supported by Muhammad and his faction. This was socially rooted in the emerging bourgeoisie of the city of Medina, in opposition to the ruling classes of Mecca, the main centre of economic and political power on the Arabian Peninsula at the time.

The birth of political Islam

To understand the political significance of Islam today, it is necessary to go back to the origins and developments of European colonial penetration into the Arab world. Colonialism destroyed Eastern markets and local crafts and broke down traditional structures, spreading a sense of humiliation and a desire for revenge against the invaders among the Arab masses. Islam took on considerable importance as an identity weapon to counter colonial "civilization."

The era of Islamic awakening began with Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1799, and two years later, the first Egyptian national uprising against French occupation took place. Numerous uprisings took place against British and French colonial rule, which, over the following decades, sought to divide and exchange much of the territory of North Africa and the Middle East. At the forefront of these revolts were mainly feudal factions whose interests conflicted with imperialist predation, while it was the most oppressed classes, the peasant classes, who rose up in material terms. The ideology that sustained the rebellion was Muslim religious identity, opposed both to the traditionalist Christian version and to the rationalist currents of the Enlightenment. The awakening of political Islam merged in many cases with the "national" aspirations of the various Arab regions, which had been under the rule of the Ottoman Empire (Sunni in origin, but with strong elements of Asian syncretism) for several centuries[1]. With the end of the Ottoman Empire, various revolts broke out in the Arab world between 1919 and 1927. France and Great Britain sought to calm the situation by granting formal independence, increasingly integrating the local feudal ruling classes into their power structures.

Among the masses aspiring to independence from the colonial powers, hatred of the collaborating indigenous rulers grew: the large landowning aristocracy, which had initially participated in the revolts, became an agent of Britain and France. In their place and against the traitors, the reins of the anti-colonial movement were taken up by factions of the local bourgeoisie that were not politically compromised with imperialism but had been structured by its economic expansion. This class "bloc," particularly the merchant class, rode the wave of popular sentiment and developed an ideology of defence and a return to the original Islamic tradition, asserting it no longer as a simple reflection of identity, but as a global political vision to oppose that of the colonialists and collaborationist classes. In essence, the theories and political program formulated at the time postulated that Sharia, religious law, should once again become the fundamental source of public and private law, regulating the life of the state. It was therefore a vision of restoring the integral Islamic order (fundamentalism) and returning to its foundations

[1] However, this process of Arab "national" liberation against Ottoman and Turkish rule was to be used by Western imperialist forces, leading to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which still determines the various borders of the main Arab countries of the Levant today. Thomas Edward Lawrence, The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, 1922

(fundamentalism), based on the wealth offered by the Quran and prophetic traditions in the regulation of social laws.

It was with this in mind that the Muslim Brotherhood movement, a transnational party in the Arab-Muslim world, was born in 1928. They opposed other anti-colonial forces, such as the communist movement as an expression of the working class and the labouring masses, and the secular nationalist bourgeois factions linked to the "bureaucratic" and military classes, which aspired instead to a modernization of the Arab countries capable of emancipating them economically and politically from imperialism of the European powers and, later, the United States. These factions then converged towards Arab nationalism and Baathism, with a secular approach opposed to the religious traditionalism that dominated life in most countries in the region, starting with the experience of Nasser's Egypt[1].

The affirmation of Arab nationalism effectively deprived the Muslim Brotherhood of its role as a bourgeois movement representing anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist demands. In fact, part of the bourgeoisie and the political and intellectual representatives who referred to the Brotherhood assumed this role. This did not represent the end of the movement, whose continuity was based on representing the interests of sectors of the middle and petty bourgeoisie in opposition to the state bourgeoisie which, through the interventionism of public capital in the economy, dominated countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, where secular nationalist regimes had established themselves. Ideologically, the Brotherhood, in antagonism with the secularism promoted by these governments or to distinguish itself from the official Islam of the religious hierarchies linked to them, aims to hegemony the most conservative and fundamentalist religious circles through the so-called Salafist Islamic currents.

In the inter-bourgeois contradiction between Islamist and nationalist forces, the former attempted to place themselves at the head of the other contradictions facing the latter, both within the internal scenario of the various countries and in the regional and international arena. On the one hand, there was the contradiction on the external front with US imperialism and the European powers, with whom the Muslim Brotherhood agreed to collaborate against the common enemy represented by the nationalist regimes. On the other hand, there were contradictions on the internal front, particularly contradictions with the working class and the popular masses vis-à-vis regimes that, although anti-imperialist in nature, were still capitalist. The Islamists attempted, and partly succeeded, to place themselves at the head of the mass movement, disputing this role with the communists and proposing a vision of a "social Islam" that could be compared to Catholic social thought in Europe. Relations with the conservative Arab monarchies were consolidated—although the Muslim Brotherhood remained in principle in favour of a republican regime—in the name of the struggle against secular nationalism and the communist movement. In 1970, the Islamist movement sided with King Hussein in the bloody repression of "Black September" against the Palestinian resistance, which was then dominated by progressive and revolutionary positions.

More generally, from the early 1970s onwards, the deepening crisis of international capitalism forced secular Arab regimes, such as Syria, Tunisia, and Egypt, to promote policies that attacked the living conditions of the masses and, in part, to open up to investment from imperialist countries or conservative Gulf monarchies. This allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to gain a new consensus and a new space. On the one hand, by placing itself at the head of social protest and, on the other hand, by preventing, even though tacit agreements with the regimes, the mobilization from turning towards class struggle and the development of the communist movement. In particular, during the same period, it was above all the capitulation of secular regimes to US imperialism and the occupation of Palestine that allowed the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist factions to exploit them to place themselves at the head of mass discontent, as in the case of the opposition to the Sadat regime, then Mubarak, in Egypt. It was precisely in this country, in the 1980s and 1990s, that we witnessed the gradual co-optation of the Muslim Brotherhood, or at least of its most compromise-minded factions.

At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the new century, the bourgeois classes represented by the Muslim Brotherhood experienced an economic rise in Egypt and much of the Arab and Muslim world. This was mainly due to its links with high finance, particularly that controlled by the Emirate of Qatar, which began to use the Brotherhood as a political tool. In Turkey, the country's economic growth process led to a change in the ruling class, which shifted from the old Kemalist state bourgeoisie to new sectors of activity, represented by the Islamist-inspired Justice and Development Party, close to the Brotherhood, which still governs the country's destiny through Erdogan's fascist regime.

The mass uprisings of 2010-2011, in the absence of other organizations and above all in the absence of autonomy and political leadership among the proletariat, represented an opportunity for the Muslim Brotherhood to capitalize on years of opposition, albeit partly made up of compromises, to the autocratic secular regimes. The financial rise of the bourgeois sectors they represented and their relations with Qatar and Turkey, two allies of the US and European powers, caused the Brotherhood to lose its anti-imperialist ambitions. But when put to the test of power in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya, they failed to maintain control of society. Everywhere, the Muslim Brotherhood lost the power they had gained by leading mass movements, swept away by the military coup in Egypt, forced into a minority role in Tunisia, and pushed into civil war in Libya. Today, they are playing a cross-cutting game: on the one hand, they are the instruments of Western imperialism, fighting against anti-imperialist movements of Shiite or secular origin; on the other hand, they are seeking their own autonomy from the Sunni movements controlled by the Gulf governments.

Sunnis and Shiites

The schism between Sunnis and Shiites dates back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad (632 AD) and the dispute over

[1] In December 2024, with the ousting of the Assad government and the "balkanization" of Syria, the international Baathist experiment came to a virtual end. It is not insignificant to note that the last leaders of this political movement, which had many nuances, were all destroyed by military force after 1989: Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi, etc.

his succession between the faction of family members, led by the prophet's cousin and son-in-law, Ali, and that of the tribe members. For the former, only those with a direct blood link are entitled to succession, while for the latter, all members of the tribal group are entitled to it. Among those who had been closest to Muhammad and who led the politics of the new state he founded, the prevailing line was to elect the caliph (Arabic for "successor") from among the members of the tribe and not on the basis of kinship, which isolated Ali's position. The divide between the leaders of what would become the Arab empire gradually became more complex and bloody. The battleground between the ruling classes of the newly conquered lands was Iraq, which became the centre of the "Shiites," or "followers" of Ali, and Syria, which, with the Umayyad dynasty, re-established the caliphate on a hereditary basis, legitimized only for the "Sunnis," so called because they claim to refer to the "Sunnah," that is, the teachings transmitted from Muhammad. The conflict reached its peak in 680 AD, when Husayn, the second son of Ali, then leader of the Shiite faction, was killed and beheaded by the Sunni faction during the Battle of Karbala in Iraq.

The ideological clash between Sunnis and Shiites concerns the concept of political power. While Sunnis believe that the caliphate has the function of holding temporal power and ensuring observance of the religion as established by Muhammad, Shiites believe that temporal power must be subordinate to spiritual power. According to the Shiite version, after the death of the prophet, only Ali—and later his direct descendants—because of their blood ties and closeness to the founder of Islam, should hold political power in the name of their superior spiritual power, since they are imams, guides of the Muslim community. For Shiites, in fact, the leadership (imam) of the Islamic community must be assumed by the descendants of the prophet in the line of his daughter Fatima and her husband Ali. Twelve imams succeeded one another in this line, each begetting and appointing his successor. But the twelfth imam, al Mahdi, disappeared in Samarra, Iraq, in 873, giving rise to the myth of the "great concealment" that continues to this day. The absent imam still reigns, but his leadership is temporarily entrusted to the clerical community. This is referred to as the imamate, as opposed to the caliphate. This difference has influenced the political thought and practice of Muslim societies to this day, which are fundamentally based on class interests and contradictions. As a historical provocation, one could compare the opposition between Sunni and Shiite Islam to the opposition between Athens and Sparta in ancient Greece. Sparta, the authoritarian state, was in fact much more egalitarian than democratic Athens, which was in fact extremely elitist.

When the era of European colonialism came to an end, the model of Sunni-majority society was one of a secular state power that demanded recognition and supremacy for religious authority, based either on a more or less secular structure, as in Egypt, or on a fundamentalist structure, as in Saudi Arabia. Although fundamentalist, Sunni Islamist regimes are not based on the power of the ulema, the scholars of Sharia law, or on a predominant role for the state in religious matters, but solely on the imposition of Koranic rules and morals by the state apparatus. Conversely, they demand political loyalty from those involved in religious affairs and consider them functional elements in their own consolidation. All this represents a continuation of the role of the caliph, as conceived by Sunnis, in the post-Muhammad period.

On the other hand, in Iran, the only Muslim country with a Shiite majority, a model of a so-called Islamic republic was established with the 1979 revolution, in which the clergy, as the holder of spiritual power, directs state power. The transformation process led by Khomeini after the overthrow of the pro-western imperialist regime of the Shah, placed control of state power in the hands of the clergy, thus establishing the superstructure of the process of economic and political independence and sovereignty for Persia against the 'Great Satan' - the United States.

If Shiite Iran represents an example of a functional political Islam, in a general sense, opposed to imperialism, Sunni Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, is an example of a political Islam that is historically and generally inclined or at least allied with American imperialism and the European powers, as well as with the Zionist regime in Israel. The power of the Saudi dynasty gradually asserted itself during the first three decades of the 20th century, on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire and with the decisive support of British imperialism, by founding an absolutist and fundamentalist monarchical regime. This state represented the dictatorship of the feudal class grouped around the crown, which, over the decades, gradually transformed itself into a comprador bourgeoisie, subservient to the imperialist bourgeoisie of the United States and the Atlantic camp. The Saudi ruling class structured itself as a social and political mediator in the export of oil and natural gas, where the country holds the world's first and sixth largest reserves, respectively. The huge revenues from hydrocarbons have been and continue to be the main economic source through which the Saudi monarchs have been able to exert decisive influence over the affairs of most Arab and Islamic countries, as well as Muslim communities around the world, projecting their interests as a comprador bourgeoisie subservient to US imperialism at the regional and global levels.

Domestically, the political Islam pursued by the Saudi crown and the ulema who have been loyal to it since the beginning is inspired by Wahhabi doctrine, that is, an extremely rigid form of Sunni Islam, different from classical Arab and Ottoman Islam, which considers Shiites and other confessional minorities in the Islamic world to be infidels (known as "Takfirism"). This ideology, which serves to maintain the kingdom's hold on power, condemns Shiites, who represent 15% of the population and are mainly concentrated in the oil-rich eastern provinces, to a kind of apartheid. In reality, discrimination against the Shiite minority is a constant trend in the history and current affairs of the Arab-Muslim world, due to the typical mechanism by which the exploitative ruling classes divert social discontent towards those who are "different." This is also due to the fact that this branch of Islam is very often practiced by the most oppressed section of the population, either because it has been the loser in the confrontation with the Sunni clans since the dispute over the caliphate, or because this branch has become a symbol of rebellion against the oligarchies and the official religion.

1979, the year of the victory of the revolution in Iran, which was dominated by the Shiite Islamic bourgeoisie[1], was a crucial

[1] This current was the main force that brought about the fall of the pro-US Shia regime and subsequently marginalized and destroyed the Iranian Marxist left. The Iranian Marxist left had real weight, was politically and militarily active, and enjoyed a real class consensus concentrated in the

year in the history of the entire Muslim world. Within the Saudi kingdom, an armed Sunni Islamist opposition emerged, accusing the monarchy of betraying the Muslim cause by selling out to the United States. In November, a group of "jihadist" fighters occupied the Grand Mosque in Mecca, demanding an end to oil exports to the United States and the expulsion of all infidel "foreigners"—technicians, civilians and military personnel – from the Arabian Peninsula. The action was crushed in blood by the intervention of French mercenaries, called in to help by the Saudi cops, who had hastily converted to Islam because otherwise they would not have been allowed to "set foot" in the holy place.

On the other hand, Khomeini's victory galvanized all the Shiite masses in the Arab world, in Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf countries, etc. It gave birth to organized political movements, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon. At the same time, Saudi Arabia and other reactionary Sunni regimes, supported by the underlying leadership of US imperialism, began to support the armed opposition to the pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan, organizing the influx of mujahideen (jihad fighters), composed mainly of unemployed youth and sub-proletarians, but also sons of the bourgeoisie, such as Bin Laden. In addition to the desire to fight the USSR and its allies, the Saudi, Pakistani, Jordanian, and other ruling classes wanted to launch a powerful counter-hegemonic operation against the destabilizing force of internal rebellion that the rise of Sunni jihadism and Khomeinism was exerting on the Arab-Muslim masses as a whole.

But it would take more than two decades for the two fundamental variants of political Islam, Sunni and Shiite, to clash directly. They were generally the expression of the rivalry between the Saudi and Iranian bourgeoisies, holders of the world's first and second-largest oil reserves, respectively. It was the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, created the conditions for this direct confrontation, resurfacing where it had begun more than 1,300 years earlier. Once Mesopotamia was occupied, the United States was forced to promote the rise of the Shiite community, i.e., the tribal, bourgeois, and clerical classes that dominate it, closely linked to Iran, to replace the Sunni regime of Saddam Hussein. The political and military strategies of US imperialism thus came into brutal collision for the first time with the vital interests of Saudi Arabia and other Sunni regimes, whose ruling classes began to negatively influence the process of resistance to the occupation of Iraq, which was mainly led by the Sunni masses of the north-central part of the country and gradually became dominated by anti-Shiite sectarian positions, until it was taken over by the takfirist group "Islamic State." ."

In 2011, in Syria, with the outbreak of the Sunni mass revolt against the Baathist regime of Assad, the confrontation already observed in Iraq spread to the neighbouring country, but in this case, the United States sided with the Sunni front in order to bring down Iran and Russia's key ally in the Arab world (Syria). In 2015, the dynamics of inter-confessional confrontation spread to Yemen, already marked by five years of revolt and civil war, with Saudi Arabia intervening to support its puppet, the Sunni Hadi, against the rebellion led by the Shiite Houthi militias supported by Iran. In this case too, the United States did not fail to support Saudi Arabia politically and militarily, while concluding the nuclear agreement with Tehran at the very moment when the latter launched its military intervention. The United States seeks to play the role of arbiter and guarantor for the Middle East, trying to maintain its own hegemony through a flexible policy.

In 2016, the execution of Shiite cleric and political opponent Nimr al-Nimr in Saudi Arabia, along with 46 other prisoners accused of terrorism, was a clear provocation. This crime demonstrates Saudi Arabia's desire to further divide Sunnis and Shiites and provoke new regional tensions with Iran. Al Nimir was a prominent figure and symbol of Shiite activism in the Islamic world, particularly in Iran (where the Saudi embassy was attacked), Bahrain, Sudan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Yemen, and Indian-administered Kashmir.

Among the 46 people sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia in January 2016, in addition to Nimir, were many Al Qaeda militants considered responsible for attacks carried out in the kingdom between 2003 and 2006. This is a veritable bloodbath against the organization led by Bin Laden.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda is a jihadist movement, i.e., a movement that ideologically posits the political and military duty of Muslims to fight internationally for the restoration of the divine order on earth, that which belonged to Muhammad and the first caliphs, against infidel powers such as the United States and against governments linked to them. The organization was founded in 1989 and gave itself a name that literally means "the base," derived from the mujahideen training camps in Afghanistan, which were supported in their anti-Soviet role by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and other Sunni regimes.

The birth of Al-Qaeda was the result of the inability of the United States and other allied governments to control the reactionary mobilization they had led to fight the USSR, since Al-Qaeda's political program was that Muslim fighters, once the Soviet Union was defeated, should fight against the United States. The organization was founded by the scion of one of Saudi Arabia's richest families, Osama bin Laden, and by the doctor Ayman al Zawahiri, who came from a bourgeois Egyptian family and was already active in Islamist groups, those who, unlike the Muslim Brotherhood, had rejected any conciliation with secular regimes. This paternity says a lot about the class nature of Al Qaeda, which aims to represent the most radical tendencies of the Sunni bourgeoisie in order to break with US imperialism and all "infidel" governments. To this end, the group began to act as an international network with a centralized command, aiming to carry out attacks around the world, support armed Islamist groups active in individual countries, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, and eventually integrating them into its own organizational network, as happened with the Syrian movement Janhat al Nusra, or creating local groups that refer directly to the organization, as in the case of what was formerly al Qaeda in Iraq or al Qaeda in Yemen.

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cities. However, it was unable to offer a viable alternative to the Shiite Islamic movement. The harsh and cruel repression of the communist movement in Iran led to a huge diaspora and, in many cases, to the adoption of increasingly opportunist and pro-imperialist positions. Today, Iran is a capitalist state, riven by increasingly fierce contradictions linked to global competition and capitalist urban development, but it retains its anti-imperialist role.

As for ISIS (Islamic State), the group emerged from Al Qaeda in Iraq. The latter, after initially promoting the Mujahideen Shura Council, following a merger with other Iraqi resistance groups, took the title of Islamic State in 2006, claiming control of the Sunni provinces of Iraq. With the attempt to destabilize the Syrian republic, the group entered the neighbouring country, proclaiming itself the Islamic State of Syria and Iraq, claiming control of the eastern regions of the country, on the Iraqi border, rich in gas and oil, where the Syrian branch of Al-Qaeda, Jabhat al Nusra, had established itself. An internal feud broke out between the two groups, resulting in thousands of deaths. It was essentially about control of Syria's energy resources and ended with the expulsion of Islamic State from the international organization, decreed by Ayman Al Zawahiri, because it had strayed from the borders of its own jihadist front – Iraq – by attacking the "mujahideen brothers" of Al Nusra. The Islamic State, as a separate organization, was thus born out of an internal split with Al-Qaeda. The two organizations pursued different strategies, each representing the interests of different bourgeois factions. On the one hand, al-Qaeda mainly deploys a military strategy of destabilizing attacks in individual countries and at the international level, calling on the Muslim (Sunni) masses to revolt and presenting itself as the armed wing of the Arab and Islamic bourgeoisie that wants to break its enslavement to the United States. On the other hand, the Islamic State has structured itself as a veritable army-state, seeking political control of territory and establishing a command bourgeoisie that exploits the economic resources conquered through war. This has led it, after conquering vast areas of Iraq and Syria, to proclaim itself the new Islamic caliphate. The initial successes of this organization can also be explained by its ability to achieve consensus among the Sunni masses by positioning itself as an alternative to traditional regimes. In the English-language magazine published by ISIS, Dabiq, alongside war propaganda, there was a considerable amount of social propaganda material: the inauguration of schools, free public services, hospitals, the imposition of political prices on basic necessities, the construction of infrastructure, and the administration of law through courts. The Islamic State was thus able to demonstrate its real ability to offer better living conditions to the working classes than the governments in Damascus and Baghdad. Its practice of war and governance involves the use of mass terror and ethnic cleansing against other religious and confessional groups, as well as political enemies. The group's propaganda and military action have accentuated the sectarian and takfirist drift, already historically present in Sunni Islamism, in an anti-Shiite and anti-religious minority stance, such as against the Yazidis in Iraq, aspiring to sectarian cleansing. However, the defeat of the Islamic State's territorial project, aided by a parallel convergence of the main imperialist forces and their allies on the ground, did not destroy this organization.

Palestine

Once again, it is the "Palestinian question" that has repositioned the various factions of political Islam.

The Palestinian resistance front in Gaza led by Hamas (a Sunni organization) with the participation of other pan-Arab and Marxist Palestinian political-military forces has been supported from a political-military standpoint only by Shiite political Islam organizations. The support of Sunni nations (from the Maghreb to the Arab Gulf) has been symbolic and opportunistic.

Take the example of Algeria, a nation that even banned demonstrations in support of Palestine, claiming that since the government is pro-Palestinian, popular support is unnecessary... Sunni Arab governments fear popular support for Palestine. Their government policy is based on extreme restraint when it comes to concrete acts of support for the Palestinian armed resistance.

We are therefore witnessing a new "submission" to the main mechanisms of imperialist and Zionist hegemony by Sunni political and state forces. The main forces of political Islam that actively support Palestine (a country with an overwhelming Sunni majority) are Shiite Islamic political organizations such as Hezbollah or the Yemeni "rebels," and of course Iran. The export of the "Islamic revolution" has always been an objective of the Iranian regime, which, since the 1980s, has supported rebel movements in Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and, of course, Iran. in Yemen, and of course Iran. The export of the "Islamic revolution" has always been an objective of the Iranian regime, which since the 1980s has supported Shiite rebel movements in several countries where they have traditionally been socially and politically excluded. Although they have not achieved complete victory in any other country, and to date the Islamic Republic of Iran is the only country of its kind in the world, these movements are considerable forces where they operate. In Yemen, the Ansarallah (Houthi) govern 40% of the territory, having defeated not only the supporters of former President Hadi, but also the coalition of Gulf monarchies led by Saudi Arabia. They recently imposed a naval blockade on Israel, even under Anglo-American bombardment. In Lebanon, they have consolidated Hezbollah[1] as the country's main armed force, responsible for thwarting Israeli invasions on three occasions. In Iraq, even before the 2003 invasion of the country, Iran supported Shiite rebel groups which, after the defeat of Saddam Hussein's predominantly Sunni Islamic government, became the main organized political force in the country, occupying the parliament as political parties. Iraqi Shiite militias form the backbone of the Popular Mobilization Forces, a coalition composed mainly of Shiite militias, but also Assyrian Catholic, Sunni, and Yazidi militias, responsible not only for defeating the Islamic State in the country with Iran's support, but also for attacking US bases in the country and bombing Israel as part of Operation Al-Aqsa. Alongside them are smaller Shiite rebel movements in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.

These movements form the core of the "axis of resistance," which has evolved in the 2010s from an international coalition of Shiite insurgents led by Iran to a much more complex system of alliances led by Iran. The axis of resistance includes Iran, Shiite armed movements, the Syrian Arab Republic, and

[1] Hezbollah (Party of God) is a party that for years has managed to control political and social life in Lebanon, incorporating much of the working methods of the Arab Marxist left through the creation of a dense network of social structures and a modern vision of organization aimed at supporting the popular masses. Thanks to Iranian support, the strength of Hezbollah's paramilitary wing has grown over the years to the point where it is considered more powerful not only than the regular Lebanese army but also, according to Israel, than most Arab armed forces in the world, and this has been the case continuously since the start of the Syrian civil war, which saw Hezbollah enter the scene as a key ally of the Assad government. In 1997, Hezbollah was designated a terrorist organization by the United States and Israel; in 2013, the European Union designated its military wing as a terrorist organization; in 2016, it was declared a terrorist organization by the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League

various factions of the Palestinian armed resistance. Under its leadership, the Islamic State was defeated in Iraq and Syria (with the exception of a few pockets in the desert where it survives), and the Al-Aqsa flood initiated in Gaza by the Palestinian resistance was elevated to a multi-front war against Israel. The latter was the great international political victory of Iran and the Axis of Resistance, which consolidated its status as a heterogeneous international anti-imperialist front in the Middle East.

One need only look at the Palestinian resistance front to be convinced of this. Palestine is now 90% Sunni Muslim, with Shiites representing a small minority and Christians even less. The three main resistance movements are:

– Hamas, a movement that emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood is considered a terrorist organization in Iran, while in Turkey and Qatar it enjoys government support.

– Islamic Jihad, which emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood but is closer to Iran.

– The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and other Marxist and left-wing organizations.

All these organizations, despite their different origins, were part of the Axis of Resistance and were supported.

However, the crisis in Syria, with the flight of Assad, has weakened the Axis of Resistance and given new life and agility to radical Sunni organizations.

The Baathist Syrian republic of the Assad government was an integral and essential part of the Axis of Resistance because of its strategic positioning, facilitating Hezbollah's actions and the logistics and supply of weapons to Palestinian guerrilla movements (especially Palestinian Left organizations).

The Syrian opposition, spearheaded by "jihadists," overwhelmed the Assad government. Coincidentally or not, they launched their offensive on the same day that the ceasefire between Hezbollah and Israel came into effect, forcing the Lebanese resistance movement to engage on a second front in the north while it was still recovering from losses suffered on the first front. The Syrian "jihadists," who emerged from the ranks of Al-Qaeda's Islamic State, are now described as "democratic rebels" and, while retaining their own level of independence, are following the old model of radical Sunni forces used by Western forces in an "anti-" anti-imperialist role. The blatant betrayal of the Palestinian cause—evident in the attack on Palestinian leftist camps in Syria and the submission to the invasion by Zionist forces[1], which easily penetrated the country—is plain for all to see.

In this 'geopolitical game', radical Sunni forces, with a Syrian "moderate Al Qaeda," have participated in weakening the resistance front against Zionism by intervening directly in the destabilization of Syria, a nation that, for better or worse, has always represented a logistical base for the pro-Palestinian, anti-Zionist, and anti-imperialist[2] resistance.

Islamophobia

We live in a world where money is everything, where economics eats politics, where dematerialization, flexibility, speed, and finance dominate. The presence of new players, such as China, and the exacerbation of global competition with the angry response of the Atlantic imperialist bloc with the United States at its centre, are leading Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, the Gulf States, and Iran to play new roles alongside local bourgeoisies seeking to develop their own monopolistic strategies and break free from the semi-colonial state. Mecca and the Black Stone, places of worship and symbols of the Muslim world, are joined by the neon lights and skyscrapers of Dubai...

In this context, however, two factors remain central and fixed:

– the uncompromising defence of Zionist imperialism as a platform for control over the entire Middle East

– the inability of political Islam, especially in its Sunni components, to develop a genuine plan of action independent of imperialism, crushed by its class contradictions.

Over the past 60 years, political Islam, in its main components, has benefited from and suffered the enthusiastic or moderate support of the main Atlantic countries in an anti-communist and anti-pan-Arab role, only to find itself considered the "enemy number one," the essence of modern "terrorism"... only to become once again a "progressive" interlocutor, as in the recent turn in Syria, where terrible 'terrorists' magically become "democratic" liberators of the people and the status of women....

Political Islam tried to "use" this "Atlantic" support and was crushed. There is no liberation possible when it comes from those who built your chains. This is the dramatic lesson of previous anti-colonial cycles, where a gap exists between independent anti-colonial experiences and those controlled by the colonizers themselves.

Political Islam among the Arab-Islamic masses in the West exists and in many cases, represents a defence of the community against the mechanisms of disintegration of the imperialist metropolis. In prisons, "politicization" and social redemption often see Islam and political Islam as the main, if not the only, vehicle for redemption. Those who cry scandal in the ranks of the communist movement should ask themselves not so much about the politicization of the extra-legal proletariat, but about the reasons for the absence of the communist movement...

However, the influence of political Islam in Western cities is outweighed by the war propaganda spread by imperialist

[1] The Israelis had not invaded Syria's borders since 1975.

[2] The crisis and fall of the Syrian republic can be explained by internal reasons linked to its class nature and the regime's inability to connect with the interests of the masses. However, it would be blind not to see how these contradictions have been used and directed by foreign forces, the US, the EU, and Israel, to destabilize a country that was not only organically part of the Axis of Resistance but also under the influence of Russia. Syria has become another arena for global competition and the new imperialist war sweeping the world. We therefore find tragic the position of those who advocated the end of the Syrian government in December and who, at the same time, supported Palestine. The fall of Syria was a stab in the back of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples and represents a new act of betrayal of the Palestinian cause by Sunni political Islam and Arab governments.

democracies in search of an identifiable enemy that is weak and, above all, a minority within society as a whole.

The projects of political Islam in the imperialist democracies oscillate between the search for a strategy to bring about the emergence of an Arab-Islamic bourgeoisie and make room for it, and the re-proposal of a "Third Worldist" approach, which sees the imperialist democracies as nothing more than a recruiting ground and a source of disruption.

Arab-Muslim proletarians represent a large part of the urbanized masses in the metropolises of imperialist democracies, one of the most criminalized sections of society.

The Islamophobia that is being fomented today is a new attempt by the ruling classes to sow fear of the other in order to better impose ever harsher political and social measures at home affecting all proletarians, native and immigrant, and to be able, abroad, to legitimize the continuation of imperialist aggression against peoples. The intellectual and political servants of imperialism have even invented fictitious categories such as Islamo-leftism to attack the possible conspiracy between class demands and Marxism with the Muslim masses in the West. The battle against Islamophobia therefore plays a central role for those who rely on class bases. Fascism manifests itself in the restriction of freedoms and social and political guarantees, such as the extension of anti-terrorism laws and the use of the defence of terrorism.

It is important to counter Islamophobia not so much from a generic anti-racist point of view, but on the basis of identity demands and class struggle, which must unite all proletarians, regardless of their origin, religion, and culture, by opposing the militarist and racist rhetoric that seeks to justify war between the poor and imperialist war. We must affirm and fight to support the resistance of oppressed peoples, whether led by bourgeois components, such as political Islam in its various forms, when these play a genuinely anti-imperialist role.

In order to strengthen our practice of struggle in this direction, understanding this phenomenon in dialectical materialist and class terms helps us, on the one hand, to break with imperialist culture and propaganda, including all conspiracy rhetoric and Islamophobic obsession. And on the other hand, it helps us to address the contradiction between the line of the proletarian and revolutionary left and that of political Islam, which is sometimes concretely and primarily anti-imperialist, but fundamentally reactionary in nature, given the class interests it expresses.

Political Islam is the expression of factions of the bourgeoisie in Arab and Muslim countries which, due to their specific and concrete interests in different historical phases, are more or less in contradiction with each other and with the interests and strategies of the imperialist monopoly bourgeoisies, primarily the United States. Referring to religion, a superstructural element that inevitably links class-divided societies, is a way of giving oneself a mass identity line in relation to the people, as is the case with nationalists referring to the homeland.

The history of political Islam is also the history of the limits of the pan-Arab left and the communist movement in Arab and Islamic countries. From its inability to place itself at the head of the anti-colonial movements of the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa in the last century, to its lack of political autonomy from Arab nationalism and, in some cases, from political Islam itself, to its extreme weakness as an organized political movement.

Marx stated that "*religious misery is both the expression and the protest against real misery. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the feeling of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless condition. It is the opium of the people. To eliminate religion as the illusory happiness of the people is to demand their real happiness. The demand for the abandonment of illusions about one's condition is the demand for the abandonment of a condition that needs illusions.*" - 'For the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right', Introduction 1844.

These expressions, which refer to religion as a superstructure, can also be used to refer to religion that becomes active politics, as in the case of Islamism.

History teaches us that if communists want to pursue this "real happiness of the people," they cannot simply assert that it is illusory for the masses to "take opium," but that they must replace it with the class struggle of the proletariat, with its ability to lead the struggle of the masses in a revolutionary direction. This is true here, "in the rationalist West," which consumes a great deal of political and cultural opium other than religion... and there, "in the traditionalist East," where the masses are forcefully seeking a path to authentic liberation and placing themselves under the leadership of those, such as Islamists, who promise it and are willing to give everything for it. In other words, either the communists free themselves first from political "soporific" and 'opportunism' and manage to prevail over the sedative of conformism, repression, and reaction, or the masses will continue to seek in a so-called "opium" a cause of illusory liberation, but legitimate in that it is concrete. The damned of the earth and of the "metropolis" have no time, unlike the bourgeoisie, which can evaluate, study, wait...

- M.G.

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We conducted a number of interviews with different organisations, in order to highlight the extreme richness of the revolutionary movement and its capacity, even in an unfavourable phase, to find ways of intervening and developing. In these interviews, we tried to highlight the organisational history and practices, the transmission between the new and older generations, the relationship between territory and class, etc.

Fuerza Acción Revolucionaria-(Chile)

Interview with comrades from Fuerza Acción Revolucionaria de Chile (Revolutionary Action Force of Chile)

-What are the main contradictions in Chile and what form are the urban proletariat and popular masses taking today?

During the period of military rule and the subsequent return to bourgeois democracy, Chile underwent significant transformations with the consolidation of monopoly capitalism, including the development of large corporate conglomerates that now operate as monopolies in various industries, such as forestry, Similarly, foreign capital has consolidated its position in our country, mainly from China and Canada in strategic sectors such as mining, energy, and finance, as well as investments from the United States.

Furthermore, the privatization of all social rights, such as education, health, culture, and housing, which began in the late 1980s and early 1990s, has been accompanied by a deterioration in the living standards of the working class and a sustained decline in real wages, an increase in unemployment and informal work, and an increase in the cost of living which, especially in recent years, has had a strong impact on working-class families, leading to the early integration of young people into the world of work, as well as an increase in female employment, under very precarious conditions.

In this sense, the discourse of the bourgeois forces that led the "democratic" transition, according to whom "a better Chile was coming", has faded in the face of the increasingly unfavourable reality affecting the workers of our country which has erupted after almost two decades of ups and downs in mass mobilizations and a progressive discrediting of the bourgeois democratic regime and the political parties of the bourgeoisie, in what was the insurrectionary situation of October 18, 2019, better known as the popular revolt. The popular revolt was mainly a spontaneous and unorganized uprising of the popular masses, which quickly took the form of a direct confrontation with the repressive forces and resulted in the assassination of dozens of people, hundreds of cases of mutilation and torture, and more than two thousand prisoners. At the same time, in order to undermine the insurrectionary situation and put an end to the crisis of governability, all the political parties of the bourgeoisie, from the Communist Party to the most reactionary parties, agreed on a peaceful solution through a peace agreement. The aim was to prepare a referendum to carry out a process of constitutional change. The result was the demobilization and institutionalization of the conflict, which ended with two processes in which both constitutional proposals were rejected by referendum. At the same time, the demoralization of the masses has led in recent years to an organizational and ideological retreat of the masses, so that today the popular forces are in a state of total retreat. This has allowed the progressive government of Gabriel Boric, representative of the interests of the bourgeoisie, to advance an institutional offensive through laws that grant more powers to the repressive forces and outlaw historical mechanisms of struggle such as occupations, as well as allocating significant resources to the police and military institutions, all with the aim of preparing to prevent future processes of popular mobilization. Despite this, despite the efforts of the bourgeois media and the methods of political coercion promoted by the state to show a stable regime, bourgeois institutionalism has not structurally overcome the loss of legitimacy that paved the way for the 2019 revolt, and although the subjective conditions are far from developing, the objective conditions are evident and palpable in the daily reality of the workers of our country.

- What role does the legacy of the Pinochet dictatorship play in Chilean society today?

The bourgeois dictatorship has had an impact on all aspects of Chilean society to this day.

Firstly, the dictatorship established the legislative framework that still constitutes one of the greatest obstacles to the organization of workers today. The mechanisms that limit and fragment their organization and coordination, that restrict the role of trade unions, and that limit the unionization of workers due to the risk of dismissal have meant that, to this day, the trade union movement has been greatly weakened and, with a few honourable exceptions, is nothing more than a bureaucratic tool or a simple instrument of economic struggle within the narrow limits imposed by capital.

On the other hand, it laid the foundations for the consolidation of big capital in Chile through the freedoms it granted, legal advantages, the sale of state-owned companies to private companies at ridiculous prices, and the privatization and establishment of the market as an intermediary for access to basic goods.

In addition, the cultural and ideological impact was very strong, not only because of the establishment of a culture based on consumption, fetishization of what is foreign/western, the discourse of social advancement, competition, and individual achievement, but also because the dictatorship's offensive against the working class permeated all aspects of its life, not only materially destroying the revolutionary and popular forces of our class, but also annihilating them politically and ideologically. This blow has been very difficult to reverse to this day. In short, the social, cultural, economic, and legal foundations laid by the dictatorship are still fully in force today, but it is important to emphasize that they were only a reflection of the aspirations of the bourgeoisie, since the dictatorship was merely a means used to achieve its own reordering and objectives.

– What is the current state of the revolutionary left in Chile today?

To be honest, revolutionary forces in Chile today are very few and far between and are in a marginal position in terms of their significance within the working class. The critical state of these forces is not an accidental outcome, but rather corresponds to poor political preparation, the absence of serious revolutionary projects, and the absence of political organizations that develop as genuine combat units, with the discipline, rigor, and work that would allow us to speak of genuine parties or cadre organizations. Much of what has been the Chilean revolutionary left in recent decades has ended up abandoning the struggle to join the ranks of reformism or progressivism, and in many cases, a large part of these organizations, even those that today stand outside bourgeois institutionalism, have ended up embracing liberal and

post-modern positions out of fear of being marginalized or simply out of opportunism.
In the same vein, and in the absence of clarity, many activists and organizations have adopted hesitant positions, placing their optimism in the hands of processes led by the bourgeoisie and its parties, such as constitutional referendums, or in the typical sophism of the lesser evil, which led many sectors to call for a vote for progressivism in the last presidential elections. On the other hand, in some groups there is a strong contempt for the masses, operating apart from our class and its reality or, in many cases, instrumentalizing it for their own ends. Self-congratulatory attitudes and the exaltation of 'accomplishments' of little or no relevance have made it difficult to recognize the endemic crisis that the revolutionary left is going through, and make it much more difficult to plan unitary actions in the country. *Despite this, many are making sterile efforts and statements about overcoming structural stagnation.* In our case, we have chosen our own path and the task of building, assuming our own difficulties and limitations, but with the certainty that the construction of a fighting party - with a theoretical and political development in line with our reality, cohesive and ideologically firm, composed of genuine revolutionary cadres with discipline and commitment to the workers - is a task that cannot be postponed.

– How has your organisation founded?
Our organization was born under the influence of two important factors: comrades from other previous political experiences and a sector composed mainly of young people who lived through the construction of this organization with us as their first militant experience, and who joined the organization mainly in the context of student struggles.
Ten years have passed since our beginnings, with great changes and important advances, which have been the result of our maturity, but above all, the impact of the popular revolt and the lessons we have learned that have made us grow qualitatively.
From a historical perspective, we consider the most important experience in our country to be that of the revolutionary left movement led by Miguel Enriquez. We acknowledge its mistakes and differences, but we integrate it into our political education and appreciate its contributions, many of which we have incorporated into our own analysis. At the same time, we completely dissociate ourselves from the historical matrix of the Chilean Communist Party and the Trotskyist, Maoist, or Stalinist analysis present in other organizations. We recognize that for Chile and Latin America, today more than ever, we must build on the foundations of Marxism-Leninism a political theory capable of guiding us on the path of struggle against the bourgeoisie and for the conquest of power by the working class. To this end, we understand the continental nature of the struggle as a fundamental element for the success of the socialist revolution, which is why we have formed *La Continental Revolucionaria*, together with the Guevarist Party of Argentina and the Revolutionary Brigade of Mexico.

– What are your objectives in relation to the Chilean social and political context?
As we have already mentioned, we characterize the current context as a moment of bourgeois offensive, on the part of the current progressive government, and of organizational and ideological retreat of the masses, after the moral and political defeat of the institutional solution to the popular revolt.
That is why, today, our objectives are focused on strengthening our organization with a view to forming a revolutionary fighting party, which is a challenge we highlighted at our second congress.
Similarly, we have set ourselves the fundamental task of rebuilding the forces of the workers, promoting their organization, consciousness, and militant disposition, always assuming that this requires the self-promotion of the masses and the exercise of genuine democracy, in order to develop learning from the experiences of the workers themselves in struggle. In addition to the above, we consider it a central task to prepare ourselves to destabilize the bourgeois democratic regime, strike at its foundations, confront our class enemy, and create the conditions to generate new political crises and new scenarios of struggle in the context of the general upsurge of the class struggle. The goal is to generate a revolutionary alternative, but at the same time to give direction to our mass insurrectionary strategy, the path we have charted to carry out the socialist revolution in our country, which has as its goal the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the conquest of power by the working class, and the construction of a socialist society as a transition to communism.

– How do you combine the goal of revolution with your daily political work? What strategy do you use in mass work: in unions, neighbourhood collectives, etc.?
Our experience in this regard has been very valuable but very complex from an organizational point of view. To face the challenges of compartmentalization and the protection of our comrades, within the framework of an organization that assumes revolutionary war as an inevitable element of the class struggle, we have organized our forces by specializing our militant practice around certain activities, where we have structures dedicated to mass work.
Comrades dedicated to this task develop their intervention mainly in student spaces, at the community level (neighbourhoods), and, at an earlier stage, among informal workers. For social construction, we have what we call Intermediate Fronts, which are spaces from which the FAR aims to bring together its Revolutionary Social Force and from which it defines its political line for the sector in which it operates; in this case, we currently have *the Revolutionary Student Force, the Revolutionary People's Force*, and *the Revolutionary Workers' Force*. From there, we create local frameworks of development, in the case of cities, have been linked mainly to children, young people, and women.
An important mass experience to highlight, which we have been working on for years, is the organization of children called *La Colmenita*, which is present in several cities (for more details, you can access La Colmenita's Instagram: La.Colmenita). Our method of construction is what we have defined as revolutionary pedagogy, a synthesis of the principles of Makarenko and other revolutionary educators, combined with our own political experience. Revolutionary pedagogy is based on four pillars that are deployed as tools to develop mass work: curiosity, experience, the exercise of struggle, and collectivity (Editor's note: we recommend reading our article: Revolutionary pedagogy: our method of construction in mass work). Its application is based on the need for spaces of mass organization that adopt popular democracy as a fundamental principle. This is direct democracy, that is, spaces where the masses take on the tasks of decision-making and active participation, and where our line achieves legitimacy and allows us to guide the masses, to the extent that we are able to use collective social and political practice as a form of learning and as a means of developing class consciousness. We therefore understand that the treatment of class contradictions and the development of consciousness are not abstract or metaphysical exercises, but are directly linked to the material and social reality in which we act. This is why, although we attach importance to the role of agitation and propaganda, we see it as a means of mass building that On the other hand, we believe that the mass organisational spaces in which we are embedded can become points of reference and achieve legitimacy with those that are not organised, inspiring new ways of connecting, thinking and perceiving ourselves as a class.

Popular resistance in Turkey against traffickers and drugs

Interview with comrades from the Popular Front, a revolutionary left-wing organization in Turkey (*https://www.halkinsesitv.online*), on the fight against drugs in Turkey. There are "militias" that intervene directly in neighbourhoods where the Popular Front is organized. These are organized groups of people directly fighting for the popular defence of neighbourhoods in Turkey

. Urbanization in metropolitan cities contains many contradictions. Imperialism surrounds people with reactionary messages. Drugs, alcohol, criminal gangs, prostitution, etc. are used to lull the masses into passivity. Calls for security urging the State to strengthen the police and crack down on crime, serve to mask the links between the state and the police in the same criminal market. The drug problem is certainly one of the most important issues. How are neighbourhood militias fighting this problem?
Everyone knows that drugs, corruption, and imperialism poison people through their power of collaboration. Perhaps no one knows better than the front-line militias; that the police, acting as the government's watchdog, also protect and shield drug traffickers (baggers). We have martyrs in the fight against drugs and corruption. We have lost five martyrs, either at the hands of the police or at the hands of state-sponsored gangs.
Where there is fascism, there can be no talk of law, because it is we who have been shot down and it is we who have been arrested. The murderers were sentenced to death, while the revolutionaries or militiamen who claimed their neighbourhoods were sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment.

Our martyrs in the fight against drugs:

Birol Karasu – November 6, 2006 – Küçükarmutlu / Istanbul
Birol Karasu was martyred when market owners opened fire on members of the Cephe (Front) who had gone to a market on Karanfildere Street in the Fatih Sultan Mehmet neighbourhood of Küçükarmutlu, Istanbul—one of the sources of drug trafficking and corruption in the area—to deliver a warning to the dealers.

Hasan Ferit Gedik – September 29, 2013 – Gülsuyu / Istanbul
On September 28, a march against corruption was organized by the People's Front in Gülsuyu, Istanbul. During this action, gangs opened fire on members of the People's Front. The next day, while the gangs and members of the People's Front were protesting against the attack, the gangs arrived in cars and mowed down the crowd from behind before fleeing. During this attack, he was hit by a bullet in the head, neck, and back. He died in the hospital on September 30, 2013. Today, we call our drug treatment and addiction centres HFG – Hasan Ferit Gedik.

Kemal Delen – April 11, 2016 – İkitelli / Istanbul
On the evening of April 11, 2016, Kemal Delen, a member of the İkitelli People's Front, died in hospital with six gunshot wounds to his body following a vicious attack by a gangster.

Recep Hasar – May 26, 2016 -Gazi Mah. / Istanbul
On the night of Friday, May 13, 2016, a clash broke out in the Gazi neighbourhood of Istanbul, following a denunciation by the residents, during a demonstration organized by the Front militia against a house where drugs were being sold. Recep Hasar, a member of the Front militia who was wounded in the clash, fought for his life in the hospital for two weeks. On the morning of May 26, he was wounded in the leg. He died from an infection.

İbrahim Devrim Top – September 13, 2018 – Küçükarmutlu / Istanbul
On September 13, 2018, İbrahim Devrim Top was executed by police with a single gunshot—under the pretext that he had punishing a drug dealer of the Armutlu district.

How does the Turkish state protect criminal gangs and attack left-wing activists who want to defend their communities and resist the cultural and social mechanisms of imperialism?
The state imprisons revolutionaries and popular militias. It protects and hides drug lords from around the world in the country. Many drug lords wanted on red notices have appeared in Turkey. Sead Dedeic and Dutch nationals Marciano Eugene Ruimwijk, Dritan Rexhepi, Eric Schroeder, Mark Douglas Buddle, Rawa Majid, and Naci Sharifi Zindashti are among them. Many of them have been granted citizenship. It turned out that some of them had politicians, bureaucrats, and even ministers of the state that they controlled through bribery. Previously, authorities discovered drugs, money, and weapons in a vehicle carrying a state deputy, a known mafia figure, and the local police chief together.
Today, the situation is no different; they are able to smuggle drugs into Turkey with a simple wave of the hand. In the port of Mersin, 258 kilograms of cocaine hidden in banana boxes were seized from a container on a cargo ship.
September 16, 2024 – We read a news report that approximately 141.5 kilograms of cocaine were seized on a Panamanian-flagged ship from Colombia in the port of Karadeniz Ereğli district in Zonguldak. The state there is no way the state can be ignorant the entry of so many drugs into the country.
The Front militia has always included the masses in its fight against drugs and corruption. It has fought by creating committees and even neighbourhood assemblies. Leaflets, writings, warnings, punishments, and all means are used,

up to and including armed struggle (with direct attacks on the homes of drug traffickers and the destruction of drugs).

-The number of drug addicts in metropolitan areas is a global phenomenon. What is the situation in Turkey? Are there any activities by left-wing revolutionary organizations to combat drug addiction and help these people overcome their addiction?

The spread of drugs in Turkey is not limited to metropolitan areas. It is also a bleeding wound in small towns.

As Turkey is governed by a form of neo-colonial imperialism, fascism, wherever the people tend to wake up and revolt, drugs spread like cancer. Drug rates in Turkey are measured in tons.

"The number of synthetic cannabinoids seized in 2023 increased by 88.8% compared to the previous year. Of the 1,994 kg of synthetic cannabinoids, 202 kg were seized in raw form. With 1 kg of raw material, products ranging from 330 kg to 1 ton can be obtained.

In 2023, 21,912 kg of methamphetamine, 13,760,337 doses of fenethylline, 5,227,853 doses of ecstasy, 2,502 kg of cocaine, 3,314 kg of heroin, 99,294 kg of marijuana and skunk-type substances, 157,343,758 of cannabis, and 17,808,426 opium poppy plants were seized in Turkey.

According to Professor Sevil Atasoy, a member of the United Nations Drug Control Board; the amount of drugs seized accounts for only 10% of those not seized. In this case, the actual figures are ten times higher than these figures.

The State cannot possibly be unaware of the trade of tons of drugs in the country.

The total number of requests for outpatient treatment addressed to treatment centres in Turkey alone in 2023 is 349,393 (requests for alcohol and nicotine addiction are excluded from this figure). Another 189,384 people made a request for the first time.

The number of admissions to inpatient treatment centres was 16,291. Of these, 13,168 were first-time treatment seekers. 37.1% were dependent on methamphetamine and 28% were dependent on heroin.

In 2023, 300 people died as a direct result of these substances. (Turkey 2024 Drug Report)

Even according to this report, it appears that there are more than 200,000 drug addicts in 2023 alone. These are official figures, and the actual numbers are much higher. In fact, the vast majority of people who use drugs do not consider themselves addicts or do not register because they believe they cannot be treated in state treatment centres.

We have named our drug and addiction treatment centres HFG – Hasan Ferit Gedik.

There is no other organization in Turkey besides the People's Front that is effectively fighting drugs and corruption.

We opened our drug treatment centre for the first time on July 14, 2014, in the Gazi district of Sarıgazi, Istanbul, under the name Hasan Ferit Gedik Centre for Combating and Liberation Against Drugs.

On August 31, 2016, the state detained and arrested patients and employees during a police raid on the HGF Centre

In Turkey, where we saved 400 drug addicts in two years, our HFG Centre was then turned into a police station by the fascist AKP government. Today, it protects drug traffickers.

We have also opened treatment centres for drug addicts outside Turkey.

On May 14, 2018, we opened the HFG Centre for the Fight Against Drugs, Alcohol, and Gambling in Duisburg, Germany.

In Athens, Greece, we officially opened our Hasan Ferit Gedik International Association for the Fight Against Drug Addiction on July 25, 2024.

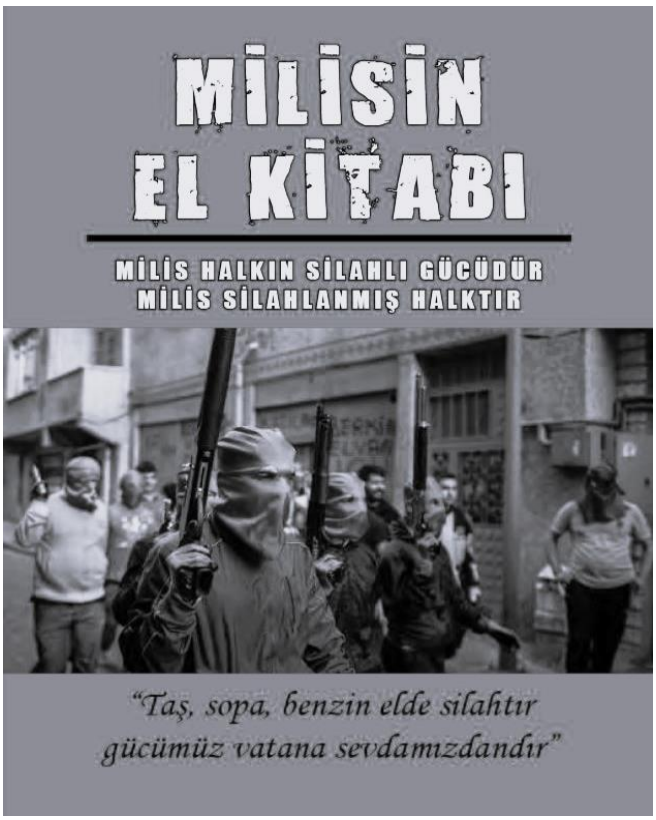
Addiction has nothing to do with a lack of willpower, moral weakness, or personality flaws. Addiction is not a problem of willpower, but a physical illness of the brain that requires long-term treatment.

A person cannot reverse the deterioration of their brain alone or solely with the support and efforts of their family and close environment. Quitting drugs is not possible through personal willpower, but through a program and collectivism. That is why we do not treat drug addiction individually, but through a programs, work, and an organized one's life.

We carry out treatment without medication. While saving our patients from drug addiction, we do not make them dependent on drugs.

Our HFG International Centre for the Fight Against Drug Addiction is a place where this effort is organized.

Treatment is only the health aspect of the fight against drugs and drug addiction. Other problems caused by drugs and drug addiction include economic and cultural corruption, prostitution, gangs, police, civil and criminal crimes. The reason for all these problems is political. The source of the problem is imperialism and its collaborators.



Anti-Imperialist Action (AIA) Ireland

Anti-Imperialist Action, an Irish socialist republican organization (Republic and occupied territories), for popular resistance to British, European, and US imperialism. Interview with a comrade from AIA-Ireland.

-To start off, tell us about Anti-Imperialist Action.
Anti-Imperialist Action is a broad based socialist republican group. We're focused on issues around Ireland's national liberation. We the national question remains unresolved, we don't see that it's going to happen through, elections, reformism or working with England. For us it's still extremely important, fundamental question to pushing forward a revolution in Ireland.

-What is your own political background?
I see myself as part of a rising generation of youth in Ireland who are seeing that the country's not working for them, and how instead it just serves the multinationals and the interests of the rich. (Ireland is a tax haven) Growing up I was inspired by history in school. Later, I lived through a historical shift; from this liberal idea that was popular in the '90 and early 2000s of things progressively getting better. One saw Barack Obama, the US' first black, president being elected, and for a brief moment it felt like things will be better, you know? It all seemed possible. That was my conception when I was a kid.

I was 12 when the 2008 crisis that hit Ireland. It made a lasting impression on me. The whole country basically collapsed. It happened so suddenly. My dad lost his job. He was in construction, that whole industry collapsed. I started my militant journey in late teens; wondering what the world had to offer and what I was going to do in my life. Everything looked pretty miserable. I was studying in college, and started to read James Connolly and Patrick Pierce, that just lit a fire in me.

Similar to other comrades I first went through many other left-wing groups, and I just thought they weren't serious, as they seemed only interested in getting seats in elections. From the moment I got politicised I believed in revolution, being the only way forward. And my ideas have developed and advanced the more I studied more met older comrades.
-What is the history of the AIA?
AIA was formed in 2017 by a number of older comrades. It was motivated with seeing Sinn Fein [1] selling-out and becoming no longer interested in pushing forward a revolution in this country. We saw that there was a need for more, socialistic, radical, street politics and community organizing and a republican organism driving that. It was a conscious step away from electoralism and move to trying to build an actual movement on the streets and in communities.

We have different generations who would have been involved in the republican movement back as far as the '60's (the generation of the civil rights movement in the north). Following them is the generation that would have been radicalised by 'the Troubles' (in the '70). For the comrades of the '80s Republicanism seemed like it might be on the wane. But in 1981 suddenly there was a resurgence thanks to the sacrifice of the hunger strikers that carried the struggle on for another couple of decades to the present generation. We're so lucky we have such a strong tie to the past. It's always a mix of ages and generations and different backgrounds, experiences, It's good. it's interesting because there's so much to learn, so much history. so much experience that we get from the older comrades. And for the younger comrades I think it's always on the young to struggle to keep things going and to push things in new directions keeping things dynamic.

-What is the intergenerational relationship like in your organization? Is there active political mentorship?
Regarding our youth wing, educationals and reading groups happen regularly and political discussions after branch meetings to discuss current issues. This allows us to come to a kind of common understanding. We're able to discuss things and have an internal culture that older comrades are very open to accommodating the younger generation.
Yeah, mentorship is important. I mean, it happens organically through working together, through discussions, we learn so much, and develop our politics through those discussions and meetings formally or informally as comrades. There's enormous respect for the older comrades, we want to learn, we want to spend time with them. We won't feel confident in a decision until we've discussed it with them. We value their opinion. We want to understand. We want to see things from their perspective too. You can read a book about some older revolutionary, but actually having a face to face discussion with one is completely different, I think it just embeds that belief and understand in people a lot more firmly.
-What are the new issues facing the republican movement in Ireland today?
Immigration has been probably the most difficult issue that's come up the last couple years. But, obviously, the position of republicans has always been that migrants are more than welcome here.

(Ireland has had a widespread acute housing crisis for over 8 years. However, it has disproportionately touched the traditional working-class communities especially in Dublin,

[1] An active republican political party in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. It is the leading political party in Northern Ireland since the 2022 Northern Ireland Assembly elections

that had traditionally formed a popular base of support for the republican movement. Adding to this existing problem Ireland is the has welcomed the highest number by capita of Ukrainian migrants (70,000 of the 100,000 migrants hosted by Ireland are Ukrainian) in the last couple of year, with the government vowing to build welcome centres in Dublin working class communities spurring on the 'war between the poor'. The result has been that Ireland has for the first time witnessed the birth a of mass reactionary movement, spurned on by far-right agitators)

Before, Anti-fascism was simple enough that these groups were small and they could be, physically taken on, and prevented from organizing. We follow Frank Ryan, the Socialist Republican leader in the 1930s, who said 'no free speech for traitors' as he opposed them physically on the streets. The anti-fascist movement in Ireland has always been Republican in its core. But that became more complicated when the far right was able to mobilise around this migrant issue.

So that did take a period of reflection and discussion, but it was great to have older, comrades who would have more contacts especially with the older and middle-aged people from working class areas. They would have shared struggles with them going back throughout the years, against the anti-austerity movement following 2008, or from the anti-drugs movement (in the 80-90s). We couldn't just go out and physically attack these people, a lot of them were working class people, we had to isolate the far right elements, we went out with a very clear message highlighting the role of the state

Parallelly, the housing league was set up to build a broad social movement and struggle. Mixed in with this was this very firm Republican idea of our right to the ownership of Ireland, that we have a right to occupy these empty buildings. Many joined our ranks as people could see quite clearly how republicanism applied in practice, in being willing to resist for what we believe in, and in particular against these more subtle forms of imperialism like these multinationals and vulture funds (buying up the housing stock during a housing crisis)

-So it's important to engage on new issues, but I know that tradition is also important in the republican movement.
Yes for example, an old and very important tradition in the republican movement commemorating our martyrs. We see ourselves as consciously part same tradition. They serve as a time to reflect on what they died for, what they believed in. And asking ourselves are we living up to that today, how can we be better?
A lot of young comrades at first can find it a bit hard to follow. To them, going to graveyards and, talking about dead people all seems a bit macabre and they find it hard to understand in their current context. And then when they start going.. especially to those of the more recent martyrs that were assassinated in the 70s: older comrades would have known them. They were not only comrades, they were friends, it's a very personal experience and it brings the reality of it home. It's not just, talking about it which can be abstract. Now some of those young comrades are the ones running the commemorations.

- Do you think this sense of tradition and the revolutionary discipline the republican movement is known for reinforces a political identity and young comrades that have grown up in a world that, leftism seems to have no clear direction or sense of the future or the past?
Yes, Commemorations and honoring the past and remembering, help to instill a sense of identity, In a sense your revolutionary beliefs are tied up with who you are, which all revolutionaries should have, but it being such a close past for us in Ireland compared to most places in the west, we're privileged to have a living link to this past.
(As regards to discipline) People see us giving leadership, being organized, taking action and suffer the consequences if we are arrested, having the right line on things, and that all takes discipline and organization to do effectively.
The knock on effects of Brexit, changing demography in the North and the Normalisation if Sinn Fein are all signs that Ireland is moving closer to a united Ireland. Do you think you'll see unification in your lifetime?
Oh, I absolutely do. But by revolutionary means. It will not happen by the goodwill of England. Never have they given us a concession by their goodwill. The occupation in the North is too fundamental to NATO, to British imperialism especially now with the specter of another world war with Russia and China.

- At the same time Ireland is becoming more multicultural how does that affect national identity on which foundations the republican movement bases itself?
It's a complexity that needs to be studied, and how do we organize these communities, where they're being the most oppressed, workers from Eastern Europe and Brazil getting treated very badly. we need to struggle against racism and unite with an organize with them, in terms of building a movement in this country. In terms of revolution, I'm often surprised that people from other countries feel this a lot more and understand it a lot more firmly. We have solidarity with the people's wars in India and the Philippines, and Lebanese and Palestinian and different struggles across in Turkey, different movements, all across the world, and so that has been one way to try and reach out to diaspora groups here, and make internationalism a part of the struggle in the country. But there's a lot more work to be done. There's always a ton more work to be done.

The role of German imperialism and the new generation

interview with Kommunistischer Aufbau (Germany)

-To begin with, could you give us a brief overview of your organisation and its main positions?

Our organisation was founded in 2014 and sees itself as a development organisation for a communist party in the tradition of revolutionary anti-revisionism. We are therefore aware that we do not yet meet the requirements of such a party, but we want to contribute to its development.

The decision to found a new organisation in this form was based on our assessment of the communist movement in Germany at the time, which, despite some positive developments since then, it still defines the current situation.

After the collapse of various attempts to build large communist organisations in the 1970s, a decades-long process of disintegration and ideological decomposition began in the communist movement, which was further accelerated by the collapse of the revisionist regimes around 1990.

Even today, the communist movement in our country is mainly reduced to certain circles. Many correct experiences of the Bolsheviks, the Communist International and other revolutionary and communist movements have been abandoned, but in other respects the movement remains stuck in purely theoretical disputes, conducted in an extremely dogmatic manner.

In our opinion, a revolution in Germany cannot succeed without positively drawing on the most important traditions of the world communist movement, such as the combination of illegal and legal forms of struggle, the organised training of cadres and professional revolutionaries, and deep and diverse roots among the masses.

However, we are aware that material reality is constantly changing and that we must constantly apply and develop Marxism-Leninism creatively so that it remains a suitable instrument for analysing and changing the world.

Since its foundation, our organisation has pursued the approach that a reconstruction of our movement cannot be achieved solely on the theoretical battlefield, but that practical steps must be taken from the outset.

In order to be able to intervene in the class struggles (albeit mostly underdeveloped) in Germany and to establish a lasting connection with the broadest sections of the working class, our organisation has therefore gradually built up a broad network of mass organisations, supplemented by a socialist mass newspaper published online and in print, as well as various media channels to communicate communist theory.

Our organisation has a special feature that is worth mentioning: in addition to a communist youth organisation, it also founded a communist women's organisation at its second congress. However, this differs from the youth organisation in the way it operates. It is composed of all female members of the organisation, leads the struggle against patriarchy within its own ranks and in society, and plays a special role in the development of female comrades as cadres.

-What new international political role is Germany playing? What are the main lines of the different factions of the German imperialist bourgeoisie?

Germany remains one of the most powerful imperialist predators in the world. Among the major imperialist powers, only the United States and China are clearly superior to it in all respects (economically, politically, militarily).

Since the Second World War and the defeat of German fascism, German imperialism has been denied certain positions of political power and military means by its competitors (e.g., a seat on the UN Security Council, nuclear weapons), but at the same time, the Western Allies, especially the United States, allied themselves with the German bourgeoisie after the Second World War.

Gradually, German imperialism was able to strengthen itself economically and, with the annexation of the GDR in 1990 at the latest, became undoubtedly the strongest economic power in the European Union. Since then, it has also repeatedly emphasised its claim to political leadership, for which it competes above all with French imperialism.

The German capitalist economy was able to strengthen itself significantly, especially in the first 15 years of this century. Especially in the severe economic crisis since 2008, German imperialism has been able to subordinate smaller European capitalist countries such as Greece and much of Eastern Europe even more directly through increased capital exports and integration into the European Union.

Nevertheless, cooperation with the United States' biggest competitors, China and Russia, played a certain role in this phase for the German economy, which is heavily export-oriented. The construction of a direct pipeline connection from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea (Nord Stream 2), which had been pushed for many years, is symbolic of this. A project that the United States has always criticised and that was destroyed by Ukrainian special forces shortly after the start of the Russian imperialist invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

This clearly shows that the long-standing German ‘model of success’ of linking itself politically and militarily to NATO, and above all to the United States, while seeking economic cooperation with all kinds of imperialist actors, is increasingly reaching its limits as inter-imperialist contradictions rapidly intensify.

As far as the fundamental orientation of German foreign policy is concerned, there are currently few fundamental alternatives to continuing the alliance with the United States. Certain sections of the neo-fascist movement in particular are formulating counter-theories (such as an alliance with Russia and a break with the United States). So far, these remain purely theoretical.

On the other hand, German imperialism is not simply an appendage of the United States, as has become clear repeatedly in recent decades at key moments, such as the construction of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline mentioned above or the refusal to participate directly in the second Iraq war. These decisions were not always made by the same bourgeois party, but by governments of different compositions.

However, if we consider the discussions between bourgeois politicians as a certain expression of internal contradictions within the bourgeoisie, then at the moment, in terms of foreign policy, we can mainly sense a conflict over the question of how aggressively German imperialism should intervene in the intensifying conflicts between other imperialists powers.

For example, SPD Chancellor Scholz, whose coalition just collapsed in November, is trying to position himself for the next Bundestag election campaign by portraying himself as a 'chancellor of peace' who is pushing for a halt of the war in Ukraine and, even in the face of massive pressure, refuses to arm Ukraine with certain cruise missiles produced by the German arms industry. In our view, however, this is not a conflict between a warmongering section and a peace-loving section of the bourgeoisie. Rather, it is an expression of the objective contradiction that German imperialism is economically strong and politically influential, but does not feel ready for a major war, particularly given the state of its army and the mood in the country.

German imperialism must overcome this divergence between relative strengths and relative weaknesses in the preparatory phase of a Third World War if it does not want to permanently and massively lose its influence in the world imperialist system.

Bourgeois politicians agree that they want to make Germany fit for war, but there are certain contradictions over the speed and tactics with which this goal can be achieved.

-Are war policies also turning into a war economy, is there a new arms race in Germany?

We can see a clear intensification of war preparations at various levels. However, we do not think it is fitting to say that the qualitative leap to a war economy has already been made.

This distinction is particularly important in order not to underestimate the capabilities of German imperialism with regard to a future war. Although the constant complaints of imperialist strategists about a lack of military capabilities are justified from their point of view, we assume that, as in previous capitalist wars, economic strength can be relatively easily converted into military strength in times of war.

We must also fundamentally take into account that complaints about obsolete equipment and the supposed lack of armaments by imperialist apologists represent propaganda by the class enemy. They primarily serve an internal political function; of politically imposing faster rearmament in the face of resistance. This also applies to reports of failures and incidents in the German armed forces, such as assault rifles that misfire or broken helicopters.

Despite these occurrences, German imperialism is already one of the most militarily powerful countries in the world. In particular, it can probably boast the greatest firepower in Europe in terms of ground forces. At the same time, it has massive deficits in other areas, particularly strategic ones, such as nuclear armament, satellite reconnaissance and space capabilities in general, compared to similar imperialist powers such as France. This leads to a particular dependence on allies at the military level.

Even though the German press is full of complaints that rearmament is not happening fast enough, it is clear that Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has been used as an opportunity to massively accelerate it. The 'Zeitenwende' (turning point) announced by outgoing Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz was backed by special loans of €100 billion and the guarantee that Germany would invest at least 2% of its GDP in military purposes every year from now on. This promise has since been kept.

At the beginning of 2025, around three years later, the election campaign ahead of the next general election will be fought, among other things, on the basis of various bourgeois parties trying to outdo each other in terms of rearmament targets. In particular, the call by the leading candidate of the former 'peace party', the Greens, for an additional €300 billion and future annual investments amounting to 3.5% of GDP, this is an warning sign and clearly shows that we are not only facing massive rearmament, but that it is also accelerating.

An example of the development of German armament efforts can be seen in the business development of the major German armament monopoly Rheinmetall, the company that produces the Leopard II tanks used in Ukraine and by Turkey in Kurdistan, among others. The company is benefiting massively from Germany's rearmament efforts and is therefore developing completely counter to the crisis-ridden German economy.

From the outset, the company's CEO publicly expressed his expectation that his company would benefit significantly from the special €100 billion fund for arming the German armed forces. Since then, Rheinmetall has built several new arms factories in Germany and acquired smaller arms companies in Spain and the United States. A tank factory for a modern battle tank (Panther) is also under construction in Hungary.

In addition to the arms industry in the strict sense, there are two other levels to consider when it comes to preparations for war. First, political and structural changes, and second, the ideological preparation of society for a major war, with these two aspects influencing each other.

Compulsory military service in Germany was suspended in 2011 in order to transform the Bundeswehr into a professional army, similar to other European countries. Today, this step is seen as a mistake by all major bourgeois parties, and gradual efforts are being made to reverse it. Similarly, the wave of outrage following Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been used to mobilise sections of the population into the Bundeswehr reserve.

However, these measures are somewhat at odds with the high level of scepticism among the German population towards the deployment of its own army in war. According to surveys, young people in particular, who would be directly affected by

such a measure, are overwhelmingly opposed to the reintroduction of compulsory military service.

It is important to emphasise here that this rejection of war missions is only partly due to a politically conscious assessment of German history and the last world wars; for the most part, it is probably based on an increasingly utopian desire for 'business as usual'.

Transforming pacifist scepticism towards some of the rearmament efforts into a mass anti-militarist movement is therefore a task that remains to be accomplished by communists and revolutionaries in Germany.

Bourgeois propagandists and politicians, for their part, have recognised that widespread reluctance to fight and die in war is a strategic problem in the face of an increasingly likely escalation of imperialist contradictions.

In recent years, their response to this has consisted of a mixture of clear statements and appeasement. The SPD defence minister in particular has distinguished himself by gradually and more aggressively proclaiming the concept of 'war preparedness' as a national goal in recent years, only to reaffirm a little later that this was a purely defensive measure.

Politically speaking, the most privileged layers of the working class can still be considered a significant social force. In particular, they represent the traditional base of the traditional social democracy (SPD) and the large industrial trade unions.

However, German capitalism has been in a serious economic crisis for years. The economy is currently expected to contract for the third consecutive year in 2025. The crisis has been accompanied by a surge in consumer prices unprecedented in Germany for decades. Meanwhile, the annual inflation rate in 2023 reached nearly 10%, while wage increases have not kept pace. As a result, almost the entire working class has suffered significant real wage cuts in recent years.

However, these attacks are clearly not enough for the camp of capital. The severity of the crisis is particularly evident in the fact that many large companies are planning or threatening layoffs in 2025. What is new is that the workers mentioned above, i.e., the most privileged segments of the working class, are also directly targeted. A striking example is Volkswagen, Germany's largest car manufacturer, which is threatening to close factories in order to impose massive wage cuts on its own workforce.

However, as the trade unions led by the Social Democrats are, as expected, playing their role as co-managers, it is not certain that this will lead to immediate resistance.

For the moment, therefore, we can only note that the bought-off sections of the working class are an important stabilising factor for the camp of capital, but that the intensification of imperialist contradictions is apparently reducing the budget from which these concessions are paid.

-The German parliamentary left is deeply fragmented. We are witnessing the emergence of new formations, such as Sahra Wagenknecht's party, which is seeking a populist left-wing path centred on 'economic protectionism' that will inevitably come into conflict with the today's figure of the multinational worker. What is your assessment?

We even think it needs to be stated more clearly: the German parliamentary left, represented by the DIE LINKE party over the last two decades, is disintegrating. It is gradually being pulverised in the face of war preparations and the capitalist crisis. We clearly consider this party to be a social-democratic force, even if it has sometimes defended positions further to the left than traditional social democracy (SPD) in Germany. However, a revolutionary overcoming of the capitalist system has never been part of this party's programme since its foundation.

As we have just explained, capital is clearly less and less willing to buy social peace in Germany by granting parts of the working class a share of imperialist profits through generous concessions. As a result, the economic basis for traditionally successful social-democratic politics is increasingly crumbling.

Sahra Wagenknecht was one of the most popular politicians among the party's supporters. After years of conflict within DIE LINKE, she finally decided to leave the party's parliamentary group in the Bundestag (German national parliament) with political allies, thereby splitting the party.

The name of her new party, 'Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht', emphasises how much the project is centred on her as a political figure, which certainly calls into question the party's stability.

Politically, the party represents a mixture of social-democratic demands, utopian-reactionary illusions of a return to pre-globalisation capitalism and racism, unlike DIE LINKE.

With these policies, Sarah Wagenknecht's party is currently achieving significantly better election results than her former party, which, for its part, is in danger of not reaching the 5% threshold to enter the German Bundestag.

We do not believe that this process of decomposition of the various bourgeois social-democratic and social-chauvinist parties has yet reached its conclusion. In the long term, however, everything indicates that DIE LINKE and the Sahra Wagenknecht alliance will not be able to coexist in the parliamentary landscape.

Despite the racist anti-migration policy of the current German government or the even harsher racist demagogy of the fascist AfD party, it remains clear that German imperialism cannot achieve its goals without an additional influx of migrant workers.

The increasingly aggressive racist tone of the election campaign is primarily aimed at creating the social atmosphere necessary to promote both internal and external militarisation and justify a migration policy that increasingly serves the German economy's appetite for labour.

This means, above all, granting legal status to highly skilled workers, while criminalising less educated migrants and thus pushing them into the most precarious working conditions.

-The war in Ukraine and then the war in Palestine have deeply divided the alternative left and the revolutionary left. This has created a divide between those who are anti-imperialist and those who defend, from the 'left', the values of Western Atlanticism. In France, anti-imperialist sectors have been deeply attacked, demonstrations for Palestine were initially banned, but mass mobilisations made it impossible for the French government to maintain the restrictions. What is the situation in Germany?

As far as developments in Germany are concerned, we can also confirm that not only has the entire bourgeois

parliamentary landscape shifted considerably to the right in connection with the war in Ukraine and Palestine, but also a large part of the 'non-parliamentary' left or the 'alternative movement'.

In both cases, the phenomenon has repeated itself: a large part of the peace movement, the environmental movement and the anti-fascist movement in the broadest sense has failed to assert an independent political point of view in the face of massive state propaganda and a veritable witch hunt against dissenting opinions orchestrated by the media.

Instead, a large part of these movements has, with varying degrees of conviction, adopted the German imperialist viewpoint on both issues. After the invasion of Ukraine, we mainly observed that large 'anti-war demonstrations' were organised under the leadership of the ruling parties, which in fact turned into events demanding arms deliveries to Ukraine.

Not only did entire sections of the parliamentary left quickly join the demand for arms deliveries to Ukraine, but so did some German anarchist groups.

There has also been a much less significant reaction, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to the war in Ukraine from the remnants of the GDR bureaucracy and revisionist communist organisations. For them, the invasion of Ukraine has sometimes been openly defended as an anti-fascist or even anti-imperialist act.

Overall, few organisations managed to adopt what we consider to be the only correct internationalist position from the outset in February 2022, distancing themselves from both Russian imperialism and the NATO powers. However, we would not say that the revolutionary movement itself has been divided by this process, but rather that this political development, among others, has made the dividing line between revolutionary internationalists and reformists clearer.

After the commando actions of 7 October 2023, the German government quickly declared its unconditional solidarity with Israel, while pro-Palestinian demonstrations were massively criminalised from 7 October onwards. The state's approach seems similar to that of France in many respects. And we also have the impression that the approach of EU countries on this issue is based on similar principles. For example, the criminalisation of the slogan 'From the river to the sea – Palestine will be free!' and the numerous bans on demonstrations.

The systematic extermination of around six million Jews during the Holocaust is certainly a German peculiarity that still plays a specific role in the political arena concerning Palestine today. For almost a year and a half, the historical responsibility of the German people for this massacre has been used demagogically but skilfully by those in power to justify every crime committed by the Israeli state, no matter how inhumane.

However, despite all the biased reporting, news of the Israeli massacres in Gaza is increasingly reaching the German population, and the contradiction between government propaganda and the population's sense of justice has grown with each month of war.

Despite often arbitrary repressive measures against people (those who share images of solidarity with Palestine on Instagram for example) The solidarity movement with Palestine maintained varying degrees of continuity up until the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas.

Thus, here too, it was not the revolutionary movement itself that was divided, but rather the historically justified feelings of guilt of many reformist but fundamentally progressive people that were deliberately exploited to isolate revolutionary and anti-imperialist organisations; for example, by denying them access to public spaces or excluding them from broad political alliances if they did not distance themselves 'sufficiently' from the Palestinian resistance.

-Is there a new generation of militants and activists in Germany, and what role can the revolutionary left play?

When characterising the communist movement in Germany, the first thing to emphasise is certainly its weakness. After the ban on the KPD in 1956, the revolutionary movement after 1968 also experienced a certain upswing in Germany, and a number of Maoist, Marxist-Leninist or Guevarist organisations were founded.

However, through a clever mix of repression and integration, the state and capital managed to destroy almost all of these organisations or push them into irrelevance. Only the revisionist DKP and the MLPD are relevant forces (in terms of size) that survived this phase.

Essentially, the communist movement today is characterised by fragmentation and a new phase of stagnation. However, we can also see that our organisation itself is part of a certain counter-tendency. Around the time of the great economic crisis of 2007/2008, we saw the emergence of a whole series of small to medium-sized organisations turning back to communism and Marxism-Leninism.

Many of these structures only exist for a few years and at a purely local level before disintegrating again. Even if there are ideological and political differences between our organisations, we consider it a very positive trend that, in addition to our organisation, several other organisations have managed to go beyond the purely local framework of their work and regroup into cross-regional structures.

The revolutionary and communist movement as a whole can only benefit if it succeeds in developing a common revolutionary practice and lively theoretical discussions across regional boundaries.

In this spirit, thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our analysis and views on this occasion! Our warmest revolutionary greetings to your audience!

Class Against Class
(Belgium)

-What are the programmatic foundations of your collective? And what forms of organisation do you use?

Our collective does not propose a 'revolutionary programme', other than to promote class unity in all its diversity and fragmentation, to highlight the importance of antagonistic social relations and the need to organise. To be clear: our ultimate goal is communism, a classless and stateless society, where humanity and the biosphere would finally be freed from all relations of exploitation, predation and domination. The achievement of this concrete goal requires the overthrow of the bourgeois state and the emergence of forms of organisation and social consciousness that will enable the establishment of the new society.

Our relationship with the organisation is underpinned by a relationship with revolutionary strategy. Most of our activists have already participated in struggles or been part of other collectives and have some experience before joining Class Against Class. We believe that too much energy and time have been devoted to forms of militancy that border on activism. We are thinking about placing our forces where our impact will be greatest rather than dispersing them at the back or front of every protest that is added to the agenda. In practice, we try to 'prioritise' based on different criteria; for example, whether it is on our territory. One of Belgium's distinctive features is the excessive growth of its co-optation bodies. The State curtails revolutionary possibilities by injecting public funds into autonomous structures in order to better transform them into indirect agents of its control.

This situation of permanent fog of war pushes us to promote a clear line of autonomy from any state or state-funded institution. Our organisation aims to carry out tactical and physical attacks against the existing system. We maintain a relationship of antagonism, we do not wait for a hypothetical stage of a programme before putting it into practice, we try to organise ourselves as a fighting force and not as an alternative milieu.

-In which sectors (social, territorial, political, cultural, etc.) have you decided to intervene?

We have decided to focus strategically on a territorial axis rather than a workplace based axis. We start from the observation that our class has become fragmented, particularly in socio-economic terms with the disappearance of large concentrations of workers, especially in Brussels, where the territorial axis seems to us to be the most relevant for having an effect within the class. The territory we are investing in is defined by its popular composition, but also by its history and progressive identity. We are not seeking to engage in social work; we have neither the intention nor the means to compete with the with the multitude of subsidised relief organisations and temporary projects active in this area. We are in a country of 'social dialogue' where mass movements are rare and extremely peaceful, and where trade union mobilisations are choreographed by the leadership, right down to the of different groups represented that will be paraded during the usual march from the Northern Station to the Southern Station. Trade unions in Belgium have gradually transformed themselves into bodies for the co-management of companies and services for their members (payment of benefits, etc.).

This dynamic has enabled them to maintain a very high level of unionisation, but at the expense of their antagonistic potential, as membership is based more on practical obligation than class consciousness. From representatives of class interests within the system, they have become representatives of the system within the class, and their co-optation by those in power and ideological corruption make them irredeemable. Based on these analyses, we are focusing our efforts on a defined territory with ideological-political rather than trade union or social action. The process of accumulating forces is not mechanical. Those who have an interest in revolution are strengthened through the practice of antagonism, and through this, class consciousness and the capacity for collective organisation are strengthened.

-The '1900s' of the communist movement, with its victories, defeats and rich experiments, ended several years ago. How much weight do you give to historical and political identity in your actions? What do you think of the revolutionary political 'transmission' between different generations?

Classe Contre Classe was formed in the wake of Secours Rouge Belgique, which itself was born in the 2000s to bridge the gap between two generations: that of the struggles, sometimes armed, of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and that of the disenchanted 1990s, which had evolved in a context of ideological decline. While Secours Rouge focuses mainly on the dialectic between repression and revolution, the defence of revolutionary projects and international solidarity, we wanted to broaden our areas of political intervention, although the transmission of the memory of struggles remains part of our matrix.

We reject a historicist vision of our history as a linear continuity of events leading to a form of progress at the cost of certain ideological compromises, and we attach particular importance to the ruptures, contradictions and discontinuities that run through it. We take a critical view of past revolutionary experiences, their successes and the

fear they inspired in the enemy, and their mistakes that must not be repeated. This view is never intended to hand out good or bad marks, but to learn, with respect and modesty, the pitfalls, resources and processes encountered by past revolutionary experiences, in order to conduct our struggle with method and intelligence. Even a final defeat does not invalidate an entire historical experience. All historical experiences contain useful contributions to future revolutionary construction. We refuse to accept or reject a historical experience as a whole: all of them can and must nourish the revolutionary project today. In this way, we will avoid replaying the same scenes from history by learning from the choices and methods of the past. The attention paid to transmission is not the only legacy of the Secours Rouge. Solidarity work for prisoners and the valorisation of their revolutionary experiences led us, in practice, to reject political sectarianism. We believe that one of the symptoms of a weak movement is the retreat into fixed political identities (anarchists, Marxist-Leninists, etc.) defended as one would defend one's football team.

We consider other revolutionary forces not as competitors or 'comrades in error,' but as sister forces whose specific orientations are legitimate experiences in a period when much remains to be invented or reinvented. Rather than aspiring to hegemony within the revolutionary left, we seek to forge loyal alliances with all the forces that compose it. We build unity where it is possible, at the highest level possible without compromising our principles. This policy of alliances aims to lead to dynamic, evolving and offensive complicity rather than tactical gatherings on the lowest common denominator. They must be a source of collective strength and not the sum of all our weaknesses.

The current organisation of work, the new urban dimension and the contradictions linked to imperialism mean that politics is experienced differently by the younger generations. In recent years, global competition and the crisis have caused the wall of 'consensus' in the imperialist democracies to crack, but the weight of conformism, reactionary movements and reformism is strong. What do you think are the main objectives and forms that the proletarian left must adopt today?

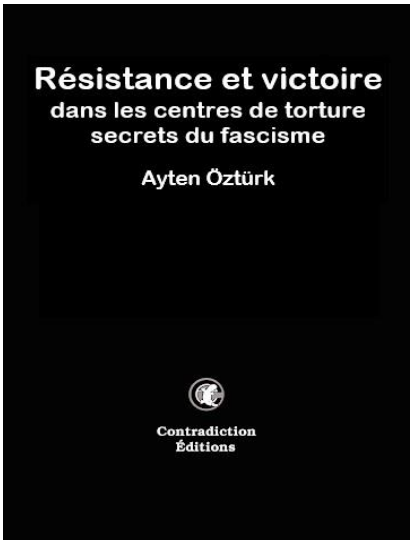
Our objective must be to advance the revolutionary process by responding to the needs and shortcomings of the revolutionary movement, while standing alongside the masses when they begin to pull at their chains. We reject any messianic posture: the contradictions of capitalism alone will not be enough to bring about its collapse. The balance of power is largely against us. It is essential to intervene where the contradictions are most evident and, above all, where our intervention can strengthen our camp and help lay the necessary foundations for this phase of accumulation of forces. The first challenge is ideological. We must remain firmly anchored in a revolutionary perspective, even if its realisation seems distant or unattainable. In this age of information overload, it is not enough to write the right text and preach a clear message for it to be read or heard and have an impact in the real world. The revolutionary project is weakened, and we must make it credible through demonstrations of strength, both quantitative and qualitative. This requires organised antagonism, which is not limited to street fighting, but is also reflected in our attitude towards the state: not begging, not legitimising it, and in the face of its repression: not collapsing, not legitimising it. Then we must overcome the lack of strategic creativity, both within the movement and among the masses. The lack of analysis leads to mechanical reproduction and often leads us to tactical dead ends. We must be able to break routines.

A bad Belgian habit is the almost systematic mimicry of what, from here, seems to work in France, without taking into account local specificities. This feeds the impression that 'nothing works here', when in fact these were only attempts to build on non-existent foundations. We must beware of retreating into militant insularity. We must make the revolutionary project credible and fight reformism in order to divert the masses from this dead end and raise awareness among reformists already committed to it, so that a large part of them, in the inevitable class war, will join the camp of the revolution. For it will always be so: as soon as the struggle reaches a certain level of maturity or radicalism, polarisation will reveal the existence of only two camps, class against class, and will force everyone to choose their side.

We know which side we are on; it is up to us to organise it, strengthen it, and give it the will and the means to go on the offensive.

CONTRADICTION EDITIONS

Ayten Öztürk was abducted in 2018 in Lebanon and sent to Turkey by the Turkish secret service (MIT). For six months, she was subjected to physical, psychological and sexual torture in a secret torture centre in Ankara. A vast solidarity campaign took place, following which Ayten reappeared, left for dead on a wasteland. She was immediately imprisoned. Her comrades counted 898 wounds on her body. The book "Resistance and Victory in Fascism's Secret Torture Centres" written by Ayten Öztürk was first published in August 2022. The book published by Editions Contradictions is the French translation.
Repression, prisons and imperialist ideological conformism are all part of a counter-revolutionary strategy aimed at preventing the popular masses from organising and taking action. The example of Ayten shows us that it is possible to resist even in the most desperate situations, because to dare to resist is to dare to win.



The texts published in this book address the issue of political violence. The choice of presenting texts written in the 1970s and 1980s might seem dated or even abstruse in the light of the current period. In fact, the context and period in which these texts were written differ in many respects from the present: in terms of class composition, links between organisations, international relations and the way in which social relations are governed today. However, there are reflections and foundations that are relevant to today's world. The main text published was written by Frédéric Oriach, a comrade who has been imprisoned several times and charged with numerous offences related to political action. He defends the strategy of urban guerrilla warfare and the development of popular warfare in an imperialist country.

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Against multipolarism

for an analysis of imperialist contradictions

'If socialism does not triumph, peace between capitalist states will be nothing more than an armistice, a truce, the preparation for a new massacre of the peoples'
(Lenin, For Bread and Peace, 27 December 1917)

The context of a 'beautiful' idea

What positions should communists defend in the current state of affairs, with imperialist groups waging wars to maintain their hegemony? In 2023, Supernova magazine, in its fourth issue, published a series of articles on the Leninist category of imperialism and its relevance today, in particular on the trend towards militarisation and war resulting from the decline of American and European hegemony and, as a counterpoint, the rise of state forces, Russia and China, which are striving to compete as autonomously as possible within the framework of global capitalism. The war in Ukraine, the military encirclement of China, 'de-dollarisation' and the rise of the BRICS+ have not given rise to but have spread and imposed the thesis of 'multi-polarism'. This thesis is false in what it describes (the possibility of peaceful development of several capitalist 'poles' without major conflict) and deeply reactionary in what it promotes (the outright abandonment of socialist revolution programmes in the imperialist countries and democratic revolutions in the semi-colonies in favour of support for bourgeois factions 'rebelling' against US hegemony)[1]. This thesis is mainly defended by the current Chinese Communist Party, by the Russian Federation and by a string of organisations that are remnants of the former international communist movement. They represent the interests of the dominant bourgeois layers in each of these countries and not those of the world proletariat or the oppressed peoples, despite their noisy trappings. Multi-polarism is not anti-imperialism, because neither Xi Jinping's China nor Putin's Russia are 'red bases' for world revolution.

The world stage is now the scene of preparations for a gigantic and increasingly inevitable global turmoil, conceived and accepted as such by successive NATO summits and reports, of which the latest conflicts, fought by proxies in Syria and Ukraine, are only the prelude. The rapid collapse of the 'unipolar' world, which promised a liberal era of peace and prosperity after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, is a proven fact. It cannot be underestimated that, for the first time since the 17th century, a non-Western country is presenting itself as a 'challenger' seeking co-governance of world affairs. In a few decades, China has gone from a rural, semi-feudal, semi-colonial country to a 'cyber-capitalist' power. However, this profound change is taking place alongside the return of significant inter-state wars (and not just anti-terrorist police operations, low-intensity or asymmetric conflicts). China's entry into the WTO in 2001 created the opposite of the mythical 'peace through trade' cherished by Montesquieu. On the contrary, each recent episode of the crisis of capital overproduction (the 2008 crisis, the pandemic, Ukraine and Palestine) indicates that the division and redivision of the world, i.e. of global surplus value, can no longer be achieved by peaceful and contractual means. The sweat demanded by capital is no longer enough; now the tax of blood is also on the agenda. The attempt to break free from Western domination is not accompanied by an attempt to break free from capitalism, and this is where this attempt is essentially doomed to failure. But it is no longer a question of China, and secondarily members of the BRICS, demanding 'a better seat at the table' by changing the terms of trade, But rather, it is a question of competing for global hegemony. The challenge facing the former imperialist powers is therefore immense. They are responding with the goal of military control of the planet (so-called preventive wars, expansion and redefinition of NATO, sanctions, 'colour revolutions'). After the destruction, dismantling and subjugation of the countries of the former Arab nationalism (Iraq, Syria, Libya), which not only destroyed any project for independence in the Middle East but also realised the Zionist dream of expelling the Arabs from Palestine, the world is now facing a more direct confrontation between; the old imperialist powers that still dominate and new imperialist groups generated by the export of capital.

But it would be simplistic to think that the current alternative is to accept American domination or to support its potential rivals, or 'rogue states' on a global scale, because the only alternative to imperialism lies in the establishment of a socialist world and not in the settling of scores between powers within the capitalist system and its unequal development.

This truth is literally 'forgotten' by the proponents of multi-polarism, despite the fact that it is not only the ABC of Lenin's theory of imperialism but also confirmed by a century of experience of socialist and anti-colonial revolutions.

The restructuring of global capitalist value chains

Multi-polarism is the expression of one of the 'camps' of capitalist restructuring on a global scale. The decline of American imperialism is not denied but confirmed by Trump's second presidency and his famous decrees and unapologetic speeches on the need for the United States to seize as many resources and certain strategic territories (Greenland, Panama) as possible. Behind the loud, macho rhetoric lies a huge admission of weakness: productivity levels in the US have fallen to the same level as in Europe, despite the huge tech monopolies. Furthermore, China's GDP has overtaken that of the US, and in terms of purchasing power parity, it is expected to be twice that of the US by 2035. MAGA (Make America Great Again) is becoming a kind of mournful and desperate chant. The United States can no longer afford to be hegemonic in the export of capital to the 'South'. The military route is thus becoming a lifeline, rather one of the 'collateral damages' of empire management.

[1] An initial assessment of the setback that the thesis of 'multi-polarism' represents for communist thought was made in our No. 4, in the article 'Lenin's "Imperialism"' and in the translation of an article from People's March No. 18 of June 2023, 'One Year of Imperialist War.' The Greek Communist Party (KKE) also produced a substantial critique of multi-polarism and its political consequences, which deprive communists of any autonomy in their contribution to the 22nd International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Havana from 27 to 29 October 2022.

In 2019, average US tariffs on Chinese products rose from 3.1% to 19.3%, while Chinese tariffs on US products rose from 8% to 21.1%. Since then, the trade war has turned into a widespread economic conflict, with both countries seeking to decouple their supply chains. The orthodoxy of the 'free market', already largely mythical, has been shattered. The major imperialist states are betting on targeted protectionism and massive industrial and technological funding. In the United States, the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 provides $52.7 billion for research, development, manufacturing and workforce development in the semiconductor sector, with the aim of boosting a strategic industry and reducing dependence on foreign suppliers. The strategic autonomy plans of the United States and Europe are a belated response to the Chinese challenge, and more specifically to the 'Made in China 2025' plan, which aims to completely modernise Chinese industry to make it more efficient and integrated so that it can occupy the highest positions in global production chains. The practice of 'friend shoring' (the practice of sourcing materials, components and manufactured products from countries considered allies or friends) , the Covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine have intensified this trend. Trade negotiations are increasingly bilateral and the WTO (World Trade Organisation) is increasingly losing its role as a regulator of trade disputes. At the same time, military spending is on the rise. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that in 2023, military spending had increased in all five geographical regions for the first time since 2009.

The Washington Consensus – the set of market-oriented economic policy prescriptions the dominated development model in the 1980s and 1990s – is now largely a thing of the past. This paradigm, which emphasised privatisation, deregulation and trade liberalisation, was promoted by international financial institutions (the IMF and the World Bank). This economic policy left most semi-colonised countries bleeding, while China and even Vietnam refused to apply refused to apply all the norms of the consensus in their industrialisation strategies. Notably, that the principle and foundations of 'global governance' were previously accepted by most countries, especially those at the centre of the game. Now, the dominant historical imperialisms no longer accept their own rules and are preparing to trample them underfoot. It is this economic context that explains the 'return' to identity-based and sovereigntist rhetoric as a solution to multiple crises. Economic liberalism is being rejected by those who created it.

Faced with Western decline, capitalist leaders from the 'South' have emerged and are trying to present themselves as less harmful alternatives to lead the development plans of the vast world of semi-colonies[1]. However, it is easy to distinguish between Russia and China on the one hand, and India, Indonesia and Brazil on the other, which are not breaking with the American and European imperialist groups. In any case, the BRICS coalition of interests sometimes presents itself not only as a demand for an overhaul of the system of international relations, but also as an alternative project to the Western order. This is where the discourse of multi-polarism comes in.

The Karaganov doctrine

To understand what is at stake in the doctrine of multi-polarism, it may be useful to study directly those who are most interested in promoting it. The most significant text is a report written in 2023 under the direction of Sergei Karaganov, one of the intellectual architects of Russian foreign policy and director of the Russian International Affairs Council. It is the main official document of Russian foreign policy. It is entitled Russia's Policy towards the Global Majority. The term 'global majority' was preferred to 'global South' for obvious reasons (can Russia be part of the South?). The report aims to define the essential contradictions that structure the world from the point of view of Russian imperialist groups and to define a strategy to rally as many countries as possible that are disadvantaged by the current world order to their point of view.

The main thrust of the report is to revive and update a concept that emerged in Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991: to make Russia a power oriented towards Asia and rejecting Western domination. Impossible to implement during the Yeltsin era, when the dismantling of Soviet industry was carried out through privatisation that was entirely open to Western capital, this concept has become fashionable once again, particularly since 2014 and the events in Maidan, Ukraine.

The report describes a world in which the geopolitical, economic and moral decline of the West pits the 'golden billion' – i.e. the Western population – against the 'global majority' – the remaining six billion. The strategic goal is to create a multipolar world in which Russia plays the role of a civilisational pole, leading others in resistance to Western neo-imperialism. The report astutely notes that the world is not predominantly aligned with the West in the current conflicts. The world has not unanimously condemned the invasion of Ukraine in the sense that the sanctions imposed by NATO countries, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand are not being applied by more than a hundred countries. Above all, however, it asserts that the essential contradiction in the world is between Western hegemony and the sovereignty of other states. "The main conflict in the modern world is the contradiction between, on the one hand, the desire of the West, led by the United States, to preserve its five-century-old hegemony, which has allowed it to distribute the world's wealth in its favour and impose its culture and political orders on the world, and, on the other hand, the desire of non-Western countries to achieve full sovereignty, unencumbered by Western dogmas, institutions and orders. Only true sovereignty guarantees freedom of development and enables equitable participation in the global economy. The war in Ukraine is seen as a theatre for the reconfiguration of global power relations, and a Russian victory would be advantageous for all marginalised states seeking sovereignty. The aim is therefore to present this conflict as anti-imperialist, when for many non-European ruling classes it is an internal conflict

[1] Article from Supernova No. 4, "A year of imperialist war", from *People's March*: Russia and China are striving to capitalise on anti-colonial sentiment and anti-Western hegemonic domination (which is developing in the southern part of the world) in order to establish their hegemony over the South. The economic sanctions imposed on Russia by the G7 countries have caused food and oil prices to rise, leading to a food and energy crisis in the South. There is no doubt that the Western superpowers can sustain the war because they have the financial resources and capital at their disposal. But the South does not have the same privileges. Furthermore, the South's refusal to support the West in its proxy war with Russia is also explained by economic reasons. The United States' share of global production fell from 21% in 1991 to 15% in 2021. In contrast, China's total share of production rose from 4% to 19% over the same period. Europe is going through an unprecedented crisis of deindustrialisation, high inflation and financial crisis. This paints a picture of the vulnerability of the Western economy that was not as clear before the war. At present, many developing countries conduct their transactions in their regional currencies rather than relying on the dollar as a 'universal currency'. '. In recent years, China has become one of the largest producers of electric vehicles. This has led to an increase in demand for cobalt, lithium, copper and other rare earth metals. Most of these resources are abundant in Latin America.

between the powers of the "North". A non-dominant and economically fragile imperialist power is trying to present itself as an oppressed country, at the very moment when it is attempting to expand its own spheres of influence at all costs through the export of capital and troops.

The report seeks to present this global sovereigntist struggle as a struggle of values: "In terms of values, Russia focuses on promoting the strengthening of state institutions and the liberation of states from neo-colonial dependence; respect for the socio-cultural identity of all countries and peoples; the protection of human values, enshrined in all religions, cultures and civilisations of the world, against the anti-human values promoted by the West and the ideas of 'transhumanism'; the fundamental preservation of ideological and ethical diversity and pluralism." When anti-colonialism is based solely on a war of cultural 'values', it means that its socio-economic programme does not consist of breaking with the capitalist order, or even of competing with it[1]. It is in fact a sham anti-colonialism that does not touch the roots of capitalist domination. Think of the rentier states of the Gulf, which are perfectly integrated into this economic order and also fly the flag of anti-Western 'values'. Ironically, however, the conservative struggle against the 'decadent' ideas of progressivism has become a mantra... even in the mouths of the American leadership! (Could this be considered be anti-Western?).

Offering no vision of an alternative world free from capitalist exploitation and barbarism, the report presents the goal of Russian foreign policy as that of a civilisation seeking 'balance'. Russian foreign policy, according to the current Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as 'the Concept'), proceeds from the cultural and civilisational self-determination of Russia as a 'unique country-civilisation, a vast Eurasian and Euro-Pacific power', fulfilling a 'unique historical mission to maintain the global balance of power in the broad sense of the concept." Russia is therefore a global state with a civilising mission. These are the essential elements of the discourse of Great Russian chauvinism, so fiercely opposed by the Bolsheviks.

What are we to make of the position officially promoted by Russia? It is a fantasy. The assertion of independence by the BRICS countries is not a conflict of civilisations against the 'golden billion'. There are as many non-Western nationalities in the business centres of New York, the Gulf and Singapore as there are in the global proletariat. This does not mean that divisions between imperialist centres and dominated countries do not exist; but rather that this structural division also follows the lines of class division in society. Today's Russia is a capitalist country in demographic decline, with a fragile economy (exporter of energy resources and importer of finished and semi-finished products) and increasingly dependent on China, which benefits from its status as successor to the Soviet Union and cannot offer any real alternative to the current world order.

The reactionary significance of multi-polarism

Ultimately, the theory of multi-polarism replaces the class struggle and the struggle for socialism, the only alternatives to imperialism understood as a stage of capitalism, with the promotion of the policies of certain factions of the bourgeoisie, on the grounds that their interests do not coincide with those of the dominant factions of world imperialism. It is based on the idea that there could be a healthy, peaceful capitalist development that could advantageously replace the centuries-old domination of the Europeans and their American figurehead. Opposition to the domination of the International Community of European and American Imperialists can of course exist and necessarily exists without being led by the struggle for socialism. But only this struggle really attacks the roots of imperialism. The supporters of multi-polarism defend a truce and peace between the 'blocs'; we defend the perspective of new proletarian revolutions. A multipolar world does not mean a world without imperialism.

It is certain that the very development of contradictions between imperialist groups carries great dangers for the life and survival of the most oppressed masses (as the African proverb says, "when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers") but also opens up periods of instability and division among the class enemy; which are opportunities for a revolutionary situation to develop. We are moving into a period of confusion and disillusionment in which there is no clearly identified revolutionary centre, despite the heroic struggles of revolutionaries around the world, particularly in Asia (India, the Philippines, Turkey and Palestine). Supporters of multi-polarism therefore find it very easy to present themselves as the 'only way forward' in the absence of revolutionary processes identified by a programme and significant historical breakthroughs. Yet the war between capitalist powers is preparing the conditions for the overthrow of the ruling classes. War between imperialists does not spontaneously give rise to revolution without a large revolutionary current that has structured itself, rallied the masses to its cause and is capable of launching an 'assault on heaven'. The struggle against war and the war economy must contribute above all to the constitution of the subjective forces of revolution and not to the promotion of those who bury this perspective.

- S.J.

[1] China, which has just created DeepSeek (an equivalent of ChatGPT), is not opposing Silicon Valley with a cultural war, but by surpassing it in the very field of technology and AI. Russia, on the other hand, unable to produce a cutting-edge technology industry, is capitalising on fears of Silicon Valley's futuristic fantasies, whereas in the 1960s, technological and space competition favoured the USSR. The Sputnik effect has shifted to China.

Israel, the necessary aberration of imperialism in a post-colonial world

Going Against the Tide (USA), goingagainstthetide.org

At the end of the Second World War, the situation was clear. 'High colonialism', the form by which the European imperialist powers had divided Africa and Asia into colonies under their direct control, was coming to an end. The European powers that had carved up the world into colonies during the 19th century no longer possessed the military strength, political power or economic capacity to hold on to their colonies. Ironically, it was the world war they fought to redivide these colonies that destroyed their ability to hold on to the colonies they were fighting for.

The hopes of the European imperialist powers to regain their strength were dashed by three factors. First; the oppressed masses in the colonies revolted, seeking to throw off the colonial yoke and establish independence, i.e., political sovereignty over their territory. Second; after the Second World War, a significant socialist camp emerged, with the Soviet Union, joined by several Eastern European countries and then by China. The socialist camp acted as a bulwark against imperialist domination and directly supported anti-colonial revolts. Third; a new imperialist power, the United States, supplanted Britain at the top of the imperialist order and generally chose to implement new forms of foreign domination that it had experimented with in Latin America during the previous century.

High colonialism thus collapsed, but the division of the world between imperialist powers and oppressed nations continued in postcolonial forms of imperialism.

The process of decolonisation that ended high colonialism had very different outcomes and followed different paths depending on the forces struggling to get rid of colonialism and the extent to which the European powers tried to hold on to their colonies. Where decolonisation was led by genuine communists, of which Maoist China is the most striking example, it was a profound revolution not only against the colonial (or semi-colonial) form of domination, but also against the entire system of production and social relations on which capitalist-imperialist domination was based.

When led by forces from the national bourgeoisie, the newly independent former colonies sought to develop on a capitalist basis and found themselves under imperialist domination in a new form. A more detailed picture of this process will be given in the second part.

As for the role of the European powers in the process of decolonisation (or in resistance to it), Britain was more willing than others to give up its colonies because its close alliance with the United States assured it a privileged status in the new imperialist order. France employed the British method of a 'polite' exit in some places, but it also waged brutal wars to maintain its colonial control over Algeria and Vietnam.

Portugal, which had set out early to dominate the world before seeing its position reduced to that of a second-rate imperialist power well before the 20th century, clung desperately to its colonial positions, with all the bloody consequences that entailed for its colonial subjects in Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola. In southern Africa, where the fusion of high colonialism and settler colonialism created a significant and reactionary social base for clinging to the old order, the apartheid states of Zimbabwe and South Africa persisted until the end of the 20th century. But regardless of the resistance offered by the colonial powers and regardless of the path taken by the newly independent former colonies, the old colonial order was set on the path to extinction after the Second World War.

Because the old colonial forms were abandoned because, in most cases, they no longer served the accumulation of capital by the dominant imperialist powers, and not because of any moral principle, they were kept in reserve, out of sight, and used under updated labels whenever the situation required it. A few relatively small 'overseas territories,' such as Puerto Rico, remained colonies, formally deprived of sovereignty and officially dominated by an imperialist power. However, in one case, imperialism revived the old forms, dusted them off, and repackaged them. Thus, Israel was born.

Israel was, and still is, the necessary aberration of imperialism in a post-colonial world. Without direct colonial control, the imperialist powers had to develop new forms to ensure that the accumulation of capital –(the

economic logic of capitalism – imperialism) would continue, and would continue to serve the interests of imperialist powers. In the Arabian Peninsula, imperialism could leave nothing to chance. Strategically positioned as a crossroads of global trade routes for centuries, the stability of the region is crucial to ensuring the regular flow of goods necessary for the accumulation of capital. The Suez Canal is today one of the most important passageways for the ships that allows for the aforementioned flow of goods. If being one of the centres of global trade routes were not enough to merit the special attention of imperialism, the Arabian Peninsula is also central for another reason: oil. Beneath the sands lies the largest quantity of the vital liquid of capitalist production, to which the imperialist powers must have access in order to maintain their position.

Thus, when Britain and France abandoned their 'mandates,' i.e., their colonies, in the Arabian Peninsula, capitalism-imperialism had to ensure continued access to the oil beneath the surface and the seaways surrounding it. Welcoming a new bourgeois class – the oil rentiers – as subordinate beneficiaries of capital accumulation was part of this delicate solution.

Beyond economic and political causes, imperialist anxiety also had an older ideological source. Drawing attention to how the Arabian Peninsula and its surroundings were seen as the Orient in the European imperialist worldview, Edward Said explained that:

"*The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the site of Europe's most important, richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilisations and languages, its cultural competitor and one of its most profound and recurring images of 'the Other'. Moreover, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its image, its idea, its personality, its contrasting experience.*"[1]

It was with these historical and contemporary anxieties in mind after the Second World War that imperialism took out an insurance policy to secure its domination of the Arabian Peninsula in a postcolonial world: the creation of Israel, a bridgehead for Western imperialism to keep unreliable allies in check and as a rapid reaction strike force to be deployed against adversaries when needed (as highlighted by the example of Egypt in 1956). To create Israel, the imperialists resorted to old colonial methods: seizing territory, extending territorial domination through the deployment of settlers, dispossessing the indigenous population, expelling a large part of the indigenous population from their lands and subjecting those who remained to occupation and apartheid.

To ensure Israel's survival, imperialism has provided it with the most advanced weaponry and technology, thus combining the most modern tools of vicious violence with the old forms of foreign domination. Very opportunely, Israel also provided a reactionary solution to the Jewish question in Europe, putting an end to centuries of official European anti-Semitism and the successive pogroms that led to the genocide of six million Jews by the Nazis, by installing Jewish settlers, supported by American and European imperialism, as oppressors and exterminators of the Palestinians.

Israel has served imperialism well, waging war against its neighbours when they stepped out of line and carrying out sabotage and assassinations against governments and political forces that did not fit into the established imperialist order, while demonstrating imperialism's willingness to repress genuine national liberation struggles. Israel also proves that imperialism is not invincible, as the Palestinian people have refused to give in, courageously resisting the most heavily armed occupation force in human history. Furthermore, Israel's role demonstrates that imperialist powers are not mere puppeteers, but must rely on a number of second-tier partners who have their own interests, which overlap with those of the major imperialist powers, but are not identical to them.

In the case of Israel, its foundation and continued use of old forms of territorial colonialism and colonisation mean that it often goes further in its brutality than the American bourgeoisie would aspire to (because of the potential of this brutality to cause destabilisation in the region, not because of any moral concern), but without consequence due to the necessity of this brutality for the imperialist order. As US imperialism's domination of the Arabian Peninsula has weakened over the last two decades, Israel has increased its brutality in an attempt to maintain (American) imperialist hegemony in the region – hence the intensification of settler incursions into the West Bank and the war on Gaza that began in October 2023, during which hospitals, mosques and churches, refugee camps and journalists have all been targeted in bomb attacks.

Understanding Israel's role in the global imperialist system forces us to recognise that while the bourgeoisie, as a class, is driven by the accumulation of capital, it must also think strategically about how best to maintain the conditions for continued capital accumulation. This is why the bourgeoisie has governments and armed forces. Bourgeois state power does not exist to serve the narrow profit motives of any particular member of the bourgeois class, but to serve the class interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole. In the case of Israel, guaranteeing the conditions in the Arabian Peninsula region for the continued accumulation of capital by the dominant imperialist power or powers has required the use of methods and forms associated with settler colonialism and high colonialism on lands that rightfully belong to the Palestinians, and the Palestinians have been denied national sovereignty as a result of this situation. The main motive for maintaining Israel is not the exploitation of Palestinian labour or potential oil on Palestinian land, although both are part of the picture, but the broader geostrategic concerns of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the region – how to maintain optimal conditions for the accumulation of capital.

[1] Edward Said, *Orientalism.* Although this quote from the first pages of the book brilliantly summarises one of Said's main arguments, do not follow the postmodernist practice of graduate students who only read the introduction to *Orientalism* – Said deserves much more from us intellectually than that.

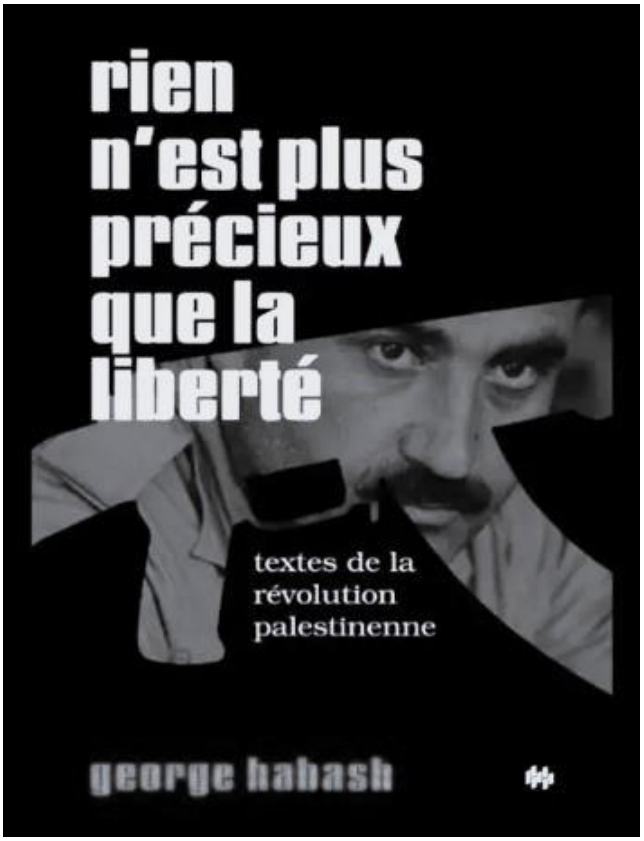
Israel's brutal subjugation of Palestine is a case of contemporary colonialism, and wherever colonialism as a form of domination still exists, the struggle for political sovereignty over territory – the anti-colonial struggle – remains on the agenda. But in most of the world, the forms of domination that best serve the imperialist bourgeoisie do not take the form of colonialism. The division of the world between imperialist powers and oppressed nations today mainly takes the form of formal sovereignty for the oppressed nations, which are burdened with debt, subjected to economic domination in the form of free trade regimes, transformed into zones of industrial and agricultural production and resource extraction for the benefit of foreign imperialism, and/or side-lined from the global process of capital accumulation and abandoned when their lands and populations cannot be exploited profitably, these conditions being reinforced by the US military bases scattered across the planet and the US warships that stalk the seas. The division of the world between imperialist powers and oppressed nations has itself become more complex in recent decades, with various subordinate nations supported by imperialist powers, but still subordinate to them, and new imperialist powers rising and seeking to challenge the existing American hegemony. Today, the forces—the communist revolutionaries and the class-conscious revolutionary masses—capable of overturning this entire order and beginning the socialist transition to communism are largely absent from this landscape (or disorder).

One reason for this absence is that many of those who want, or claim to want, to overthrow the existing order are fighting ghosts or pursuing fantasies. Over the past decade, the left, certainly in the United States but also in many other parts of the world, under the influence of postmodernism (or intoxicated by it), has chosen to analyse contemporary reality through the prism of colonialism, a form that, with a few important exceptions, has disappeared from the landscape. Busy fighting the ghosts – even if these ghosts are a dead weight from the past on the present – of colonists and colonialism, they are unable to respond to the challenge of overthrowing the contemporary monsters of capitalism and imperialism.

At the same time, some, who are clever enough to know better than others, have decided to place their hopes in an imaginary path of development that escapes the dictates of American imperialism but is still subject to the logic of capital accumulation, with the so-called multipolar world creating the dream landscape for this fantasy. Whether it is a matter of fighting ghosts or pursuing fantasies, the common thread is capitulation, in this case by refusing to face contemporary reality as it is in order to escape the reality implied by making revolution.

Capitulation is an ideological question, but perhaps we can lift the darkness surrounding it if we get rid of the ghosts and dispel the fog of fantasies through an analysis of the past and present of capitalism-imperialism. The aim of such an analysis is to demonstrate that, through various historical forms and processes, the logic of capital accumulation has been the driving force that has brought us the monstrosities of colonial brutality and postcolonial imperialist domination today. This does not mean that there are no other logics at play, and we must therefore show how these logics are linked to the central logic of capital accumulation. The conclusion we are working towards is that if we want to put an end to these monstrosities, we must abolish the logic of capital accumulation, not fixate on the previous forms it has taken or seek a more friendly form of it. Our priority, if we take revolution seriously, must be to understand the current conditions of capital accumulation that we must overturn.

- Kenny Lake 2024, USA



Sankara and the Burkinabe revolution

Understanding the Burkinabe revolution

Thomas Sankara's fame overshadowed the revolutionary process he led in Burkina Faso from 1983 to 1987. Many people know his name and that he was assassinated in mysterious circumstances on 15 October 1987, but few are familiar with the historical trajectory of the Burkinabe revolution. Today, at a time of clear decline in French domination in West Africa and throughout the Sahel, and at a time of renewed anti-imperialist aspirations among African peoples, it may be useful to retrace the broad outlines of this historical experience. In 2025, Sankarism is being claimed from all sides throughout the 'sub-region'. Its legacy is the subject of competition between several political forces[1]. This is an undeniable sign that revolutionary movements can rise from their ashes, even in conditions that often seem unfavourable. Historical experiences are the treasures of revolutionary theory because, as a scientific conception, it feeds on the synthesis of everything that sets millions of human beings in motion. But we must clear up a misunderstanding, especially if we associate the term 'revolution' with Thomas Sankara. These experiences are not produced by the charisma and integrity of 'great men' but, conversely, it is the historical situation and the specific configuration of social forces that create the opportunities that will be seized by figures and organisations capable of channelling the deep aspirations of the most oppressed and exploited masses. The masses create their own leaders. The subjective forces of revolution exist and develop only through their ability to understand the course of events and to establish themselves permanently among the popular masses. What is of most interest to us, then, is precisely the analysis of the revolutionary process itself, its programme, its political line, its achievements and its limitations arising from unresolved contradictions. Thus, for all those who believe that capitalism is not the ultimate horizon of humanity and who aspire to a society free from the exploitation of humanity by its own kind, then the political *lessons* from a historical experience that broke, even partially, with the dominant imperialist order - are *more important* by far the brilliance of even the most luminous figure.

The revolution of 4 August 1983 and the DOP programme

On 4 August 1983, the democratic and anti-imperialist faction of the army seized power and placed Captain Sankara, the former prime minister, who had been arrested, imprisoned and then placed under house arrest, at its head. The main political force mobilising support for this armed takeover was, apart from military circles (OMR, Organisation Militaire Révolutionnaire), were the PAI (Parti Africain de l'Indépendance) and the ULC-R (Union de Lutte Communiste-Reconstruite), two parties claiming to be Marxist. The central government was made up of the CNR (National Revolutionary Council) and the mass base was the CDR (Revolutionary Defence Committees). The programme of the revolution was set out in the Political Orientation Discourse (DOP) broadcast on the radio on 2 October 1983 and presented until 1987 as the guiding principle of the Burkinabe revolution. This document was mainly drafted by Valère Somé, a member of the ULC-R. The name that came to be used to describe the process of change was the 'Democratic and Popular Revolution' (RDP). It is likely that the concept of the RDP emerged within the FEANF (Federation of Black African Students in France), an important catalyst for anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles between 1950 and the 1970s. The concept emphasises the idea that the Revolution in Upper Volta (the former name of Burkina Faso) cannot yet be socialist but must allow a patriotic national bourgeoisie to come to power in order to support a policy of national industrialisation. According to this model, the working class, unable to lead the revolution, forms a strategic alliance with progressive elements for the management of the state, in a popular front[2]. This concept was definitively theorised in the Discours d'Orientation Politique (DOP, Political Orientation Speech).

The DOP became the main reference point for institutional political discourse. The text begins by placing the seizure of power on 4 August 1983 in the context of recent and past popular uprisings in the country since 1966. The text then characterises Upper Volta (later Burkina Faso, "land of honest men") as a poor, predominantly rural country dominated by neo-colonialism, lacking industrial development and real sovereignty, and plagued by the misappropriation of "international aid" by a corrupt bureaucratic and military caste. It emphasises the continuity of colonial and neo-colonial domination, which sees a small Burkinabe bourgeoisie benefiting from the plundering of the country's resources under the guise of independence. "In essence, neo-colonial society and colonial society are no different. Thus, colonial administration has been replaced by a neo-colonial administration that is identical in every respect to the former. The colonial army has been replaced by a neo-colonial army with the same attributes, the same functions and the same role as guardian of the interests of imperialism and its national allies." The DOP identifies the *comprador* and bureaucratic bourgeoisie as the enemy of all social progress: "With the support and blessing of imperialism, Voltaic nationals undertook to organise the systematic plundering of our country. From the crumbs of this plunder that fall to them, they are gradually transforming themselves into a truly parasitic bourgeoisie, no longer able to restrain their voracious appetites. Driven solely by their own selfish interests, they will now stop at nothing, resorting to the most dishonest means, developing large-scale corruption, embezzlement of public funds, influence peddling and property speculation, and practising favouritism and nepotism. The DOP describes in

[1] The reference to Sankara is, of course, the basis for the legitimacy of the current regime in Burkina Faso, led since the coup d'état of September 2022 by Captain Ibrahim Traoré. Its raison d'être lies in the security challenge posed by the immense difficulties in pushing back the jihadist insurgency, mainly in northern Burkina Faso. To this end, a change in military alliances has taken place, with Russian support replacing that of the armed forces of the former French colonial power. The transitional regime has also signed an agreement with Russia to build a nuclear power plant. Only 25% of the population has access to electricity. The Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency (ROSATOM) has been leading the Burkinabe project since June 2024. However, if successful, the project will take between 10 and 15 years to complete. Of the 400 power plants around the world, only one nuclear power plant is located on the continent, in South Africa. Ideologically, the ruling junta presents itself as 'anti-imperialist patriots' and heirs to Sankara. However, it should be noted that it carefully avoids adopting Sankara's ideas on class struggle, praising instead 'traditional chiefdoms', whereas the 1983 revolution explicitly aimed to eradicate 'feudal' structures.

[2] This theory therefore departs from crucial points of the New Democratic Revolution advanced by Maoism, according to which, in colonial and semi-colonial countries, the Communist Party, as the command centre of the working class, must lead the revolutionary process by eradicating feudalism, imperialist domination and the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie subordinate to it, before moving on to the socialist phase.

very concrete terms the catastrophic situation of the Voltaic peasantry, which has been plundered and exploited to the extreme. The document places particular emphasis on the lack of food self-sufficiency in a country that is nevertheless rural. The overall situation of dependence is highlighted: "Private investment from abroad is not only insufficient, but also places an enormous strain on the country's economy and therefore does not contribute to strengthening its capacity for accumulation. A significant portion of the wealth created with the help of foreign investment is drained abroad instead of being reinvested to increase the country's productive capacity. In the period 1973-1979, foreign exchange outflows were estimated as income of the National Council of the Revolution, DOP, Wednesday 2 October 1983. Upper Volta 12 foreign direct investment at 1.7 billion CFA francs per year, while new investment averaged only 1.3 billion CFA francs per year." The school enrolment rate was 16% and illiteracy stood at 92%. The revolution led by the CNR would therefore be a fierce, conscious and organised struggle against the parasitic classes for whom neo-colonialism was an Eldorado. This is a crucial point in any revolutionary process. Whatever the difficulties and ultimate failure of the Burkinabe revolution, which raised hopes and led to disillusionment, the crucial question is that of a programme and a politicisation of the masses that embraces the class struggle. The DOP, unlike the political lines of many 'African socialisms'[1] of the past and the current 'sovereigntist' lines, affirms that there can be no revolutionary change without class struggle. The DOP offers a Marxist analysis of the social space based on belonging to the people or to the enemies of the people and on supposed political consciousness. The DOP thus specifies who the enemies of the Burkinabe people are[2]: the state bourgeoisie, the comprador bourgeoisie, the middle bourgeoisie and the traditional 'feudal' chiefdoms. The DOP thus demonstrates the legacy of political debate within the revolutionary left. Indeed, as early as 1971, at its 5th Congress, the General Union of Voltaic Students (UGVE) stipulated that the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and patriotic intellectuals were potentially revolutionary, while the political-bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the comprador bourgeoisie and the feudal forces belonged to the camp of reaction. This fundamental analysis and the political initiatives that would follow had to be disseminated widely among the masses, according to Sankara and the leaders of the Burkinabe revolution. On this issue, however, Sankara showed great clarity. In his last speech, Sankara congratulated those who participated in the translation of the DOP into Fulfulde, Dioula and Mooré, a task 'which certainly required a lot of effort, a lot of work and a lot of thought to adapt and translate concepts that were sometimes 'new' but which "will be of no interest if the peasants cannot read it because they have not learned to read". Indeed, with a population that is 95% illiterate, the dissemination of the DOP has undoubtedly been limited. However, it is important to note the symbolic significance of translating this text into the national language. Sankara continued: "Giving the DOP in a language other than the national languages to an illiterate person is like insulting a blind person by giving them a torch. The blind person first needs to see, then a torch to see better. Let us give all illiterate people the ability to read, then we will give them healthy and useful reading material such as the DOP translated into national languages." The changes proposed by the Sankarist experiment did not therefore stem solely from the revolutionary enthusiasm that clearly animated Sankara. They were driven by a radical left-wing organisational front (with the notable exception of the PCRV-Parti Communiste Révolutionnaire Voltaïque) and by the choice to structure grassroots organisations (the CDRs) whose explicit aim was 'the destruction of the neo-colonial state machine'. They were endowed with significant powers such as the establishment of identity cards, census-taking, tax collection and the appointment of judges for the People's Tribunals. The Burkinabe revolution aims to be an experiment in breaking free from subjugation to the imperialist order and an attempt at agrarian and industrial development of the country, relying on its own forces and organising popular mobilisation in self-organised structures. It is taking place in a landlocked and isolated country at a historic moment of decline in revolutionary initiatives worldwide. The aim is therefore to break free from financial, political and military subjugation to imperialism and to lift the countryside out of its backwardness. However, it remains within the framework of bourgeois social relations. These characteristics allow us to judge objectively what was achieved during the Sankarist experiment: Sankarist cannot be blamed for limitations that it did not set out to overcome.

- J.S.

[1] The first president of Guinea (Conakry), Ahmed Sékou Touré, asserted that class division and class struggle were ineffective concepts in Africa and that it was necessary to speak of a 'class people' unanimously subjected to colonial and then imperialist domination. This was not the case with the revolutionary political currents that nourished emancipatory experiences and thinking in Africa, as was the case with the late Kwame Nkrumah (Class Struggles in Africa), Amilcar Cabral (The Weapon of Theory), Pierre Mulele in the DRC, or the rich heritage of the communist current in South Africa.

[2] "Who are these enemies of the people? They revealed themselves to the people during the events of 17 May in their hostility towards the revolutionary forces. The people identified these enemies of the people in the heat of revolutionary action. They are: 1°) The Voltaic bourgeoisie, which is divided, according to the function that each member performs, into the state bourgeoisie, the comprador bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie. – The state bourgeoisie: This is the faction known as the political-bureaucratic bourgeoisie. It is a bourgeoisie that has been enriched in an illicit and criminal manner by a situation of political monopoly. It has used the state apparatus in the same way that industrial capitalists use their means of production to accumulate surplus value extracted from the exploitation of the workers' labour power. This section of the bourgeoisie will never willingly give up its former advantages and stand passively by while revolutionary transformations are taking place. – The commercial bourgeoisie: This faction, by its very nature, is bound to imperialism by multiple ties. The abolition of imperialist domination means the death of the 'golden goose' for it. That is why it will oppose the present revolution with all its might. This category includes, for example, crooked merchants who seek to starve the people by withdrawing food from circulation for the purposes of speculation and economic sabotage. – The middle bourgeoisie: This section of the Voltaic bourgeoisie, although linked to imperialism, competes with it for control of the market. But as it is economically weaker, it is being ousted by imperialism. It therefore has grievances against imperialism, but is also afraid of the people, and this fear may lead it to join forces with imperialism. However, because imperialist domination of our country prevents it from playing its true role as the national bourgeoisie, some of its elements, in certain respects, could be favourable to the revolution, which would objectively place them in the camp of the people. However, revolutionary mistrust must be developed between these elements that join the revolution and the people. For, under this cover, opportunists of all kinds will rush to the revolution. 2) The reactionary forces that draw their power from the traditional feudal structures of our society. The majority of these forces have been able to offer firm resistance to French colonial imperialism. But since our country gained national sovereignty, they have joined forces with the reactionary bourgeoisie to oppress the Voltaic people. These forces have kept the peasant masses in a situation where they serve as a reservoir from which they engage in electoral one-upmanship. To preserve their interests, which are common to those of imperialism and opposed to those of the people, these reactionary forces most often resort to the decadent values of our traditional culture, which are still alive in rural areas. Insofar as our revolution aims to democratise social relations in our countryside, to empower peasants, and to give them access to more education and knowledge for their own economic and cultural emancipation, these reactionary forces will oppose it. They are the enemies of the people in the present revolution.

Letter from Mikhail and Alexandre Kononovitch (Ukraine)

Secours Rouge Marseille

Published by *Workers World magazine* (USA) in December 2024, (translated into French by *Secours Rouge-Marseille*). This is a letter from two brothers in the Ukrainian Communist Party who were arrested and tortured. At the beginning of 2025, we witnessed a new campaign to criminalise communist activists. The Ukrainian authorities accuse communists not only of calling for desertion, but also of possessing 'Marxist literature', which is banned in Ukraine as part of 'decommunization'. The group was called the 'Ukrainian Workers' Front' and was a Marxist-Leninist group of workers and students who reportedly went underground in 2022.

Dear comrades,

We would like to first draw your attention, comrades, to the fact that we, communists and anti-fascists, brothers Mikhail Kononovich and Alexander Kononovich, were arrested for our many years of "Komsomol [Communist Youth League] for Peace" actions, which we held in all cities of Ukraine, starting in 2014.

The last action was two weeks before the full-scale war of 2022 began, held near the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine with the main slogan "No to NATO – Peace for Donbass!"

Only communist anti-fascists advocated for peace in Ukraine. We tried to prevent the "Third World War." That is why being a communist and anti-fascist in Ukraine is already a crime.

Since our arrest on March 2, 2022, we have been in the dungeons of the SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) and prisons for eight months, subjected to beatings, torture, abuse, deprived of sleep in solitary confinement and in inhumane conditions like in Guantanamo.

Now we are under house arrest with an electronic bracelet. The Zelensky regime has deprived us of our livelihoods; we cannot work while under arrest and criminal prosecution; they want to bring us to a bestial state and poverty so that we surrender!

Beaten like George Floyd

We were arrested without trial or investigation, without a lawyer, kidnapped and beaten to an animal state during the arrest, strangled until unconscious (like George Floyd). They brought us to the basement of the SBU where for four days from March 2 to March 6, 2022, they brutally tortured us. They beat us in handcuffs every two hours, beat us with rifle butts and kicks. They broke our ribs, knocked out our teeth, broke our noses and tore Aleksander's nose.

Comrades, what is the most terrible thing for a person and a man? It is the torture of his family and children! The special services of the SBU regime threatened to rape Mikhail's thirteen-year-old daughter in front of his eyes if he did not agree to their conditions. There were no rules there at all!

Friends, can you imagine what really happened there?! When we were brought in for interrogation for the first time after several days of torture, they carried us in, because we could not walk or even sit on our own. We did not recognize each other, although we are twin brothers and have lived together our whole lives. Instead of my brother, there was a piece of meat in front of me, disfigured by blood and bruises.

The goal of the special services was to discredit the Communist Party and the Anti-Fascist Committee of Ukraine. As leaders of the left-wing movement in Ukraine, they demanded we slander ourselves and our party comrades.

According to the [Kiev] regime, if we are communists and anti-fascists, then we are definitely working for the Russians, but this is not so! We understood that the lives of hundreds of communists and anti-fascists all over the country depended on us, and we could not commit such a vile betrayal, even under threat of death. Better death than dishonour and betrayal!

It was precisely such torture and abuse in a Ukrainian prison that U.S. citizen Gonzalo Lira could not withstand, and he died from injuries.

After bold and decisive mass statements and speeches around the world by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, leftists and anti-fascists, the Zelensky regime was forced to tell the whole world that the communist brothers Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich were alive and arrested by the authorities. We were then transported from the "SBU dungeon" to a prison, where we were kept for two months in solitary confinement without medical care and practically without food.

The Kiev pre-trial detention centre initially refused to accept and process us, fearing that we would die, and the prison would be blamed for our deaths, not the SBU. On our prison cards we had a terrible mark, "especially dangerous criminals," and therefore we were treated like cruel terrorists. We were kept in prison without a court decision, since we were so beaten and maimed that they could not show us to anyone.

While the regime waited for two months for the traces of torture and beatings to heal, we lay on the concrete floor of the prison cell like animals without medical care and hope for life.

For the first time in May 2022 we were taken to court, where we saw our lawyer. All this time they tried to break us and force us to confess to non-existent crimes against the Zelensky regime. When this did not work, we were thrown into an overcrowded cell with Nazis and murderers.

We will never forget this day. In the cell hung the flag of Nazi, Hitlerite Germany, and on the bench lay Hitler's book "Mein Kampf." The goal of the regime was still to finally

break us. Zelensky's regime failed to do this with beatings and solitary confinement, so they decided to break us communists by putting us into Nazi and racist cells with repeat offenders.

The cell was not large, made for 12 people, but there were 20 people in it. We did not have our own bed (bunk) for more than three months, so we slept in turns. Alexander was in the same conditions, only in a different building. We were constantly attacked, starving and deprived of sleep. But we are communists and could not give in to the Ukrainian regime.

'We will not surrender'

Under no circumstances did we have the right to surrender. We decided this back in the SBU basement — no matter what they do to us, we will not surrender and would rather die than admit to the fabricated charges against us, the Communist Party and the Anti-Fascist Committee of Ukraine.

As a result, we were officially charged under Article 109, Parts 1 and 2 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (armed rebellion and attempted overthrow of power.) Allegedly the two of us, with weapons in hand, wanted to overthrow Zelensky and seize power in Ukraine! Russia has been fighting in Ukraine for the third year and cannot do this, but we, two communists and anti-fascists, the Kononovich brothers, wanted to do this on our own. The history of mankind has never known a more stupid accusation!

Under pressure from the communist international and actions in our support — #FreeKononovich" — around the world, as well as thanks to the unprecedented help of anti-fascists in Europe, we were released under 24-hour house arrest with the wearing of an electronic [GPS] bracelet.

Now there are trials on a fabricated criminal case against us, the Kononovich brothers. The government wants to put us in prison for 10 years with confiscation of property just because we are communists and anti-fascists.

Look, our American comrades, at the "democracy" that the U.S., EU and NATO authorities are imposing on Ukraine! Human rights do not exist in Ukraine now. People are disenfranchised like cattle. The people of Ukraine want peace, unlike the corrupt government.

We would like to draw the attention of U.S. communists and anti-fascists to the fact that hundreds of thousands have been repressed in Ukraine, with tens of thousands in prison, including thousands of communists and anti-fascists of Ukraine, all those who fought for peace.

We can name several specific comrades, those who like us have nothing to lose or fear. We are all being tried or have already been convicted exclusively under political criminal articles. In particular, there is the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, the Head of the Anti-Fascist Committee of Ukraine, Georgy Buiko, accused under criminal article 110, facing10 years in prison with confiscation of property, "encroachment on territorial integrity." The case is completely fabricated.

Komsomol member Sergei Novikov was sentenced to five years, under article 436, for allegedly "recognizing NATO as the culprit of the start of the war in Ukraine." The case is completely fabricated.

Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Yuri Petrovsky was sentenced to 15 years in a strict regime prison with confiscation of property, under article 111, "subversive activity," having advocated for peace. The case is completely fabricated.

Member of the anti-fascist committee and communist Anatoly Miruta, disabled (heart disease), was sentenced to 10 years in prison with confiscation of property, under Article 111, "subversive activity," having advocated for peace. For him as a disabled person, this is a severe sentence. The case is completely fabricated.

If we were to list all the convicted, repressed communists, Komsomol members, anti-fascists, it would take months. Not all of our comrades were lucky enough to survive this struggle, like our friend, anti-fascist Vladimir Novikov, who was unable to withstand the torture and abuse in prison. He hanged himself in his cell with a sheet through the window bars. He left this life as a true anti-fascist, not defeated by the fascists and not betraying his comrades and his ideas! Eternal memory to the anti-fascist heroes who fell in the struggle!

Communist Party banned

We, the anti-fascist communists of Ukraine, are outlawed for the first time in post-war Europe. The Communist Party of Ukraine is officially banned as in Nazi Hitler's Germany. We are being physically exterminated, destroyed to the applause of the Western world.

Ukraine is a testing ground for the implementation of modern colonial policies of external control and enslavement. The next victims of colonial policies and the cleansing of the left flank will be you, comrades, communists and anti-fascists of the United States of America.

We, communists and anti-fascists of Ukraine, call on you to take action and fight, be active and strong. You have nowhere else to retreat, only your physical extermination and the repetition of the fate of the Ukrainian communists.

Friends, you are stronger than you think! Thanks to you and your support, specifically we — communists Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich — remained alive. Without any pathos nor loud words, we owe you — communists and anti-fascists of Europe, South and North America — our lives.

Comrade communists and anti-fascists of the USA, we appeal to you for help. We communists of Ukraine ask you to help us and support us. Our lives and the lives of our comrades depend on it. We ask you to come out to actions in our support —#FreeKononovich —at the embassy and consulates of Ukraine in the U.S. Be brave and honest! Be real communists and anti-fascists!

P.S. Mikhail and Alexander Kononovich: We are communists, we cannot lose! And if we lose, then we are not communists!

Historical Memory

League of Black Revolutionary Workers-Detroit

Interview with former activists of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (Detroit). The League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW), founded in 1969 in Detroit, was dissolved in 1971. Although short-lived, it was one of the most interesting experiences of the radical African-American movement. Published in the form of an *audio interview* by Cosmonaut (cosmonautmag.com, USA) in 2024, and edited by the editors of Supernova[1].

Isaac: I'm Isaac. I'm an organizer and communist of all trades in Brooklyn I'm here with Ira.

Ira: Hey everyone. I also live in New York city. I am also a communist involved in a lot of labour organizing founding member of Amazonians United New York city and very happy to be here

Isaac: So, our main guest is Jerome Scott, who is a founding member of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, and also a founding member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America.

We're here to talk about. The incredible organizing life he's had and just to talk about this history and give it a kind of first-hand perspective which I think is key to figuring out how to do and practice politics and Marxism in this country. I'll hand it off to Jerome to introduce yourself.

Jerome Scott: Yeah, I am, I'm Jerome Scott. I'm originally from Detroit, Michigan, but I live in Atlanta, Georgia now. I guess I became a revolutionary in the process of our work with the League of Revolutionary Black Workers and have been a revolutionary ever since.

Ira: Jerome, can you start by just telling us what it was like growing up in Detroit ?

Jerome Scott: Yeah. I grew up in Detroit. in an area where most of the poor black folks live in a general area of Detroit. And I grew up not knowing how poor I was. It's always interesting when people always ask me how did it feel to be poor? In Detroit growing up and I would say everybody in my community was poor. So, we thought that's the way the world was.

And so, it didn't, make some imprint on me that I was poor and everybody else weren't. But I know the kind of decisions that I had to make in the process, like the decision to go into the military when I was 17 years old, I thought this is the only way I would save my life is to go into the military because, I wasn't prepared to go to college. I had just graduated from high school. My brother was a criminal and he was pulling me into that criminality. And I told my mother, if I don't get out of here, I'm going to be in prison or dead. And so, she immediately said, let me sign those papers to get you in the military. So it was that kind of life that I grew up within.

Ira: Jerome, I remember one thing you've said before has really struck me as really demonstrating what people from all kinds of backgrounds can take Marxism and really change themselves through it. Why don't you tell me what your bookshelf was like growing up?

Jerome Scott: Laughs) . I don't even think we had a bookshelf! There was a Bible in my house, but that was the only book in my house. I don't think I read a book, not even in high school. not cover to cover anyhow ? In high school, I would read as much as I possibly needed to read to make sure I could pass the test, but that was it. I didn't read a book until I was in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit, when we began to really study. Yeah, books was not part of my upbringing.

Ira: And you just finished writing a book now.

Jerome Scott: Yeah, isn't that amazing?

I was talking to a couple of my neighbours the other day , and one of them was telling me about some of the questions that the doctor asked them when they went to get their physical. And one of 'em was, do you ever feel like you haven't done anything in life? do you feel like your life has been worthless?

And he said; sometimes I feel like that. What about you?

And I said, man, where I came from, the fact that I'm still living is a testament to being strong. But the fact that I had participate in, not only developing and writing a book, but also participating in ongoing struggles throughout my life. That, to me, is a contribution to the world that I never thought I would be able to make growing up. Yeah, my growing up and just making it through life makes me successful. Many of my neighbours did not make it. Not even to 50, let alone 78, which I am now.

Ira: Can you tell us a little bit more about when you joined the military and I understand you also spent some time in Vietnam. What kind of impact did that have on sort of your political journey?

Jerome Scott: Yeah, first of all, I didn't even know there was a war going on when I joined the military. I had no idea Vietnam was happening. I joined the military, like I said before, because I wanted to get out of my neighbourhood. I just knew that I wasn't going to make it if I stayed there. And once I joined and got into basic training and people started talking about Vietnam, I started asking what is Vietnam?

And they looked at me like I was crazy and said, man you're in the military and you don't know, what's going on in Vietnam? I said, no, I sure don't. And they said you better hope you don't get sent there. And so, I immediately got a little nervous about my military adventure. So, I did eventually get sent to Vietnam, like most of us that joined the military in the early 60s. And when I look back on it, I think about it as the worst and the best thing that could have happened to me.

[1] For an analysis and history of racial and class experiences in France, you can read: "Pour un bilan politique des luttes des cités ouvrières de l'immigration" (For a political assessment of the struggles of immigrant working-class neighbourhoods) n.3 Supernova, 2023.

I was stationed up at Dong Ha, which was five miles from the DMZ that separated the North from the South of Vietnam. And so, our site was bombarded all the time. We lived basically in underground bunkers that we dug ourselves. That was the first thing we had to do when we got to Vietnam, was dig a bunker so that we'd have some place to sleep overnight because they would bomb the site just about every night. So that was the worst part of it.

The best part of being there was that I really began to think for the first time in my life. I began to think about what the hell am I doing here? I could lose my life and not know why. One of the jobs that everybody on the site would have to do is go down to the river and get water for the site. And then one day we were down there and we found these flyers laying on the ground. And the flyer said, "Black soldier, why is it that in Vietnam, you're always at the front of the line, but at home, you're at the end of the line? "

and, what they meant by that is, if you went out on a search and destroy mission, you had a point. The point person was 80 percent likely to be killed or wounded. So, it was the most dangerous position that you could have in the military in the war zone.

And, something like 75 % of all points were black, and so they were emphasizing how many black soldiers get killed in Vietnam, At the front of the line. And then when you go home, you can't get to the front of the line to get anything. You're always at the end of the line.

So that flyer made me really think about what I was doing in Vietnam. How did I get there? And how come I don't know anything about it? And so, I promised myself that I would never go anyplace else without knowing why I'm there, what I'm going for.

Vietnam made me think about things that I had never really thought about before . It Is what set me on the course of becoming a revolutionary. Because once I left Vietnam, I just started searching:

I need to learn some stuff about how this world works.

I want to know why they send people to war without informing them of what's going on and why they are there

It really did set me on the basis of being a revolutionary till this day. And so, it was the worst and the best time of my life being in Vietnam.

Ira: Can I just ask where those flyers came from?

Jerome Scott: I don't know if people realize this, but the government would hire Vietnamese to work on the site. They hired a tent boy to come in and make up our beds and clean up the tent. And that was really puzzling to me, too, that the government would, have servants, basically, serving these GIs that were on the front line, ready to be killed.

But, little do they know that a lot of the people that got hired, end up being part of the Viet Cong, the revolutionary Vietnamese people's army. So, I would imagine that the flyers came from some of the Vietnamese people who supported the revolution that the Vietnamese people were going through and was trying to inform the GIs what they were looking at.

Isaac: I was talking to someone, could had a somewhat similar experience over the weekend that I'm at a march in New York and he said he left, to Fight against Ho Chi Minh and then came back from Vietnam ready to fight for Ho Chi Minh.

Jerome Scott: Yeah indeed, that was my experience too

Isaac: So, you come back from Vietnam searching for answers?

Jerome Scott: Okay, so I get back from Vietnam in 1967 and I'm thinking I'm going to go to college. But one day I'm just hanging out in the neighbourhood, and I'm the only one in my neighbourhood that has a car, and one of my neighbours asked me to take him over to the plant to apply for a job.

And so, we're over there and I'm sitting down in the office waiting for him and one of the interviewers said, don't you want a job too? And I said not really. I'm thinking about going to college as soon as I can. And he said, who knows, you could get a job that do your studies on the job. Why don't you just take the test and see what happens? So, I said , okay. I took the test.

They hired both of us straight away 'you can start tomorrow' they said. So, I ended up starting to work at Chrysler Corporation, Detroit Ford's plant.

This is 1967. Now, in 1967, at Dodge, Maine, was when one of the very first Wildcat strikes happened. That was a strike by the Arab workers at Dodge, Maine, protesting the war in Palestine: the 1967 Israeli war that was taking over Palestinian lands. They were protesting the government Bonds that were being sold to support Israel, and so that was the first wildcat strike at Dodge Maine and we began to hear about it Over at Detroit Ford's and a number of us started talking, So That was the first kind of conversations about organizing that happened.

That strike didn't last very long, that strike had drew a lot of attention from Black workers. throughout Chrysler anyway, just because there was a strike around the oppression and murdering of another of people, the Palestinian people.

So then in 1968, when the second Dodge main strike happened, which resulted in the creation of DRUM. Once that strike happened, a group of us at the plant went over to talk to the people who were working at Dodge, Maine, who had organized the Wildcat strike there, and asked them, what can we do to support the strike?

And they told us, you should go back to your plant and do some organizing. Develop a base at your plant of a number of workers that's willing to do some day to day organizing, and then come back and talk to us.

We can help you with that, but the only, the way you support us is by organizing at your plant. And so that's when we began to talk to each other and expand our conversation with other workers. One of the things that I had done when I was hired , which got a lot of people to know who I was I asked for was a contract. This came from My Vietnam years of not wanting to be any place where I don't know what the rules are, or what I was doing.

So, I asked the foreman for a contract and he thought I was crazy! " Your first week at work and you're asked for a contract?!", and so word got around that this new guy, in the plant was, already asking for a contract.

So, a lot of people wanted to know why I was doing that. And so, we got to talking about my history of being in the military and being in Vietnam and my desire not to be any place where I didn't understand the rules and that everybody should know the rules.

So, I had a number of people in the plant already that, that I'd been talking to. So, when we went back to start talking to people about organizing, we talked about everything. We talked about the civil rights movement that was really big in Detroit at the time and how that was affecting work.

We talked about; what kind of things were going on in our factory that made people really nervous. And it was mainly health and safety issues. The fact that people were getting hurt. on the line all the time, and every time somebody got hurt, the line might stop for a little while, but then their main goal was to get that line back up and running. It wasn't to make sure that everybody was safe. So yeah, those conversations begin to

develop on a regular basis once the Dodge Main strike happened in 1968.

So, 1967 also was a big Detroit rebellion, there was a curfew. No one could be on the street , from dusk to dawn. Except for the fact that if you worked for the auto industry, you didn't have to abide by the curfew. As a matter of fact, if you, if they had to, they would send the military to your house to escort you to the factory if you needed it.

So, the people at Dodge Main looked at this situation and said, there's something going on here. How come only the folks at the plant can get through these military and police lines to go to work, but we can't get out to go get some food from the grocery store?

And they concluded that there was something special about working at these factories. If it was so important that we got to work during the middle of a rebellion, in the middle of a curfew, then that meant that we had some power that we were not exercising. And if we could organize the point of production and get some control over a vital part of the plant, which was significant, not only to the entire planet and the entire industry, then we might have some power.

And so, the rebellion really set the basis for the League of Revolutionary Black Workers of what their strategy was going to be, and that was to organize at the point of production, because that was a position of power.

So just think about it, 1967, you had the Arab First, Wildcat Strike, you had the Detroit Rebellion, which created the understanding among workers that we should organize at the point of production. And then in 68, you have the Drum Strike.

Ira: Drum, that's the Dodge Revolutionary Union movement, right? That was the precursor to the Revolutionary Black Workers.

I love that story because some things never change. When you and I first met, it was in the early days of the COVID pandemic, everything was shut down in New York City. You could not leave your apartment unless you had that essential workers permit. I was looking at Amazon at the time and was in Queens which was the epicentre of the pandemic. And then there was the George Floyd uprisings so it was very similar. And because of the uprisings the NYPD was deployed in mass to really enforce a lockdown. But if you were declared an essential worker, you were given a card to show the police so you could go to work after hours. But for a lot of my black co-workers the police sometimes wouldn't even let them get their card out.

So, when you told me that story, I saw the parallels of how I was going through something quite similar, but just in a different context, in a different time.

Isaac: So, can you maybe take us through the development from these individual struggles , at what point to they start to cohere? are there political developments that are happening along the same time?

Jerome Scott: So, in 68 the Dodge revolutionary union movement is created out of the Dodge main strike. That wildcat strike lasted for about five days, which is long for a wildcat strike. It really mobilized workers throughout the city, because everybody wanted to know how could this happen? How could black workers at this one factory be able to shut it down? And so that reverberation is what set-in motion to create, the creation of many RUMS , revolutionary union movement apparatuses: not only in the Auto industry , but also in steel, rubber, and UPS.

So, when We had decided to return to our own factory to start organizing, as it turns out, a many more had made that same journey

They Had established an office in the garage at General Baker's house. And so, we would go over to talk and, do our flyers. They had set it up a little printing area where they had a Gestetner and a printing press.

People just kept on coming: from Eldon , from Ford Rouge, from Detroit Forge... and so that Dodge Main strike was the element that really sparked this river that began to flow throughout Detroit.

Parallelly, The Black United Front began to develop in different high schools around Detroit, and they came in contact with DRUM , and at the same time, the civil rights movement was starting to be in full swing in Detroit. There was a big demonstration that same year. And so, in the city, in the community, things begin to boil over. Between 1968 and 69 there was at least 12 to 14 chapters in various factories around the country.

There was a big community apparatus that had developed in that year, and there was this big high school apparatus. And those were the elements that came together to form the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in 1969.

If We go back to that question about, what role did the civil rights movement play in this process? It played a gigantic role. We thought of ourselves as taking the civil rights movement to the point of production, and because white supremacy in the plant was rabid : the first complaint that workers had was health and safety. The second complaint that workers had was disrespect, that these foremen did not respect black workers at all, they tried to treat us like shit every day, and so the civil rights movement was in our minds the whole time. So, we thought of ourselves as a militant branch of that civil rights movement in the plants in Detroit.

Our defence was to first go to the union. But The union wasn't really interested when we brough up the disrespect and white supremacy.

So, we ended up understanding that if we were going to make any advance in our livelihood in terms of how we were treated and how we were looked upon as black workers in the plant that we had to do something not only to challenge the company but also the union.

So, it became a two-front battle: we were going to fight the company tooth and nail, but we also was going to try to make this union do what it was supposed to do. And that was represent workers.

We never had any strain of anti-unionism. Detroit was a union town. Everybody wanting to be a member of a union, because they knew that if you were a member of a union, your wages would be higher, you would have some say in terms of how you could evolve .

But when you approached it as a black worker, all those things were pushed to the back, and so it was very clear to us from the very beginning that we had to fight to make the union be a union.

Isaac: Absolutely, from my experience there is a huge disconnect between unions going out and lobbying for federal legislation and then actually fighting these things on the shop floor, actually intervening in the point of production.

Jerome Scott: We did a little bit of research into what was going on with the UAW and unions in general, as part of our educational process. And when we discovered that historically, in the 30s and 40s, the trade unions were More of a class struggle trade union. They not only fought for their members, but they also fought for the working class.

But in the 1950s, during the McCarthy era, with the struggle to try to break unions, and bring them in line: we realized that what had happened with unions is that they had transformed themselves to be unions for their members only. They were no longer going to be fighting for the working class, which meant they weren't going to fight against white supremacy and not anything else about our lives or what was happening in society as a whole. They were only going to fight for wages.

Once we found that out, we knew that this struggle with the union and the company was going to be a continual one, because that relationship between the company and the union had become more and more consolidated.

We also saw what the wildcat strikes meant to the union. Many people don't know what a wildcat strike is today. A wildcat strike is a strike that the workers take on themselves. When you do a union contract strike, what happens is that the union is in negotiation with the company. They give the company a notice that they're going to strike in 90 days. The company then goes about his business , preparing for that strike stockpiling the cars and stockpiling the stuff that they need. So that when the strike actually happens, they're prepared for it.

A Wildcat strike is a strike where we say, all right, tomorrow we're going to shut this place down! And we shut it down straight away . So now the union is screwed because they weren't expecting it. The Only people that was prepared for that strike was the workers who was calling it, so that became the major tactic of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

And in those Wildcat Strikes, we had community people and students. The students would come to us and say, all right, y'all are getting fired for passing out leaflets, in front of the plant. Why don't we pass them out? And the community would come to the picket lines also and support the picketers.

So maybe we didn't realise it at the time but when you look back at it, we were trying to express to the company and the union, the way they would have to fight the class as a whole, and not just the workers at this one plant.

Isaac: Can I just ask like without having a cell phone and texting a bunch of people strike tomorrow? How do you get the word out about a wildcat strike without losing that element of surprise?

Jerome Scott: We would do a flyer every week which would deal with all kinds of stuff, and once we got those flyers inside, the distribution inside was all through workers would just pass them on. And word of mouth as well

I'll give you an example of the Wildcats track that I was in. What happened to start it off is that a worker got hurt. In this case, this was a skilled trades worker whose fingers had literally been pulled off his hand because the crane malfunctioned while he was putting the load on it. We just immediately went over and talked to skilled tradespeople. Word began to spread throughout the plant that this had happened, and that the bosses weren't going to shut down the . And so, by the time we decided to have a wildcat strike that by the end of that shift, just about everybody in the plant knew it already. And Foremen knew it, and the supervisors knew it but... what can they do in one day?

And then there was the power of the picket line, once you set up a picket line at a plant in Detroit, black in those days, wasn't nobody going to cross those picket lines! So, it was a combination of word of mouth, making sure you had enough people to set up the picket line and the surprise that: yesterday this happened, today we are in strike .

The Union and the company often conspired, we, they would get together and say okay, who are the leaders of this wildcat strike? And they would immediately fire people.

in my case, they fired 15 workers, eight of us were, 8 of them were skilled trades workers 7 of us were production workers. And the union then sat down with the company to decided who would be able to come back to work with some disciplinary action and who the union wanted to stay out.

As well as the company would be permanently fired in my situation, it was three of us that the union and the company jointly decided that they wanted us to stay out of the plant to production workers, one skilled trades worker, two black workers, one white worker, and so the union.

We shut the entire Chrysler corporation down in 1973, and our strike lasted for 7 days and our picket line was 24 hour non-stop.

And so, it was the union that ended up mobilizing this group that we would call the Flying Squadron, which was organized in the 1930s to go to different plants to help set up picket lines and help enforce the strikes that were going on. In this case, they mobilized the Flying Squadron to come break the strike.

Ira: Jerome, how'd this led you to Marxism? Did that organically happen or did you have a little guidance along the way? Do you still have no, books on your bookshelf?

Jerome Scott: < laughs> I have so many books on my bookshelf now!

What happened is with The League of Revolutionary Black Workers we began to evaluate the extent of our victories that we were having with Wildcat Strikes. We had gotten people hired, black stewards elected, and committee men. We had gotten black supervisors hired, and black people were on the board, national board of the UAW, and we realized that our lives had not changed, the workplace had not changed, even though we were making those advances.

So, we began to discuss whether or not our program was really the program that we needed to have, and how did we develop a program that would change our lives, the workplace and our community. And so it was that desire to be more effective that drove us to what we called an educational retreat, which we began to study the various political thinkers throughout the world, particularly African scholars and Marxist scholars throughout the world.

And we began to realize that Marxism was written for the workers, that Marxism was the science of society that really analysed the role that workers played in the building and development of society and the role that the ruling class played in controlling the growth and development of that society.

So, the study retreat went on for about 18 months , we met daily; between 4 - 5 hours a day we would studying together , there was about 60 of us that went through this study.

And we ended up discovering that Marxism was the theory that served us well

That if we could organize workers and get them united on an overall strategy, of how to deal with the capitalist society as a whole and not just our workplace. It made us understand the role that the workplace played in the ability of the capitalist society continue to function, and to continue to make profit.

So that's how we got to Marxism. We realized that Marxism was the theory that was written for workers and that if we could Understand Marxism, not just understand it in the abstract way, but understand it as an applied science, how do we apply Marxism to our workplace, to our organizing, to our

understanding of how the world works, then we could really develop a cadre of workers that could be instrumental in transforming the society. And so, Marxism became the science that we relied on and continue to rely on to this day.

Ira: That brings me to the question of mentorship. We've had a couple episodes on Cosmopod about revolutionary mentorship or communist mentorship. And Jerome you're a very close mentor of mine as well. And it's actually my relationship with you that has made me realize how instrumental this intergenerational connection is, and how we are at a disadvantage that we don't have a party that can provide us with that on an ongoing basis.

When You talked about the role of revolutionary mentorship, you said that you didn't have relationship to the old communist party as it had largely become a revisionist. Skeleton of what it used to be. How did you guys seek out mentorship?

Jerome Scott: Yeah. So, in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, there were a few, like Jimmy and Grace Boggs who lived right down the street from the League office. Jimmy was a mentor to many, especially the younger ones, and they had a library that none of us had ever seen before, it had everything in it! And so, it, became an inspiration for the library that we built at the league office.

So, mentorship played an important role; for instance, you can't just drift into Marxism, someone has to tell you about Marxism.

Someone has to say to you ' if you're searching for something that can guide Your revolutionary work, you might want to look at Lenin or you might want to look at Stalin, you might want to look at some of these other folks who developed some theories around this question. That's what mentors done for us. So, when we got to this point of, wanting to educate ourselves, a couple of us were out on the West Coast and they were looking for someone to help us study, and so they ran into what was then called the California Communist League and this guy named Bob Williams volunteered to move to Detroit, to help us develop this study. He was a great mentor. He was one of these guys who had studied a lot of Marxism, had studied a lot of stuff, and he had a photographic memory, so he would say stuff like " look at page 22 of Foundation of Leninism paragraph 5" and then he would begin to quote What that paragraph would say. And it would be exactly what he said!

And this guy was a worker. He was a streetcar driver out in the Bay Area. And so, he was a worker too, and he had studied Marxism and was at this level of understanding where he remembers all this stuff. So that just helped us devote ourselves to understanding Marxism too. And so, he inspired us because if he could understand Marxism like that meant that we could. This helped us understanding that Marxism wasn't some abstract theory that no one could understand - in the way people talked about it abstractly- but was a theory that you could understand and you could actually apply it to the day to day organizing you did .

And then after a while. We began to have a relationship with the California Communist League and Nelson Perry who was interesting because he had been in the CP, he had been one of the black intellectual workers.

He had gotten purged from the CP in relation to the Watts Rebellion, because the CP had told them to stay away from the rebellion. And they said, no, we can't do that. We live in the middle of Watts. Watts is burning and you're telling us to not to be involved with it?

So, we had the connection to the old CP, and the one thing that Nelson really ingrained in us was that in order to be able to understand this world that it was constantly changing. You had to have a theoretical understanding of how this world works and a philosophical worldview of how you unit the working class and how you were in solidarity with other working-class folks throughout the world. He really had an emphasis on political education That it was education that would be able to raise the consciousness of workers so that they knew why they were revolutionaries and what that meant in terms of transforming this world.

So, I think mentorship is really critically important because, you don't just, you don't just grow up and automatically become a revolutionary. You might think of yourself as revolutionary, but are you an effective revolutionary? I think you need mentors to guide you, to introduce you to new ideas that they were introduced to, many years ago. So, I think that's a really critical process.

Isaac: Definitely. And I think it's also, it's just a product of the Red Scare, right?

It's that those kinds of connections are so important and a big part of the role of anti- communism in American society is to Erase that history and erase those generational connections.

Jerome Scott: That a lot of people don't realize this but the whole McCarthy era of the fifties, part of their goal was to break that historical connection. They wanted to break the relationship between workers Intellectuals, in order to isolate the working class so that they could break that possibility of the working class coming together, which was one of the major goals of the McCarthy era.

So, we had to dig deep to make that connection with what was happening in the thirties with unions and what was happening in the sixties and seventies.

Ira: So, what came next for you after the study group seeing as you'd been fired and thrown out of the union?

Jerome Scott: So, one of the skilled trades workers that was fired with us was in the process of buying a bar right before the strike took place, and the bar was right at the corner beside the factory. So, he hired the three fired workers as bartenders.

So, for the next couple of years, I was bartending across the street from not only the plant that I fired from, but also seven other plants. So, people also started coming in to talk to us, so it became a real organizing joint, so in one way , I was in a better organizing position than I had been before.

So, the League of Revolutionary Black workers had a split in 19 71.

We had, one of the things that had happened is that we had connected SNCC, particularly James Foreman and he began to work very closely with the leadership of the league. And in the process of that relationship, we began to think about expanding from Detroit to other places around the country. We started this process of building what was called the Black Workers Congress. And it was that process of building the Black Workers Congress that set the basis for the split in the league, because I really don't think we were a mature enough organization to really have consolidated our various bases in Detroit , that we could really begin to divide our attention toward other cities.

It began to drain the resources from our work in Detroit and eventually people at the plant began to not be able to get to the printing machines, not have the equipment or the resources that we needed to get our leaflets out. We were having trouble with trying to have the kind of meetings that we needed to have .

And so, people just began to get more and more entangled in this internal debate about whether or not it was a smart thing to do to try to go national. when we hadn't really consolidated our Detroit base.

And so that split developed. And, looking back on it after a number of years, I think that if we had been a more mature organization, we might've been able to find a way that we could have done both. Because I don't think it's necessarily wrong to have to try to expand, because what was happening in Detroit It was pretty easy for the ruling class to isolate us. We were just this one grouping in Detroit fighting on the plant, to isolate us. Plants were beginning to move. To, to the South and to Latin America at the time they were, and they would shut down some of the most, and move some of the most critical plants that had really good, revolutionary union movements in them.

So, it' after the split when We went on our education retreat to figure out exactly what we were going to do. Those of us who was left after the split was all the workers and most of the student bases. So Went through the educational retreat and after that we eventually joined the communist labour party, joining with a number of organizations that came together in 1972.

I thought I was a revolutionary once leaving Vietnam and understanding that I didn't know why I was there and was not going to be in that position again. But I really didn't know what a revolutionary was until we went on that education retreat. And coming out of that retreat, I think we had consolidated ourselves as conscious revolutionaries and conscious communists.

Ira: Tell us about your book.

Jerome Scott: So, the idea behind the book was to put forth the lessons that, that we had learned, through the process of being militants. The title is "Motown, the making of working-class revolutionaries". It follows the journey from the League of Revolutionary Black Workers to the Communist Labour Party, and one major theme is this whole question of understanding the world. It's not good enough to just study Marxism abstractly. The lesson that we learned is that you have to learn how to apply it, because the world changes every day. You can't look at the world of the 1960s and 70s and say, we can just duplicate that, you, because things have changed drastically and so studying Marxism, doing political education is a lifelong process. That's the lesson ; we have to continue to study and continue to analyse. Our organizing efforts to see if they're being really effective.

The second thing that we learned is that you have to really concentrate on developing working class consciousness. You need the working class to be more and more conscious of all the things that are going on in this world and how it's affecting us, and it is through the process of developing working class consciousness that you're able to create a section of the working class that will unite around, whatever the strategy needs to be for that period of time.

It's one thing to be able to unite in opposition to something immediate. Accidents keep at the plant for example so you organise a wild cat strike. But a Wildcat Strike only unites you for that moment .

What keeps you united after is whether or not you understand the connection between that specific tactical struggle and the strategic objectives of the fight. Now strategically, we united around the need to transform this society from a capitalist society to a socialist society.

And if you could unite a section of the working class around the strategy that there is a path to socialism in this world and in this country. And if we can unite on that common path then that will require a necessity of you studying together, on you fighting, struggling this out. This is not something someone can pass down to you and say, "this is the strategy." This is something that you have to understand yourself in order to be able to contribute to it. That was another lesson we learned that we should make sure that everybody has a role in this process because we all do, whether we know it or not, we all do. If we don't have a role in this revolutionary process, then we're going to drift.

And then the last lesson that I will, say is this whole question of theory and practice. Marxism don't tell you what to do it just gives you a framework to understand better how this world works and why this society is a class society, and how that functions to serve capitalism.

What you have to understand is how do you apply Marxism to that changing situation so that you know then how to organize, how to develop the tactics that will be effective in struggling against the ruling class in this whole. I think that we have a path to victory because capitalism itself is changing and undermining itself by the development of technology.

For instance, the basis of capitalism is the relationship between labour and capital. But if you can begin to create commodities with less and less human labour all the time in the process, you undercut the relationship of capitalism itself because only human labour makes value. And capitalism is all about the creation of new value. So, if you create products without human labour, you creating products with little or no value, which then undercuts the capitalist system. And that's why I say, this is an opportunity that we have because the ruling class is beginning to struggle with itself is beginning to have cracks because there's a section of the ruling class is still solidly based in industry and then there's another section of the ruling class that's clearly based in, advanced technology and digitalization of everything and financialization of everything.

And those two caps are beginning to struggle over who's going to control. It is during the process of those struggles that the working class, that we can Get ourselves together and unite. We have an opportunity to break the power that the ruling class have on this society. Those are some of the lessons and some of the thinking of why we can win if, if we get our shit together and take advantage of this moment in history.


"When those who fight against
injustice are defeated,
Will injustice be accepted as justice?
Our defeats, you see,
prove nothing except that
We are too few,
who fight against infamy,
And we expect from those who merely observe
That they feel at least some shame."
-Bertolt Brecht, 1934
DENY - DEFEND - DEPOSE
DENY - DEFEND - DE
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