

Summaries

Enzo Traverso: Communism – An Onsite Appointment

The anti-capitalist movements of recent years were no longer shaped in the tradition of the October Revolution. They are orphans that need to reinvent themselves. This is their strength, as they are not restrained by conventions. But it is also their weakness for they lack historical memory. They are not aware of the work of grieving following the defeats of the 20th century, without which, however, socialism cannot renew itself.

Josep Fontana: The Russian Revolution and Us

The article is a short overview of the history of the Russian revolution and the Soviet state, showing both the reasons for its failure alongside positive achievements. The goal is to counter the usually one-sided, negative evaluations of the revolution as well as the ›fear‹ of communism in the academic world marking the 100th anniversary of the revolution.

Guido Liguori: Revolution as Learning Process. Gramsci and the Russian Revolutions of 1917

Liguori discusses the development of Gramsci's thinking, departing from his way of dealing with the Russian revolution and its consequences, which – despite of his approval – is also quickly marked by a criticism of the Stalinist policies that alienated Gramsci from his own party. The outcome of this learning process can be found in the theories of hegemony, civil society and integral state in the *Prison Notebooks*. They underline the impact of the the experience of the revolution in its significance for the young Gramsci in his development of a Marxism that brings together socialism and democracy.

Wolfram Adolphi: »We took us away«. 100 Years October Revolution

The end of the Soviet Union and the Soviet model of socialism in Eastern Europe in 1989/90 led to a new wave of capitalist self-praise as well the massive delegitimization of the revolutionary process in general. But what about the world and humankind after this »victory«? Adolphi looks back at the reasons for the October Revolution as produced by the capitalist system itself, the reactionary wars and actions culminating in fascist regimes, the decisive role of the Soviet Union for the foundation of a new world order after World War II, and the worldwide hopes for long-lasting peace and a global perestroika in 1988/89. He concludes that today's capitalism, »unlimited« as it was pre-1917, threatens again the existence of mankind at an unprecedented level.

Frigga Haug: Love and the Revolution. Against misusing Alexandra Kollontai

An article on the Russian revolution in the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* offers a starting point for remembering Alexandra Kollontai and thus reviving the context of the socialist project on love in Marx's work and all others who adhere to his legacy.

Robert Cohen: Subjective Chronicle. Christa Wolf's Letters 1951–2011

The sheer number of letters – over 15000 – that Christa Wolf wrote during her lifetime make the 1000-page edition of selected letters an integral part of her literary persona. While the letters deal with many aspects of her private and public life, the focus of the article is on the harassment by and growing disillusion with the ruling elite of the GDR, which was followed after 1989 by harassment and defamations in the newly united Germany. The article also discusses Wolf's continuous engagement with and contributions to feminist thinking, as well as her reflections on the poetics, aesthetics, and on the ethical aspects of her work.

Jan Loheit: »At the Grave of the Revolution«. Wolf Biermann's Funeral Reception

When Wolf Biermann appeared in the Cologne Sport Centre in 1976, he celebrated Rosa Luxemburg's work as a legacy that the GDR must finally take possession of. In his 2016 autobiography, whose political contradictions are illuminated in the present article, Biermann buries this legacy under the verdict of totalitarianist theory. The poet's spirit of contradiction was transformed on a whim following his abandonment of the ethical substance of Marxism.

Radhika Desai: Imperialist Anti-Capitalism

The Russian Revolution broke out amidst a world war among imperial countries and a critical part of its legacy lies in the challenges to imperialism it inspired and enabled in the century that followed. In the centenary year of the revolution, however, the western left finds itself dominated by theoretical positions which lionise capitalism as Promethean, neglect the critique of imperialism and reject autonomous development independent of imperial capitalism – which have also disabled it from mobilizing the discontents of capitalism, leaving them prey to an array of right wing forces.

Ingar Solty: No Anti-Imperialism Without a Theory of Current Capitalism. A Rebuttal to Radhika Desai

Due to Desai's class-theoretical and state-theoretical weaknesses, her World System's Theory-informed anti-imperialism falls short of an understanding of the deep transformation of global capitalism after the neoliberal turn. Solty argues that Desai's misunderstanding of transnationalized class formation and the dramatic shift in class power relations under neoliberalism lead her to overestimate both global rivalries and the emancipatory potentials of multipolarity.

Arndt Hopfmann: The »Development Challenge« of the October Revolution

There is hardly a continent for which the global consequences of the Russian revolution were of such tremendous importance as in Africa. Decades before the African Year of 1960, the Russian Revolution and the ascent of the Soviet Union had already created the essential geostrategic facts that became important pre-conditions for the process of de-colonisation and (national) development. The politically most influential lesson that many leaders of so-called developing countries learned from the

Russian revolution concerns the ultimate necessity of a state-planned industrialisation programme. Ironically, almost at the same time as the Soviet Union encountered a serious political crisis, the developmental state in Africa collapsed altogether with the single-party model. However, 25 years later it is more obvious than ever: There is no stable international order without industrial development and structural transformation in the South, particularly in Africa.

Norman Paech: No Peace in the Middle East. On the Development of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the centre of war in the Middle East. Three events, the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the UN resolution of 1947, and the beginning of the occupation after the so-called Six Day War mark significant defeats in the Palestinian conflict and, moreover, are key events of the Jewish-Arab confrontation. Paech draws attention to some elements of this history which are responsible for the permanent terror in this conflict and have prevented a peaceful solution. Historically and at present, they include a militant form of Zionism and the interests of European colonialism that have expanded into transatlantic imperialism. However, crucial is also a weakness on the Arab side which led to a lack of sufficient support to the Palestinian resistance against an internationally supported military in Israel. The tragedy of the resistance manifests itself in the separation of Fatah and Hamas, which was deliberately fostered by Israel and the US. Furthermore, there is the demographic factor that plays an important role in the proclaimed two-state solution, which Israeli governments have successfully undermined with their settlement policy. Neither does an »alternative war« (Moshe Zuckermann) for a two state solution, nor does Apartheid within one state promise peace.

Micha Brumlik and Jan Loheit: German Names – Frank Pergande, the FAZ and the Legacy of the GDR

The names of streets, squares and institutes have always been the subject of controversies in the context of struggles for cultural hegemony. Whom and what should be remembered? In the recent past, the German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, has taken up this question on several occasions, once in defence of the name of the former Ernst-Moritz-Arndt University, then again in rejection of the names of squares and streets which, even after the fall of the GDR, still bear the name of Communists and Nazi victims. This reveals a disturbing trend in current German politics of remembrance.