

Pertinent Essays: The Center Will Not Hold

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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

By Samir Amin, [Monthly Review](#)

Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System IV: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 396 pages, \$26.95, paperback.

Immanuel Wallerstein's analysis in the fourth volume of his series on the modern world system is perfectly consistent with the title. The author has produced a remarkable analysis of the birth and subsequent triumph of the "liberal center" in nineteenth-century Europe. I do not intend to summarize this creative work whose theses are supported by strong arguments. Read it and, whatever your opinion may be, you will learn much from it. I shall take up the four major points of this contribution to understanding our world, which are: (i) the centrality of the French Revolution; (ii) the long ideological and political conflict through which the crystallization of the liberal center emerges; (iii) the parallel that Wallerstein makes between France and England, the major

creators of this crystallization; (iv) the birth of social science, which is one of its principal products. In this way, I propose to continue the ongoing discussion that has linked Wallerstein, our now deceased colleagues, Andre Gunder Frank and Giovanni Arrighi, and me for four decades.

The Centrality of the French Revolution

I fully share the assertion on the centrality of the French Revolution, in company with Karl Marx and Eric Hobsbawm (and quite a few others!), which today has become a minority current in historical thinking, contested by the contemporary postmodernist current that is devoted to devaluing the significance of the French Revolution, mainly to the advantage of the American and English Revolutions. However, the French Revolution triggers the political trajectory of modern times far more than the others.

The primary question, in my view, is the articulation between, on the one hand, the class struggles (in the broad sense of the term, i.e., perceived in all dimensions of their political and ideological expressions) and, on the other hand, the conflict between "nations" (or states), in this case France and England, in the shaping of *global* history—understood as broadly coinciding with the development of the capitalist world economy. To simplify, the first dimension, the class struggle, could be described as an internal (to each of the two nations) factor, and the second dimension, the inter-state relation, could be described as an external factor. Wallerstein considers the second dimension to be determinant. The French Revolution, he says, is not a French event, but the product of the unfolding conflict between France and England for hegemony in the capitalist world economy. While he bends the stick too far in this direction, in my opinion, Wallerstein does have the merit, consequently, of giving full credit to the French Revolution for its role in building the modern world system.

I shall return later to the central articulation between class struggles and the making of globalized capitalism that, I believe, governs the evolution of the radical critique of capitalism, as much in the long-nineteenth century (the actual subject of this volume) as in the twentieth and undoubtedly the twenty-first century (on which Wallerstein expects to focus in his forthcoming volume).

The French Revolution substitutes the sovereignty of the people for that of the monarch, the very birth of modern politics and of democracy, which becomes consubstantial with it. Certainly, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States had already made the declaration of principle ("*We, the people*"). Yet, the conclusions were not drawn from this principle. Quite the contrary, the efforts of the Founding Fathers were focused on the objective of neutralizing the impact of this declaration. The events that the French Revolution went through (its Jacobin radicalization followed by its reversal), however, are ordered around these central issues: how to understand and define the sovereignty of the people and how to institutionalize its implementation. The English Revolution of 1688 was even more clearly unconcerned with responding to these issues, which it did not even consider, being content with limiting the powers of the sovereign through the concrete assertion of the powers of the rising bourgeoisie, without thereby repudiating those of the aristocracy.

Hence, I make a distinction between "great revolutions," which project themselves far into the future, and "ordinary revolutions," which are content to adjust the organization of power to the immediate requirements of evolving social relations. The French Revolution belongs to the first group, just like the later Russian and Chinese revolutions.

The Emergence of the Liberal Center

The French Revolution immediately encounters

conservative/reactionary social forces. I have defined such forces as those which refuse modernity, the latter being understood as founded on the proclamation that "man" (today, the human being) makes his own history, while reactionaries reserve the right of initiative to God (and His Church) and to ancestors (in particular, aristocrats). Consequently, in the Revolution, the moderate democrats (for whom democracy is inseparable from the defense of property) and the radicals (who discover the conflict between the values of liberty and equality) begin to clash. The objective conditions of the era do not allow them to get beyond certain limitations and confusions. The radicals, who are moving towards socialism, will only achieve autonomy from the Jacobin tradition of the radical revolution beginning in 1848. The struggles occur around the distinction made by Sièyes (and emphasized by Wallerstein) between active citizen and passive citizen, the surpassing of representative electoral democracy, initially based on restricted voting rights and later on universal suffrage, and the method of managing the economy (governed by private property and competition).

I have proposed a representation of this conflict in which I emphasize the philosophical debate initiated by the Enlightenment concerning "rationality." The crystallization of the bourgeois social project disconnects the management of politics (confided to an electoral democracy based on restricted voting rights followed by the advent of universal suffrage) from the management of the economy (controlled by private property and competition). These two dimensions of reality are then reconnected by the artificial—and false—assertion of the "natural" convergence of rationalities: the rationality of political choices and that of the market.

The social struggles of the disadvantaged against the power of the exclusive beneficiaries of the new liberalism (a power which is linked to a conservatism that is gradually moderating, in that it accepts evolution and modernity) compel

advances that are both political (universal suffrage) and social (freedom of workers to organize, denied at the beginning in the name of liberalism). Nevertheless, the European socialism that crystallizes in this context will be, in turn, gradually integrated with capitalist modernity through the evolution of liberalism, which consequently becomes "centrist" and capable of adopting social postures. The conservatism of the state itself—the Bonapartism of the Third Empire and Bismarck in Germany—is used to speed up the evolution of the liberals themselves. In my opinion, it remains the case that this evolution, which crowns the success of centrist liberalism at the end of the nineteenth century, cannot be separated from the imperialist position of the centers in the world system of capitalism/imperialism.

Wallerstein offers important analyses on these questions that, in my opinion, skillfully complement the writings of Marx and Hobsbawm, among others. I will not go into that here. The centrist liberalism that is triumphant in Europe and the United States, then, develops in all dimensions of reality: (i) it is the ultimate expression of the ideology that is still dominant today ("the liberal virus"); (ii) it formulates the method of managing the political practice of representative electoral democracy (in which suffrage ultimately becomes universal), the definition of the sharing of powers and the rights of the citizen; (iii) it combines this formulation with economic management based on respect for property; (iv) it provides legitimacy for new fundamental social inequalities (wage workers versus capitalists and property owners); (v) it combines this group of rights and duties with the assertion of "the national interest" in relations with other nations of central capitalism; (vi) it combines all of these practices implemented in the centrist liberal nation with the practices of domination exercised over the "others" (the imperialist dimension of the project).

The France/England Parallel

Here again, showing great originality, Wallerstein moves away from the still-dominant discourse that contrasts the evolutions of France and England in the nineteenth century. In counterpoint, he proposes, with convincing arguments, a parallel reading of the evolutions in the two major countries of centrist liberal modernity.

I certainly share Wallerstein's viewpoint that the comparative advantage of England results not so much from its advance in the industrial revolution, but more from its control of a gigantic colonial empire, founded on the conquest of India, in particular. The English reality, more than that of any other country in the new center of the world system, is inseparable from this Empire. The British Empire is the model sub-system of the new capitalist/imperialist system. South African communists who, in the 1920s, had focused their analyses on the challenges of this reality, as well as the writings of Amiya Bagchi, Giovanni Arrighi, and several others, have contributed to bringing out this essential consideration.

For all that, however, should the specificity of the industrial revolution be reduced to nothing by limiting it to a bunch of technological innovations similar to those that had taken place in other times and places? I do not think so. The new "machino-facture" should be contrasted with the "manufactures" of earlier times. It begins the massive deskilling of labor that, as it grows worse, leads right to the Taylorism of "modern times" described by Harry Braverman (and Charlie Chaplin!). The new industrial revolution is structured, in turn, around a particular type of agricultural development based on the rapid expropriation of the rural majority. The development of this model of capitalism would have been unsustainable without the safety valve of massive emigration to the Americas. The "European" capitalist model (which could not be exported) was certainly not the only historical path for possible advances. China's "industrious revolution," rediscovered by the recent works of Kenneth

Pomeranz and Giovanni Arrighi, based on maintaining access to the land for the majority of the peasants, demonstrates that other paths to progress were at work, which dominant Eurocentrist thinking can hardly imagine.

Be that as it may, the triumph of the European model has completely transformed history and, consequently, given rise to a series of simplifications to which Wallerstein calls our attention. The English economy was still widely based on agriculture in the middle of the nineteenth century and the French industrial system was not behind that of its English competitor, Wallerstein reminds us.

Yet, while the similarity of the changes in England and France appear to be obvious in areas concerning the economic progress of capitalist development, the same cannot be said about the political struggles that accompanied these developments. The English path is characterized by the successive compromises between the bourgeoisie, thus described as "*middle class*," and the aristocracy of the *Ancien Regime*—in that way softening the effects of the entrance of the working classes onto the political scene. In the French Revolution, the confrontation between the latter and governments established for the benefit of the bourgeoisie is infinitely more visible. The "Irish" factor, the result of a particular type of internal colonialism unique to England, contributed, in turn, to delaying the maturation of a radical socialist consciousness in England. It is not by chance that the most advanced moment in the expression of this radicalization is the Paris Commune, difficult to imagine in England.

In the United States, the radical popular component has failed, up to now, to distinguish itself from liberal democracy. In my opinion, the reason is the devastating effects of the successive waves of immigration, in which the construction of *communitarismes*, themselves arranged into a hierarchy, is substituted for the maturation of a socialist consciousness.

Yet, despite the differences on which I have focused my attention here, the final result is identical: the same liberal center and the same historical compromise between capital and labor that determines the existence of that liberal center triumphed, above all else, as the form of managing modern society at the end of the nineteenth century, not only in England, France, and the United States, but even elsewhere in Europe, although in attenuated forms. The major reason for this convergence is quite simply the dominant (imperialist) position that Europe and the United States occupy in the world system, the construction of which is perfected in the nineteenth century. Cecil Rhodes had perfectly understood, undoubtedly better than many European socialists, that the choice was "imperialism or revolution." The impact of the class struggles in each of the social formations of the system and the impact of the conflicts between the states over their position in the global hierarchy are inseparable.

The Formation of the Social Sciences

The picture drawn by Wallerstein of the birth of the social sciences in the nineteenth century is a convincing demonstration of the inescapable relation between the crystallization of the definitions of the new objects that constitute each of these sciences, on the one hand, and the development of liberal capitalism in the nineteenth century, on the other.

The birth of social thought that proposes to meet criteria of scientific objectivity could only be, in its very definition, the product of modernity, founded on the recognition that people make their history. In earlier times, the most advanced thinking possible gave itself the sole objective of reconciling faith and reason, while the modern scientific project relinquishes this metaphysical concern of searching for the absolute to theologians in order to concentrate solely on the discovery of relative and limited truths. However, the

elements of rational social thought freed from religious dogma emerge before modern times, particularly in China and in the Muslim world (Ibn Khaldoun). Modernity, far from being formed "miraculously" and belatedly in the London-Paris-Amsterdam triangle of the sixteenth century, had begun its birth five centuries earlier in China and subsequently in the Muslim Caliphate. It remains true, however, that it is only in the nineteenth century, as Wallerstein demonstrates, that Enlightenment thought succeeds in forcing philosophical reason to break apart into distinct disciplines.

Political economy occupies a dominant place within the group of new social sciences, thereby reflecting the reversal of dominance in the hierarchy of instances within the mode of production, which moves from the political in earlier tributary modes of production to the economic in capitalism. My insistence on the dimension of modern commodity alienation complements, in my opinion, Wallerstein's contribution in the chapter here in question. It allows us to read the history of the formation of modern social scientific thought as a development that leads to Marx. Subsequently, the exclusive concern of the new "economics" (Wallerstein reminds us that the term *economics* is introduced for the first time by Alfred Marshall in 1881) will be to substitute for Marx's historical materialist method a definition of the "economic" that transforms it into an ahistorical anthropology. The new science is used in an attempt to demonstrate that in the imaginary "market economy," invented as a response to Marx, the markets are self-regulating, tend to the production of equilibrium (that is optimal, moreover), and hence merit consideration as the expression of a trans-historical rationality. Leon Walras in the nineteenth century and Piero Sraffa in the twentieth, the major thinkers who set themselves the objective of demonstrating this, failed in this impossible endeavor.

The world economy (of historical capitalism) moves from

disequilibrium to disequilibrium through changes in the balance of power between classes and nations, without ever tending to any equilibrium definable in advance. "Economics," however, which still forms the major axis of social thought under capitalism, fulfills a decisive ideological function without which the power of the established liberal center would lose its pretense of rationality, i.e., its legitimacy.

The Nineteenth Century, Apogee of Historical Capitalism

Capitalism is not a system based on a transhistorical rationality that would allow it to be reproduced indefinitely and thereby become the manifestation of the "end of history." As opposed to this ideological view inspired by the "economics" of imaginary capitalism, I read the historical trajectory of capitalism as consisting of a long preparation (eight centuries from the year 1000 in China to 1800 in Europe), a short apogee (the nineteenth century) and a decline begun in the twentieth century.

Are the two concepts "European world economy" and "historical capitalism" interchangeable? My definition of historical capitalism includes its global tendency. It advances by including external regions, beginning in 1492 and ending only at the close of the nineteenth century. The analyses of each of the four teammates (Wallerstein, Arrighi, Frank, and me) converge on this essential point and break with the dominant conventional view that, to say the very least, underestimates the globalized dimension of capitalism—which it is content to juxtapose to the analysis of the diverse formations that make up the world system.

My approach to the formation of capitalism begins with the specificity of this mode of production in contrast with the preceding dominant mode, which I have described as tributary. The latter does not require the formation of a political authority covering a vast area. That remains the exception, exemplified by China in contrast with the successive failures

to establish empires in the Middle Eastern/Mediterranean/European region.

Wallerstein chooses to identify the birth of the European world economy as occurring either in 1492 or a century and a half earlier in Europe. I am proposing a more ambitious approach here, based on the thesis that the same contradictions traversed all of the tributary societies, in Asia as well as in Europe. From this perspective, I see the beginning of capitalist modernity occurring much earlier in the Sung era in China, spreading to the Abbassid Caliphate, and then the Italian cities. Nevertheless, Wallerstein and I jointly critique Frank's later thesis (formulated in *Re-Orient*), which eliminates capitalist specificity.

Wallerstein draws a picture of the nineteenth century as the (short) apogee of capitalism: the social order is stabilized and the working classes have ceased being dangerous, and Europe's domination over "the rest of the world" is established and appears indestructible. These phenomena are really two sides of the same coin. However, this apogee will be brief.

In Europe, the apogee of capitalism leads to the formation of new "nations" inspired, to varying degrees, by the models of France, England, the Netherlands, and Belgium. This type of "national renaissance," which takes the place of a bourgeois revolution, shapes the unifications of Germany and Italy, begun in 1848 and completed in 1870. The formation of eastern and southeastern European nations, also proclaimed in 1848, completes the picture. These complex processes, which combine the aspirations of the educated middle classes, instead of the established bourgeoisies, and the peasantry, were the subject of animated debates, notably within Austro-Marxism and nascent Bolshevism at the end of the nineteenth century. These movements, the so-called "springtime of nations" (of peoples?), are obviously distinct from those of peoples who are victims of internal colonialism, a specific phenomenon

unique to England (the Irish question) and the United States (the Afro-American question). Similar movements of the awakening of peoples who are victims of internal colonialism develop in the Indian regions of Latin America (the Mexican Revolution of 1910–20 is the prime example of this awakening) and in South Africa.

The very success of the expansion of this apogee, however, is going to lead rapidly to the first great systemic crisis of capitalism. The challenge presented by this large and long crisis, which begins in 1873 and will find only a provisional solution after the Second World War, will bring about a three-part response from capital: the move to monopoly capitalism, financialization, and globalization. This qualitative transformation of historical capitalism marks the end of the system's apogee and begins the long decline through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

Will this long decline, from the first lengthy crisis (1873–1945/1955) to the second (begun in 1971 and still deepening)—the “autumn of capitalism”—coincide with the “springtime of peoples”? This challenge is central to the social struggles and international conflicts (the revolt of the peripheries) taking place for the last hundred years.

It is clear that the nineteenth century still inspires a barely concealed nostalgia among all defenders of the so-called “liberal” (centrist liberal) capitalist order.

The Impossible Stabilization of the Liberal Center in the Peripheries of the Capitalist/Imperialist World System

The triumph of the liberal center involved only Europe and the United States and, perhaps, but much later, Japan. In the peripheries of the system, the capitalist order could never be stabilized on the basis of any consensus able to carry the conviction of its legitimacy. From the beginning, i.e., from the middle of the nineteenth century, the states, nations, and

peoples of the peripheries began their struggles against this system. I will be content here to point to three of the great movements that, beginning in the nineteenth century, herald the twentieth century and the decline of the capitalist imperialist world system.

China had been integrated into this system only from the opium wars (1840s). Yet barely a decade later—from 1850 to 1865—its people were involved in the Taiping Revolution (which is not a “revolt” as the dominant historiography continues to describe it), a surprisingly modern attempt to deal with the new challenge. Consequently, it is not equivalent to one of the millenarian movements of earlier tributary eras. The Taiping Revolution combines a radical critique of the Chinese imperial-tributary system with a critique of the new imperialist order that has just begun to be organized. It paves the way for Maoism in the twentieth century.

In Russia—a semi-periphery, it could be said—the debate between Slavophiles and Occidentalists poses, in similar, even if rather confused, terms, the same question: how to reject the new world order? Should this rejection take the form of a return to the past or the adoption of Western values? The conflict is transformed into another debate concerning the means of rejecting both the past and the new order, in which the Narodniks are opposed to those who will give rise to Bolshevism.

In the Arab world, the *Nahda*, on the other hand, offers a completely different perception of the new imperialist challenge and puts forward a backward-looking response calling for the reestablishment of Islam in its original greatness. The *Nahda*, which initiates the twentieth century Arab revolutions, traps the peoples concerned in an impasse.

One could examine the diversity of examples and analyze them more closely. This is an indispensable task for understanding how the decline of capitalism (“the autumn of capitalism”)

could become, or not become, synonymous with the "springtime of peoples" and what conditions could begin a movement "beyond capitalism" and the world system within which it develops.

The triumph of the liberal center itself has turned out to be more fragile than it seemed to be in the eyes of Europe and the United States. The liberal center had, moreover, only advanced slowly in the major centers, even more slowly in most parts of Europe. It had been challenged by the Paris Commune (1871) which demonstrated in theory and in practice that another social order was necessary and possible: socialism, or communism, understood as a higher stage in the development of human civilization. However, it will be argued that since the Commune was defeated, the order of the liberal center seems to have gained a decisive legitimacy. The reality, which will unfold through the convulsions of the twentieth century, is more nuanced. The clash of anti-liberal reaction (fascism) and projects more radical than those of the liberal center (popular fronts) will occupy the foreground in the interwar period. Yet, it will be argued again, this is now past; the order of the liberal center finally seems to enjoy a solid consensus in Europe and the United States. Certainly, but this observation is not sufficient. The deepening of the systemic crisis ("the crisis of civilization") that goes along with the move from monopoly capitalism (1880–1960) to the generalized monopoly capitalism in place today entails, in turn, the decline of the order of the liberal center, a deviation from the democratic perspective and practice on which its legitimacy rested.

The triumph of the liberal center, once again exclusively in Europe and the United States, could only be imperfect, unstable, vulnerable, and incapable of responding to the challenge that I define as the confrontation between the heretofore conservative forces, which defend the preservation of the established imperialist order, and the ambitions of the peoples of the peripheries, openly anti-imperialist and

potentially anti-capitalist.

The twentieth century sees the start of an initial wave of advances by the liberation movements of the peripheries: 1905 in Russia (which prepares the way for 1917), 1911 in China (which prepares the way for 1949), 1910–20 in Mexico, and other events of the same kind. Europeans, who had benefitted from having exclusive control over the initiative of constructing the modern world since 1492, give way to the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This reversal is the major event in my interpretation of the decline of historical capitalism. I analyze it as the concrete historical demonstration of the central propositions of Maoism: (i) that the peripheries are the storm zone where the capitalist/imperialist order (these two dimensions of the reality are inseparable) enjoy no stable legitimacy; (ii) that the challenge to this order takes place simultaneously on the plurality of levels in which social reality appears—states (ruling classes), nations, and peoples (working classes)—and that, consequently, class struggles and international conflicts are intertwined in complex and changing relations of complementarity and conflict; (iii) that the movement carries in itself the potential capacity to go beyond national liberation and development in and by capitalism in the direction of challenging the social order of capitalism.

I thus interpret the nineteenth century as the brief moment of apogee in the long history of capitalism. Since the path to capitalism was paved over a long gestational period lasting hundreds of years in successive waves, I view the decline of capitalism as linked to successive waves of possible advances in the direction of a future socialism. It is precisely here that the focus of my question is located: Will the autumn of capitalism and the springtime of peoples coincide?

There is no possible clear-cut answer to this question.

The coincidence is difficult to achieve. It implies the

construction of convergences at the level of the entire world ("North" and "South"), i.e., an internationalism of peoples capable of defeating the internationalism of generalized monopoly capitalism. Once again, the class struggles cannot be viewed as realities specific to the social formations that form the world system or as conflicts between the ruling classes acting on the world stage. As Marx already said, the working class (its definition is not important, be it restrictive or expanded) only exists in its conscious conflict with the bourgeois class that exploits it. Without that, the workers remain pawns controlled by the competition that pits them against one another. In the same way, the "national" working classes exist only through their participation in the struggle against dominant capital on the world scale. Without that, they remain hostages manipulated by their national ruling classes involved in competition with each other.

Dominant conventional thought is economic, linear, and determinist. There is no alternative to submission to the demands of the market. Moreover, as that way of thinking repeats incessantly, ultimately it is the market that produces progress. In opposition to that, Marx analyzes the contradictions of an aging system in dialectical terms that open the way to different futures that are equally possible. The victims of a system that has become obsolete can act consciously to surpass it. That is the "radical path," whether it is described as a "revolution" or revolutionary advances through radical reforms in stages. Or the system can collapse solely through its own internal contradictions. That is the path of "self-destruction" whose possibility Marx does not ignore.

Faced with the challenge of an obsolete capitalism of generalized monopolies, in which the pursuit of accumulation is henceforth simply destructive of the human being and nature with ever-increasing power, the societies of the triad of collective imperialism (United States, Europe, and Japan) are

currently embarked on the path of self-destruction. The resistance and struggles of the victims, although real, remain defensive, without a conscious and positive alternative project. They live on "pious hope," in the precise sense that the propositions that they support require agreement of the two parties—the victims and the dominant powers—for their implementation, in conformity with the ideological dogma of consensus. "Regulation of the financial markets" belongs to this family of illusory "solutions," hence, in reality, "non-solutions." A radical advance demands bold ruptures: "nationalize the monopolies," in the prospect of advancing socialization through democracy instead of socialization through the market. The descending spiral in which the Euro system is caught offers us an exaggerated example of this path of chaos in action, which, lacking a positive alternative, implies the "deconstruction" of the established system.

The United States, Europe, and Japan are involved in a descending spiral. Up to now, capital of generalized monopolies has retained the initiative and tirelessly pursued its sole objective: the growing accumulation of monopoly rent, which, in turn, produces the runaway growth of inequality in the distribution of income. Moreover, the growth of the latter itself is weakening. This inequality increases the impossibility of monopoly rent finding an outlet in expansion of the productive system and leads headlong into the growth of the public debt, which offers a possible outlet for the investment of excessive surplus profits. The austerity policies implemented do not permit reduction of the debt (which is their avowed objective) but, on the contrary, produce its continuous growth (which is the real, but unacknowledged, objective). Despite the victims' protests, the electoral majorities (including the left) do not challenge the economy of the monopolies and consequently allow the descending movement to continue indefinitely. Naturally, the growing inequality calls for increasingly authoritarian political management internally and militarism on the world

scale. This process of the system's degradation by the exclusive means of the development of its own internal contradictions is again strengthened on the European level and in its Euro sub-system by the constitutional adoption of the rules of a dogmatic liberalism, certainly absurd, but nevertheless completely functional for continuing economic management by the generalized monopolies.

Faced with the same challenge, are the societies of the South involved in conscious struggles? Yes, but at best only partially, as in the struggles of the emergent countries against hegemonism, a move towards the reconstruction of a multipolar world, or in some struggles for democratization of society in combination with social progress, and not separate from it, particularly in Latin America.

Yet the moment is quite favorable for an offensive of workers and peoples. Reproduction of the accumulation of monopoly rent requires, in fact, pauperization of workers in the centers and of peoples in the peripheries. Conditions for constructing an internationalist front are offered on a silver platter to the workers and peoples of the whole planet. However, to take advantage of this exceptional conjuncture they must dare, dare again, always dare. That seems desperately lacking. Are radical left-wing forces going to allow this moment to pass, one that is favorable to facing tomorrow a chaos managed by who knows whom, undoubtedly the most obscurantist forces imaginable?

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