Introduction

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*[1968] was neither an end
nor a beginning but only a signal.¹*

*There have only been two world revolutions.
One took place in 1848. The second took place in 1968.
Both were historical failures. Both transformed the world.²*

...

Both of the above statements—understanding ‘1968’ as a *historical marker* and as a *failed revolution*—undoubtedly capture elemental truths. Yet, the events of 1968—members of the young generation revolting, seemingly against an entire political and social order—showed that a different world could be imagined, fought for and successfully created. And these events signalled the impatience of a new generation with traditional values and conventions and the earnest

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- 1 Hobsbawm, Eric J., *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), p. 286.
 - 2 Arrighi, Giovanni, Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Anti-Systemic Movements* (London: Verso, 1989), p. 97.

intention of the youth to turn a new page in social relations, expressing, at the same time, a widening gap between generations.³ Nothing remained as it was. The developments that followed cast the world into a new era, both symbolically and substantively, birthing a legacy of economic, cultural and political transformation throughout the globe that we are still grappling with today.

As well, '1968' became a metaphor for profound, youth-led, social, political and cultural change, and the possibility of diffuse social transformation across the globe, 'almost everywhere, almost all at once'. For this was a phenomenon that was felt keenly around the globe with direct and immediate (or almost immediate) impact—carried along by a wide range of transnational processes of exchange that touched New Left groups.⁴ Given the historical conditions in each country, the year 1968 was by no means the high point of activism everywhere. Across much of the world, the events of 1968 represented a culmination of years of debating, organizing and struggling.⁵

The transnational character of '1968' can be seen in the virtual simultaneity of events that took place in the Western world, as well as elsewhere, from Latin America to Africa, the Middle East and Asia.⁶ In 1968, as in other moments of great historical tumult, such as in 1848 and 1905, successful seizures of power were few and far between, despite the movement's global character. Reflecting on the nature of revolutionary upheaval in the development of history in *The German Ideology*, Marx wrote:

[S]ocial convulsions in these periods profoundly redirected world cultures and political trajectories. Spontaneous chain reactions of uprisings, strikes, rebellions, and revolutionary movements signaled massive

3 Klimke, Martin, "1960s", in *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier (eds) (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 2.

4 One of the best studies on the subject is Klimke, Martin, *The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). Klimke examines the channels of cooperation between the American and West German student movements throughout the 1960s and early 1970s and demonstrates the strong transnational connections between New Left groups on both sides of the Atlantic.

5 In fact, in many places, '1968' came years earlier or later—in 1962 in Guatemala, 1967 in Guadeloupe and Hong Kong, 1972 in Madagascar and 1973 in Thailand. See Mohandesi, Salar, Bjarke Skærlund Risager and Laurence Cox (eds), *Voices of 1968: Documents from the Global North* (London: Pluto Press, 2018), p. 2.

6 For one of the most recent studies covering a wide range of cases, see Jian, Chen et al. (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018).

proliferation of movement ideas and aspirations, a crucial aspect of their world-historical character.⁷

Spanning all four corners of the globe, 1968 has been called “the first global rebellion”,⁸ and a “truly global moment”, whose most important legacy is having shown the potential of a different way of organizing the social sphere.⁹ Student protest and worker strikes, new ideologies and countercultures emerged in countries around the world, seeking “to reshape local political and cultural contexts... linked by a dense web of transnational connections, real and imagined, desired by many and feared by many others”.¹⁰

But as many scholars have pointed out, a narrow focus on one calendar year offers an incomplete picture of the historical time and historical space encompassed in that revolutionary moment. To hone in just on the year 1968 thus truncates a full account of the historical moment—what preceded it, including the political contestation and ideological ferment taking place in the decades following 1945, and, indeed, what followed.

Thus, in order to grasp a complete picture of the developments that characterized the moment, scholars began to speak of the ‘long sixties’, a period of change stretching back into the 1950s and forward into the 1970s. Besides, as Odd Arne Westad argues, the year itself exhibited so many contradictory currents and occurrences, as do all discrete slices of time.¹¹ Countries and regions differed. In the United States, for example, 1968 was a year of reaction—symbolized by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy and the election of Richard Nixon as president. Eastern Europe, for its part, saw the crushing of the Prague Spring, and the consolidation of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy across the region. In Greece, 1968 was a year of repression and regression by the military dictatorship that had come to power in 1967 and would rule until 1974. While the West is so often a focus, the experiences of countries from Brazil, El Salvador and Mexico to Mali and Congo, the Middle East and Australia testify to the internationalism of the movement.

7 Marx, Karl, *The German Ideology* (New York: International Publishers, 1973) as quoted in Katsiaficas, Giorgos, *The Global Imagination of 1968: Revolution and Counterrevolution* (Oakland: PM Press, 2018), p. 12.

8 Klimke, Martin, and Mary Nolan, “Introduction: the globalization of the sixties”, in *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties*, p. 1.

9 Horn, Gerd-Rainer, “1968: a social movement *sui generis*”, in *The History of Social Movements in Global Perspective: A Survey*, Stefan Berger and Holger Nehring (eds) (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 515–41.

10 Klimke and Nolan, “Introduction”.

11 Westad, Odd Arne, “Was there a ‘global 1968’?”, in *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties*, p. xx.

Defining the *Long Sixties*

The political phenomena of that time, and their associated ideas, values and forms of action, can only be understood within the specific historical context that gave rise to their emergence. Thus, to understand the ‘short summer’ of 1968, and to grasp the popular insurgency of the time—a “modernism in the streets” aroused by a modernizing impulse from above, as one scholar has termed it¹²—one needs to focus on the political void that made its emergence a social and political necessity. In other words, attention should be turned to what has been called ‘the long sixties’, roughly defined as the period from 1956 to 1977.¹³ Thus, the phenomenon emerged in parallel with the decolonization struggles of the mid-1950s, which profoundly influenced youth and radical movements in the rest of the world.

Defining the ‘long sixties’ is not merely a question of placing them in a historical perspective but also of establishing their duration. For 1956 was not simply 12 calendar months but also a ‘conjuncture’, bounded on one side by the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by Soviet tanks and on the other by the British and French invasion of the Suez Canal zone.¹⁴ Similarly, the 1960s cannot be understood if they are confined to their chronological limits. Instead, they should be seen as a period that was generational in scope,¹⁵ beginning in 1956 and ending with a set of events in 1977, a year that was marked by the escalation of terrorist actions and the deaths of the leading members of the Red Army Fraction urban guerrilla group in Germany.¹⁶ While 1977 covers a broader period, the oil crisis of 1973 and the subsequent profound economic crisis in Europe that gave rise to mass unemployment and ultimately to the triumph of Margaret Thatcher seem to have been more important in defining the period, as well as marking the conservative revival,¹⁷ at least in the Turkish

12 Hooper, Alan, “A politics adequate to the age: the New Left and the long sixties”, in *New Left, New Right and Beyond: Taking the Sixties Seriously*, Geoff Andrews et al. (eds) (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), p. 12.

13 For different interpretations regarding the chronological bounds, see Klimke, Martin, and Joachim Scharloth (eds), *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Marwick, Arthur, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958–c.1974* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

14 Hall, Stuart, “Life and times of the first New Left”, *New Left Review*, 61 (2010), p. 177.

15 Von der Goltz, Anna (ed.), *‘Talkin’ ‘bout My Generation’: Conflicts of Generation Building and Europe’s ‘1968’* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2011); Fraser, Ronald (ed.), *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

16 Hooper, “A politics adequate to the age”, p. 11.

17 Bromley, Simon, *American Hegemony and World Oil: The Industry, the State System, and the World Economy* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981), pp. 124–61.

case. Indeed, “the oil shocks appear to have ended the era of high growth and full employment”.¹⁸ The conservative renewal, also embodied by Helmut Kohl and Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, combined with the renewed intensification of the Cold War, “meant that powerful totalitarian discourses already linked western European individuals’ radical left-wing commitments to complicity with dictatorship and violence”.¹⁹ Former activists across the continent were attacked more than ever before following the collapse of eastern European socialist regimes in 1989 and the Tiananmen Square massacre of the same year. Again, the Turkish repressive measures against the ‘68 generation provide a case in point with the killing of almost all of the most radical youth activists like Mahir Çayan, Deniz Gezmiş, İbrahim Kaypakkaya to name but a few.

Such a periodization helps to capture the content of the ‘long sixties’ by framing it in a span that is as distinctive as it is paradoxical. It highlights how the period brought together the challenges from the modern era and how they were contested and contained. In other words, ‘1968’ stands as a metaphor that captures the full history not only of European protest and activism, but similar action in other parts of the world, through which new social movements emerged, with the student movement being the most dynamic, powerful and quickly radicalized.

In many countries and regions—for example, the Global North—the wave of political unrest that rocked the late 1960s seemed to come from nowhere.²⁰ This is especially so since the 1960s were a time of relative prosperity in the West compared to earlier decades. The decisive factor that worked as a fuse was the international context. In particular, the Cold War was born as an ideological contest in Europe and was dominated by the great rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States. This contest interacted with the great unravelling of the European overseas empires, a movement known as ‘decolonization’.²¹ As Frederic Jameson notes, “[i]t does not seem particularly controversial to mark the beginnings [of] what would come to be called the 60s in the Third World with the great movement of decolonization in British and French Africa”.²² The defeat of the colonial powers in Asia during World War II at the hands of the Japanese showed that the position of European primacy,

18 Yergin, Daniel, and Martin Joseph Hillenbrand, *Global Insecurity: A Strategy for Energy and Economic Renewal* (Boston, MA: Atlantic Institute for International Affairs and Houghton Mifflin, 1982), p. 3.

19 Mark, James, Anna von der Goltz and Anette Warring, “Reflections”, in *Europe’s 1968: Voices of Revolt*, Robert Gildea, James Mark and Anette Warring (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 316.

20 The use of the terms ‘Global North’ and ‘Global South’, and the problems that derive from these categorizations, are discussed at length in Mohandesi et al., *Voices of 1968*.

21 Westad, Odd Arne, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), p. 261.

22 Jameson, Frederic, “Periodizing the 60s”, *Social Text*, 9/10 (1984), p. 180.

one of the basic elements of colonialism,²³ could neither be sustained nor be taken for granted. And as the European powers sought to restore their colonial empires, they were neatly rebuffed by local independence movements and the United States' intolerance of a return to the pre-war colonial status quo. Soon enough, these former colonies became independent states. The latter took umbrage at how the world was being run and were not keen to sign up to a bipolar Cold War system that paid scant attention to their interests.²⁴

Drawing on Eric Zolov's argument about Latin America, *mutatis mutandis* of course, and at the risk of over-generalization, we can specify the following themes comprising the global framework that emerged at the time:

- a) the far-reaching impact of the Cold War as an ideological project, in which Washington and Moscow were "[l]ocked into conflict over the very concept of European modernity" and thus sought to "change the world in order to prove the universal applicability of their [respective] ideologies";
- b) the complex historical trajectories and fault lines within the political left, i.e. 'Old' vs. 'New' Left; c) decolonization, 'national liberation', which gave rise to the rhetorical power of the Third World as a new post-colonial force; d) the ambivalent relationship between politics and (counter-) culture on a global scale, i.e. in music, art, films, etc.; e) the significance of liberation theology and diversification of religious practices; and f) a greater focus on the other parts of the political spectrum and their actors, including those of the right.²⁵

From the encounter between the Cold War and decolonization came the idea of the so-called 'Third World',²⁶ uniting, under the same symbolic umbrella,

23 Osterhammel, Jürgen, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, S. Frisch (trans.) (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005), pp. 15–18. One has to remember the words, both metaphorical and literal, of Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart who use the Disney example to note the superior/colonial attitude towards the 'underdeveloped'/colonized people in Chile: "[U]nderdeveloped peoples are like children, to be treated as such, and if they don't accept this definition of themselves, they should have their pants taken down and be given a good spanking. That'll teach them! When something is said about the child/noble savage, it is really the Third World one is thinking about". See Dorfman, Ariel, and Armand Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic in Chile*, 3rd edition, David Kunzle (trans. – introduction) (New York: International General, 1991), p. 48.

24 Between 1945 and 1970, the number of independent states increased more than threefold; Westad, *The Cold War*.

25 Zolov, Eric, "Introduction: Latin America in the global sixties", *The Americas*, 70/3 (2014), 355–59.

26 For a discussion of the historical origins of the term, see Kalter, Christoph, "A shared space of imagination, communication, and action: perspectives on the history of the 'Third World'",

Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Third World struggle against imperialism flourished in many milieus, including Europe.²⁷ Colonialism had undergirded the pre-war global economy, but the United States denounced imperialism, including racial superiority, after 1945, as it was identified as the source of the destructive conflicts of the first half of the twentieth century.²⁸ Yet, security concerns saw the US—and its European allies—justify retaining their colonies for a time, moving into a position of economic dominance while relinquishing formal control over foreign territory and making America an “informal empire”,²⁹ an imperial power in disguise.³⁰ The end of formal empires, as Christos Mais remarks, did not bring the end of colonialism *ex facto*. Instead, it heralded a neo-colonial system of domination, signifying the transformation of the pre-World War II imperial-colonial nexus into a post-World War II imperialism-neocolonialism nexus. Although nominal independence would be granted to former colonies, in reality control remained in the imperialists’ hands, consolidating robust channels of domination and exploitation.³¹

in *The Third World in the Global 1960s*, Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett (eds) (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), pp. 23–38.

- 27 Arif Dirlik argues that “the three worlds configuration was a product of Eurocentric mappings of the world to deal with the postcolonial situation that emerged after World War II. Mortgaging Third World futures to either capitalism or socialism, which was a premise of this mapping, also pointed to a future dominated by alternatives of European origin”. Taking into consideration India or Indonesia, Third World implied independence from the power blocs. Therefore, ‘Tri-Continental’ might be a better term instead. See Dirlik, Arif, “Spectres of the Third World: global modernity and the end of the three worlds”, *Third World Quarterly*, 25/1 (2004), 131–48. However, in historiographical practice it is not that easy to implicitly or explicitly overcome the various obstacles imposed by Eurocentrism. As Gabriela De Lima Grecco and Sven Schuster have argued, although referring to a different context, “[i]t is then a matter of finding ways to write history from a Latin American perspective that, on the one hand, maintain a certain methodological rigor, historical depth, broad empirical basis, and appropriate analytical concepts, and, on the other, adjust these categories and methods to the historical realities of the region”. See Grecco, Gabriela De Lima, and Sven Schuster, “Decolonizing global history? A Latin American perspective”, *Journal of World History*, 31/2 (2020), p. 437.
- 28 Lundestad, Geir, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From ‘Empire’ by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 33–35.
- 29 Panitch, Leo, and Sam Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire* (London and New York: Verso, 2012).
- 30 Zeiler, Thomas W., “Opening doors in the world economy”, in *Global Interdependence*, Akira Iriye (ed.) (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014), pp. 237–38.
- 31 Mais, Christos, “Anti-colonialism and imperialism (1960s–1970s)”, in *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism*, Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope (eds) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 807.

As imperialist rule advanced, so did resistance to it. The time had come, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak reminds us, for the “subaltern to speak”.³² Once disenfranchised peoples, cultures and religious communities assumed responsibility for themselves and their dreams for the future, the methods employed in decolonization struggles varied from petitions to the United Nations to armed struggle. The Cuban Revolution seemed to promise a new path to socialism, while Algeria became the ‘Mecca of revolution’ upon gaining independence in 1962. In 1966, Mao Zedong launched China’s ‘Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution’. At the same time, to the south of the Middle Kingdom, the Vietnamese anti-colonial struggle persevered doggedly for decades (1940s–1970s), outlasting the Japanese, the French and the American occupying powers. These movements garnered worldwide solidarity, helped shape the political horizons and radicalized the youth of the era, for whom revolutionary mobilization was, at least for many, their first experience in politics. Revolutionary writings by Frantz Fanon, Che Guevara and Võ Nguyên Giáp circulated across the globe to become a major source of ideas. At the same time, the withering critiques of colonialism by Albert Camus and George Orwell continued to be widely read and to make an impact. Anti-colonialism came to constitute both “a shared memory and a common vocabulary for understanding what had happened, and was happening in the Third World”.³³ In other words, it was the concept of the ‘Third World’ that allowed protesters during the ‘long sixties’ to ground “a radical critique of existing systems of power and representations while permitting them at the same time to elaborate equally radical alternatives”.³⁴ The concept signified, at the same time, the final episode of a long period of unprecedented economic expansion, population growth—the so-called ‘baby boom’ generation—with attendant (sub)urbanization and migration; a period that would come to a sudden halt, as mentioned, after the quadrupling of oil prices in 1973.

Against this background, the New Left that emerged in the 1960s shaped and inspired many of the protest movements uniting activists from Europe and the US in dissatisfaction with the Cold War’s geopolitical stalemate and its domestic consequences. At the same time, Orthodox Marxism was increasingly proving unable to meet the revolutionary moment, contributing to a new burst of inspiration among intellectuals and initiation of social change among

32 Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, “Can the subaltern speak?”, in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds) (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), pp. 271–313.

33 Iriye, Akira, “The making of a transnational world”, in *Global Interdependence*, p. 717.

34 Kalter, “A shared space of imagination, communication, and action”, p. 24.

the younger generations.³⁵ The civil rights movement in the US at the beginning of the decade was perceived as a particular fulfilment of the desire for participatory democracy. Hamit Bozarslan speaks to the ground that Orthodox Marxism ceded in the Middle East, but his summary applies equally to other regions:

[T]he languages of commitment to the Left also became plural so as to no longer depend exclusively on the 'voice of Moscow'. Since the beginning of the 1960s, and especially after the Cultural Revolution in China, the ideas of the Left are propagated by the impact of Maoism, more and more openly anti-Soviet. In the course of this decade, the 'Guevarist' model or the theories of the *foco* will always play a role more important than all the Soviet propaganda in the passage to radicalism in the Middle East.³⁶

In the 'long sixties', "the meaning of revolution was enlarged to include questions of power in everyday life as well as questions of power won by past revolutions",³⁷ including the anti-colonial struggle. The impact was felt in revolutionary practice (e.g. sit-ins, campus occupations, demonstrations, etc.), but also in terms of political and ideological theory and art and literature.³⁸ Cultural politics became an essential means of developing an anti-colonial consciousness to unify the anti-colonial struggle. As such, it was widely promoted in various forms. Anti-colonial practices of cultural resistance to the dominant ideology of imperialism encouraged critical analysis of standard forms of representation and the processes of knowledge formation.³⁹ It was out of this context that the 'counterculture' movement, an anti-establishment phenomenon, emerged.

By the mid-1960s, a new post-war generation was questioning the direction of prosperity and security in Western Europe and rejecting the values and lifestyles of their elders. The clash of generations arose from several factors:

35 Klimke, "1960s".

36 Bozarslan, Hamit, "The ups and downs of revolutionary passions in the Middle East", in *Revolutionary Passions: Latin America, Middle East and India*, Hamit Bozarslan et al. (eds), Soma Datta Gupta (trans.) (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 102.

37 Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left*, pp. 4–5.

38 For example, as part of the so-called 'Third Cinema' film movement, William Klein, Joris Ivens and Gillo Pontecorvo, among many others, aligned themselves with anti-colonialism through their films, while Jean-Luc Goddard confronted materialism, sexuality and political violence in his work.

39 Young, Robert J. C., *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 18–19.

First, while the direct experience of deprivation and death made the pre-war generation overly preoccupied with material comforts, abundance made the post-war generation indifferent to the value of material goods. Those born after 1945 were marked by the culture of conformity and consumption in two ways:⁴⁰ on the one hand, they fully enjoyed the fruits of the economic miracle, the availability of cheap material goods, books, records, and other forms of entertainment and information; on the other hand, they wanted more meaning in their lives than the satisfactions their parents found in material goods. They deplored the conformity and cultural boredom of their elders and wanted to engage in meaningful choices and spread their comforts among others less fortunate.⁴¹

A new pop and rock culture came to epitomize the mood of this new generation. By the mid-1960s, European rock-and-roll bands like The Beatles, The Who with their inspirational song 'My Generation', and Bob Dylan's 'With God on Our Side', perhaps the most powerful voice of the post-war generation, marked the changing role of popular music, and alongside and sometimes intertwined with increasing political radicalism represented a challenge to middle-class respectability. Indeed, the transnational youth culture that spread all across Europe in the late 1950s and early 1960s was based above all on music, and "electrically amplified popular music was perceived as being left-wing because it presented a particularly democratic form of media expression and represented cosmopolitanism, a do-it-yourself activity, and shared participation".⁴² Of course, not all the different music genres and backgrounds should, at least until the mid-1960s, be considered left-wing.⁴³ For example, the folk tradition from which Bob Dylan hailed, along with Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, had long been leftist and critical, as it was white and middle class. On the other hand, rock 'n' roll was originally black and working class, much more about individualism, and less political. They started to merge in 1966, by which time Dylan had ironically left the political scene,⁴⁴ but not before

40 For Southern Europe, see Kornetis, Kostis et al. (eds), *Consumption and Gender in Southern Europe since the Long 1960s* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2016).

41 Kidner, Frank L. et al., *Making Europe: People, Politics and Culture*. Vol. 11: *Since 1550* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009), p. 831.

42 Siegfried, Dieter, "Music and protest in 1960s Europe", in *1968 in Europe*, p. 58.

43 "Communists disliked rock music as a consumerist import from the United States", testifying that, at times, as Richard Vinen argues, Western Marxists became even more puritanical in their attitude to rock music and consumerist youth culture. See Vinen, Richard, *The Long '68: Radical Protest and Its Enemies* (Milton Keynes: Allen Lane, 2018), p. 44.

44 "By 1964, [...], Dylan told friends and some reporters that he was no longer interested in politics". See Dreier, Peter, "The political Bob Dylan", *Dissent*, 24 May 2011 (https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/the-political-bob-dylan).

he had revolutionized the era with his lyrics and by bringing a political element through the transition from the acoustic to the electric guitar. These acts, which brought broader political and social content to their lyrics, “came to be regarded as though they were the centre of religious cults rather than entertainers”.⁴⁵

Apart from a few limited cases, like Denmark, state authorities clamped down on the movements of this increasingly radical new generation of students and workers with varying degrees of vigour.⁴⁶ For example, students’ protest in Poland was totally suppressed by the end of March 1968 with most of the activists being arrested. In France, strikes and factory occupations were largely brought to an end by the Grenelle Agreements (*Accords de Grenelle*) between the government, employers and trade unions at the end of May. Some remaining pockets of resistance resulted in the death of student and labour activists. In Czechoslovakia, the Soviet invasion in August put an end to the Prague Spring. The government was brought to heel and the previous liberalization movement was branded as counter-revolutionary.⁴⁷

On the one hand, in the face of state repression, activists had to rethink the very meaning of the term ‘revolutionary’. On the other, repression revealed the weaknesses and vulnerability that attended the dearth of partnership and collaboration between the student and worker movements. In other words, it showed the failure of the student and youth movements to reach out to the working class (and vice versa).⁴⁸ That failure was a key reason why Turkey’s student and youth movements did not become so massive as to play a significant role in later decades. At the same time, “[a]ctivists who were committed to political revolution were forced in some countries to go underground, switching from legal to clandestine activity”.⁴⁹ Turkey is one of these cases where the bulk of the radical leadership operated in illegal, underground groups after 1970.

45 That is true especially of rock bands like the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead and, perhaps more than any other band, The Doors; Vinen, *The Long ‘68*, p. 106.

46 Cerna, Marie et al., “Revolutions”, in *Europe’s 1968*, p. 116.

47 Ibid., p. 117.

48 This was very evident in the US with the election of Nixon, but also in France where the communist-led workers of the Renault factories got their pay rise and then turned their back on the students. In the US, “Nixon won the presidential election in December 1968. Political defeat was not in itself unusual for 68ers [...]. Nixon’s victory, however, had a particularly sharp edge for his enemies. It was they who had damaged his predecessor and his campaign was based to a large extent on mobilizing against radicalism”; Vinen, *The Long ‘68*, p. 115. See also Reed, Ernest, “May 1968: workers and students together”, *International Socialist Review*, 111 (Winter 2018–19) (<https://isreview.org/issue/111/may-1968-workers-and-students-together>).

49 Cerna et al., “Revolutions”, p. 118.

“Think Globally, Act Locally”: Turkey in the Long Sixties

Newspaper coverage testifies to the fact that the repercussions of ‘1968’ were felt in Turkey as immediately and as directly as elsewhere, and all the characteristics noticed around the world were evident there as well. But in Turkey, too, events reflected the culmination of a long period of unrest and the gradual radicalization of different segments of the society, causing substantial social changes, the radicalization of popular protests and mass mobilization.⁵⁰

As elsewhere, the Turkish 1960s does not constitute a coherent ‘time-unity’. Indeed, the ‘long 1960s’ in Turkey started in the 1950s, in this case in the political and economic crisis of 1958 that shook the Menderes government and ultimately led to its overthrow by the military on 27 May 1960. And, as elsewhere, it extended beyond 1968, indeed to 12 March 1971, when the military manoeuvred behind the scenes to force the ouster of the elected government and impose martial law, or even beyond that deep into the 1970s. Focusing on the 1960s does not mean to encapsulate these years as a ‘closed episode’. As Berna Pekesen rightly observes:

Marking the beginning of an era is obviously easier than giving any specific date to its closure. This is even more so when it comes to study[ing] ongoing cultural, social, economic, and other longer-term phenomena, where the tendencies of development might be more difficult to detect, isolate, and identify as recurrent consequent patterns.⁵¹

While the short period of military rule from 1960 to 1961 marked a clear interregnum, the dynamics of the late 1950s were carried over into the next decade, radicalizing segments of the population throughout the 1960s, which, in turn, left a substantial legacy for the decade after. In this way, Turkey became part of a long wave of global radicalization covering many countries that were imagined as constitutive parts of a ‘tricontinental’ unity (Asia, Africa and Latin America).⁵² Across this space, radical left-wing, and right-wing, mobilizations sprang up at around the late 1950s and reached their apex in the early to mid-1970s. However, the Left was unable to become hegemonic. On the contrary, if there was a victor out of this tumultuous period, it was the Right and

⁵⁰ Atılğan, Gökhan, “‘68’in Kapıları”, in *Türkiye’nin 1960’lı Yılları*, Mete Kaan Kaynar (ed.) (Istanbul: İletişim, 2017), pp. 521–662.

⁵¹ Pekesen, Berna, “Introduction”, in *Turkey in Turmoil: Social Change and Political Radicalization during the 1960s*, eadem (ed.) (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020), p. 2.

⁵² For a discussion, see Dirlik, “Spectres of the Third World”.

the Islamist movement, which made a dynamic appearance, both of which received state support. Indeed, the period of activity ended in a hegemonic rule of the Right, first in the shape of the army and the civilian governments under its tutelary regime in 1971–73 and again in 1980–83.⁵³ Ultimately, it led to the current Islamist-nationalist regime and the political hegemony of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his party. The Right not only took over the state, but it also reshaped it with the 1971 changes to the constitution and then, in 1982, with an entirely new constitution.

In other words, compared to the legacy in other cases, like Greece and Western Europe, the legacy of the Turkish radical Left of the 1960s and 1970s is one of abysmal failure. That being said, it does not mean that the radical Left acquired direct political power elsewhere. Still, society was deeply influenced and altered in a liberal sense—both culturally and politically—by the movement of '68. In that respect, one should have in mind, as Bozarslan mentions in the afterword, that the intelligentsia in the 1970s could no longer reproduce itself as a distinct social category across the globe, although in the Soviet Union it continued to play a dissident intellectual role. The neoliberal policies that were imposed worldwide, including Turkey, saw many 'Third World' intellectuals become simple technocrats.

The 'long sixties' brought about some of the most important changes in Turkish society and politics. Cold War realities meant that the US was a super-power controlling and affecting a large part of the world economically, politically and ideologically. In regard to the economy, it was during these years that Turkey passed from a pre-capitalist to a capitalist economy with the US holding a central place in that respect in pushing markets, counselling against statism and promoting capitalist growth.⁵⁴ However, the 1960s also marked the heyday of the import substitution model as the military regime's response to the Democrats' absence of any coordination and long-term perspective in the management of the economy. The State Planning Organization (SPO), established in 1960, promoted the idea of development planning, an initiative supported by a broad coalition.⁵⁵ The SPO coordinated the preparation of the first

53 Christofis, Nikos, "Coups and state formation in Turkey", in *The Routledge Handbook on Contemporary Turkey*, Joost Jongerden (ed.) (London and New York: Routledge, 2021), pp. 131–43.

54 Keyder, Çağlar, "Social change and political mobilization in the 1960s", in *Turkey in Turmoil*, pp. 12–30; idem, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London: Verso, 1987); Pamuk, Şevket, *Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey since 1820* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), pp. 207 ff.

55 The coalition included the CHP with its étatist heritage, the bureaucracy, the large industrialists and even international agencies, most notably the OECD. See Pamuk, *Uneven Centuries*, p. 214.

Five-year Plan that aimed, above all, at the protection of the domestic market and industrialization through import substitution by coordinating investment decisions. With the end of military rule and the return to multiparty politics, the power and influence of strict planning through the SPO, which had received a good deal of support from the military, began to decline. The SPO “ended up abandoning its autonomous role and becoming a body that responded to the needs of the private sector, open to daily politics and political pressure”.⁵⁶ Regardless, through the Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) model, Turkish industry was built on high wages, high prices and protectionism, which led to a huge expansion of the working class and trade unionism.⁵⁷ This model came crashing down after the oil crisis of 1973.

The close alliance with (and dependency on) the US from the 1950s⁵⁸ prompted heavy criticism and reaction from the masses, who grew steadily radicalized through the 1960s and after. As a ‘front line’ state bordering the socialist bloc, Turkey received special attention from the US and international organizations like the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).⁵⁹ This left a ‘heavy scar’ on several segments of Turkish society and the younger generations. Anti-Americanism as the common theme of worldwide mobilization during the Cold War years reached and gained considerable ground among large segments of society who migrated from the country’s rural areas to the so-called shanty towns (*gecekondu*) of the urban areas. It was also expressed through left-wing press.⁶⁰

56 Ibid., pp. 215–16. See also Yıldırım, Mehmet Emin, “Turkish economy between 1950–2000: policy and performance”, in *Turkey in the Twentieth Century / La Turquie au vingtième siècle*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (ed.) (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2008), pp. 383–85.

57 Given the economic conditions from 1960 to 1980 Emin Alper rightly argues that the conditions of the workers and peasants were relatively improved, and as such, their complaints and mobilization, especially, after 1968, should be sought through “a ‘political process’ model, [which] emphasizes political rather than economic factors and attributes greater importance to the changing power balance of organized political groups, which can provide opportunities and incentives to less organized and less represented groups to raise their voice and organize themselves”; Alper, Emin, “Reconsidering social movements in Turkey: the case of the 1968–71 protest cycle”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 43 (2010), p. 79.

58 Menderes’ “dream” was to turn Turkey into a “little America”; Bozarslan, Hamit, *Histoire de la Turquie contemporaine* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004), p. 50.

59 “Turkish bureaucrats, industrialists, journalists, engineers, agronomists, union leaders (a non-socialist labor confederation—Türk İş—had been established under the sponsorship of the US), and promising politicians were actively trained by American experts and invited to the US for visits to study and network”; Keyder, “Social change and political mobilization”, p. 16.

60 For one such political magazine, the Kemalist left-wing *Yön*, see Köse, Yavuz, “Coca Cola is poison, don’t drink it!” – From enthusiasm to hostility: American consumer goods, tourists and hippies in Cold War Turkey”, in *Turkey in Turmoil*, pp. 63–92.

Interestingly, although there has been unprecedented interest and production in Turkish Studies as a distinct field in the past 20 years, the left-wing movements and milieus that emerged and flourished in those years have been seldom dealt with in the English-language literature.⁶¹

Against this background, the present collection of articles has two aims. It seeks to bring Turkey's 'long sixties' to the attention of an English-speaking audience, and, indeed, link the Turkish case with the global 'sixties'. Second, it focuses closely on one particular aspect, namely the radicalizing left-wing environment of the time.

As far as movement research is concerned, case study analysis has tended to adopt two distinct approaches. Some researchers opt for a 'world-systems theory' approach. In contrast, others locate their work in the frame of 'contentious politics'. As Ömer Turan argues in the opening article of the issue, these alternatives—while likely to offer scholars a valid choice in many cases—have limited purchase in the Turkish case. Instead, he proposes a 'multiple movements perspective', in which rather than choosing *between* the approaches, the scholar *applies both*, drawing on the complementary strengths of each.

There is agreement among scholars who work in the field that university students, and the youth in general, were the driving motive force of the radical, even militant, period of the global sixties. Turkey presents no exception, as it was deeply affected by the internationalist, trans-nationalist character of '1968'. To begin with, as Nikos Christofis demonstrates in his article, students quickly took centre stage in Turkey's revolutionary period. Those entering university after 1961 did so with high expectations but felt increasingly frustrated when their prospects began to fall well short of their hopes on graduation. Expressed in more functional terms, the significant and somewhat chaotic growth of higher education coupled with the economic system's inability to absorb successively larger cohorts of educated graduates put a strain on students and brought about a growing sense of despair and frustration.⁶² The increasingly

61 Although not an academic work *sensu stricto*, the graphic novel by White, Jenny, *Turkish Kaleidoscope: Fractured Lives in a Time of Violence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021) that traces Turkey's descent into political violence in the 1970s provides a useful account of the period.

62 For some of the most recent studies of the student movement of Turkey's 'long sixties', see Christofis, Nikos, *From Kemalism to Radicalism: The Turkish Student Movement, 1923–1980* (Athens: Topos, 2021); Alper, Emin, *Jakobenlerden Devrimcilere: Türkiye'de Öğrenci Hareketlerinin Dinamikleri (1960–1971)* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2019); Turan, Ömer (ed.), *1968: İsyân, Devrim, Özgürlük* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2019); Lüküslü, Demet, *Türkiye'nin 68'i: Bir Kuşağın Sosyolojik Analizi* (Istanbul: Dipnot Yayınları, 2015); eadem, "60'lı Yılları Gençlik Kategorisi Üzerinden Okumak: Modernist Söylemin Savunucusu

repressive, even authoritarian, measures of the Democrat Party (*Demokrat Parti*, DP) and its leadership, most notably Adnan Menderes, triggered political and social unrest during its decade in power. Students—inspired by decades of Kemalist socialization that held them up as the defenders of the Republic—moved to the streets to defend the rule of law and call for a restoration of Kemalist norms. However, during the 1960s, student mobilization took a much more radical turn and moved towards a more leftist direction.

One of the most striking features of the Turkish student movement was its distinctive ideological bricolage, blending anti-imperialism, Tricontinentalism—or as it is more commonly known, ‘Third Worldism’—and Kemalism.⁶³ The last of these characteristics, in particular, is of great significance when we talk about the Turkish youth since it was deeply Kemalist. This blending of Kemalism, leftism and nationalism fed the view that the pursuit of Kemalist revolutionism’s objectives, unleashed after the War of Independence, had atrophied and that a vanguard of youth was called to reignite the movement towards fully realizing Atatürk’s vision.⁶⁴ This discourse, or perception, was not limited to the radicalizing youth but was widespread in the Turkish Left in general, including the Workers’ Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*, TİP), the representative of the Left inside the National Assembly.⁶⁵ In other words, Kemalism was perceived by the younger generation as “synonymous

ve Aktörü Olarak Gençlik”, in *Modernizmin Yansımaları: 60’lı Yıllarda Türkiye*, R. Funda Barbaros and Erik Jan Zürcher (eds) (Ankara: Efil Yayınevi, 2013), pp. 212–30. Feyizoğlu, Turhan, *Türkiye Gençlik Hareketleri Tarihi, 1944–74*, 5 vols (Istanbul: Sevinç, 2013) constitutes one of the most valuable sources for the student movement. In these studies, we should include also a great number of personal memoirs by some of the most important activists of the period.

- 63 Several participants and ‘witnesses’ accounts of the ‘revolutionary’ years have indeed underlined the feeling of having been carried away by an invisible force, a wave of all-powerful and irresistible energy: “at that time, we were all engaged” or “it was difficult not to be politicized” are a few phrases that come up often during interviews with former activists and in their autobiographies. See Gorgas, Jordi Tejel, “Où sont les étudiants du supérieur? Démobilisation et réengagement du milieu universitaire en Turquie et au-delà”, *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 17 (2013), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/ejts.4796>.
- 64 See also Lüküslü, Demet, “Political journey of Turkey’s 1968: from privileged youth to political defeat”, in *1968: A Global Approach*, Grzegorz Piotrowski (ed.) (Gdańsk: European Solidarity Centre, 2020), pp. 89–101, and eadem, “Constructors and constructed: youth as a political actor in modernising Turkey”, in *Revisiting Youth Political Participation: Challenges for Research and Democratic Practice in Europe*, Joerg Forbrig (ed.) (Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, 2005), pp. 31–33.
- 65 Among many, see Christofis, Nikos, “Collective and counter memory: the ‘invention of resistance’ in the rhetoric of the Greek and Turkish Left, 1951–1971”, in *The Politics of Culture in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus: Performing the Left since the 1960s*, Leonidas Karakatsanis and Nikolaos Papadogiannis (eds) (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 208–27.

with independence, development and progress, ‘causes’ that [were] ‘betrayed’ or abandoned under the pro-Western and ‘reactionary’ rule of Menderes in the 1950s”. The new vanguard was celebrated as an alliance between “the army and the youth”.⁶⁶

The two-way channel between the army and the Turkish Left, a common feature also in other historical settings in Latin America and the Middle East,⁶⁷ is the scope of Mustafa Şener’s article, which focuses on two influential (Kemalist) leftist political magazines, *Yön* (Direction) and *Devrim* (Revolution), that made their appearance during the 1960s, both published by Doğan Avcıoğlu. The majority of radical leftists who wrote for and consumed these magazines believed in the revolutionary potential of the armed forces in overthrowing the current regime and replacing it with a quasi-socialist one.⁶⁸ The so-called ‘Old Rifles’ (*Eski Tüfekler*), namely the older generation of communists,⁶⁹ “supported the 27 May coup d’état and part of the Kemalist intelligentsia... labelled it as a revolution that had to be pursued until the ultimate achievement of ‘its goals’, i.e., the instauration of a radical ‘anti-imperialist’ regime that would resemble Nasserism in Egypt”.⁷⁰

66 Bozarslan, Hamit, “From Kemalism to the armed struggle: radicalization of the Left in the 1960s”, in *Turkey in Turmoil*, pp. 120–21.

67 This was a period in many countries, including Greece in 1967, where coups d’état were badged as ‘revolutions’ in an attempt to legitimate military action. In the following decade in many countries the term ‘revolution’ ceased to be used—in particular, when anti-communism gained ground and became an indispensable tool in the political discourse of the military officials. Even in the late 1960s, military regimes were turning against the student, youth and labour movements with perhaps some notable exceptions like Chile and Uruguay where military involvement in political life was minimal, at least until 1973. Among many, see Bozarslan, Hamit et al. (eds), *Revolutionary Passions*; Westad, Odd Arne, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Christiansen and Scarlett (eds), *The Third World in the Global 1960s*. On the Middle East and Latin America, see also Dawisha, Adeed, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); Beerli, Eliezer, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York: Praeger, 1970); Hanna, Sami A., and George H. Gardner (eds), *Arab Socialism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969); Derpic, Jorge Carlos, “The (im)possible revolution: ideology, framing and historical events in the making of the Bolivian Popular Assembly of 1971” (unpublished M.A. thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 2012); Masterson, Daniel, *Militarism and Politics in Latin America: Peru from Sanchez Cerro to Sendero Luminoso* (New York: Praeger, 1991); Dunkerley, James, *Rebellion in the Veins: Political Struggle in Bolivia, 1952–82* (London and New York: Verso, 1984).

68 Ulus, Özgür Mutlu, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

69 Akar, Attila, *Bir Kuşağın Son Temsilcileri: “Eski Tüfek” Sosyalistler* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1989).

70 Bozarslan, “From Kemalism to the armed struggle”, p. 127.

In particular, the student movement—and the radical characteristics it acquired through ideological osmosis—had a significant impact on Turkey's trajectory and how the youth, the workers and other segments of the Turkish society were visualizing their futures. More often than not, however, each group was envisioning a radically different future, separated from the others by dogged adherence to its respective version of truth. By 15–16 June 1970, it had become apparent that the working-class movement had ripened. Still, both Mihri Belli's National Democratic Revolution (*Milli Demokratik Devrim*, MDD) and the TİP misread the message: “instead of recognizing that the new popular combativity was a signal for renewing political agitation in the proletarian milieus, they interpreted it as a clarion call for the beginning of the armed struggle and took to the mountains”.⁷¹ As a result, the TİP never managed to become the dominant force among industrial workers. For its part, the MDD—with the radical youth brought into its ranks—failed to realize the potential of opening up and joining forces with the working class, which was also radicalizing and becoming a mass movement.

As far as the radical youth is concerned, the activities of the university students stand out. The students came to theorize and, indeed, challenge the well-entrenched structure of the country.⁷² Against this backdrop of radical ideological currents during Turkey's ‘long sixties’, Erol Ülker reassesses the evolution of the theory of uninterrupted revolution of Mahir Çayan, one of the most influential student leaders of the time. His article concentrates on Çayan's relations with the MDD movement, which enjoyed a considerable degree of political and ideological authority over the youth movements from the second half of the 1960s onwards. The article discusses how Çayan interpreted and attempted to revise the theory of national democratic revolution

71 Samim, Ahmet [Murat Belge], “The Left”, in *Turkey in Transition: New Perspectives*, İrvin Cemil Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak (eds) (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 159.

72 Over the years, a rich collection of Turkish-language books by some of the most influential student leaders has emerged, with interviews, personal accounts and memoirs, as well as collections of articles analyzing Turkey's situation at the time. Among many, see Kaypakkaya, İbrahim, *İbrahim Kaypakkaya Kitabı: Seçme, Yazılar ve Üzerine Yazılar* (Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları, 2015); Zileli, Gün, *Yarılma (1954–1972)*, 6th edition (Istanbul: İletişim, 2015); Mater, Nadire, *Sokak Güzeldir: 68'de Ne Oldu?*, 3rd edition (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2012); Çayan, Mahir, *Toplu Yazılar* (Istanbul: Su Yayınevi, 2008); Feyizoğlu, Turhan, *Mahir: On'ların Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2007); Bayram, Bedri, *68'li Yıllar: Eylemciler*, 2nd edition (Ankara: İmge, 2002); Feyizoğlu, Turhan, *Fırtınalı Yılların Gençlik Liderleri Konuşuyor*, 4th edition (Istanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık, 2010); Karadeniz, Harun, *Olaylı Yıllar ve Gençlik* (Istanbul: May Yayınları, 1975).

regarding the changing characteristics of imperialism and colonial domination. Furthermore, Çayan's critical approach towards the Kemalists' role in the anti-imperialist bloc shows how the Left, in general, had begun to challenge the hegemonic Kemalist narrative.

Within the relatively open and plural political environment established under the liberal 1961 constitution, a dynamic and active Left made its debut. In an era of unprecedented openness in thought and writing, the Left, including those in militant youth circles, began to confront new themes and problems. One of the most striking issues raised towards the end of the decade was the Kurdish Question. Although the influence of an earlier generation of questioning was evident,⁷³ for the first time, the Kurds gained voice and visibility in Turkey through the politicization of the issue. Thus, Azat Gündoğan focuses on the Kurdish generation of the 1960s, and in particular, what came to be known as Kurdish '68ers, who stood up against the systematic oppression, exploitation and forced assimilation in the past through new action repertoires and organizational capabilities. He further explores the Kurdish '68ers' particular subjectivity and agency and analyses their unlikely alliance with the TİP.

By the end of the 1960s, students were expanding the remit and scope of their social protests, undertaking massive boycotts and campus occupations in June of 1968, focusing as well on the US military presence on Turkish soil. The student protests quickly spread to the streets and turned into massive anti-imperialist demonstrations, which also targeted the government.⁷⁴ This movement was followed by increased militancy on the part of workers and peasants. Aziz Çelik focuses on the labour movement and provides a detailed discussion of how a workers' social movement emerged, its demands, how the workers organized themselves and the ways in which this alternative collective subjectivity⁷⁵ came to be, and to what end.⁷⁶

73 Çelik, Adnan, and Béatrice Garapon, "De l'exil à la représentation parlementaire: une nouvelle génération d'élites kurdes en politique (1946–1955)", *Anatoli*, 8 (2017), 205–32.

74 Alper, "Reconsidering social movements in Turkey", p. 64.

75 Mello, Brian, *Evaluating Social Movement Impacts: Comparative Lessons from the Labor Movement in Turkey* (New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013) and more recently, idem, "Radicalization and/or reformism in working class politics", in *Turkey in Turmoil*, pp. 93–113.

76 See among many Çelik, Aziz, "Saraçhane'den 15–16 Haziran'a İşçi Sınıfının Müstesna Yılları: Altmışlı Yıllar", in *Türkiye'nin 1960'lı Yılları*, pp. 633–66; Sülker, Kemal, *Türkiye'de Grev Hakkı ve Grevler*, 2nd edition (Istanbul: TÜSTAV, 2004); Çelik, Aziz, and Zafer Aydın, *Paşabahçe 1966: Gelenek Yaratın Grev* (Istanbul: TÜSTAV, 2006), and the most recent, Aydın, Zafer, *İşçilerin Haziranı: 15–16 Haziran 1970* (Istanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2020).

The next two articles of the issue focus on women's emancipation and gender as a distinct category applied in the Turkish case,⁷⁷ a topic that has received little attention. In their article, Selda Tuncer and İnan Özdemir Taştan take the theme up directly, focusing closely on women's political actions and their struggles with the gendered, male-dominated political culture. The article foregrounds women's accounts of Turkey's '68 experience with a particular focus on their struggles to carve out a role in political life outside the traditional domain of the home.

Zeynep Beşpınar pursues the same theme, but with a distinct focus on the experiences of women leaders of the '68 student movement, trade unions and political movements at the time and after, through their personal recollections. Although the experience of women in the 'long sixties' diverges dramatically from the experiences of previous generations, Beşpınar argues that they were not, in fact, liberated at all and were obliged to bargain with patriarchy to access and fully exercise their rights and political agency. She notes that the class positions of the different women leaders often determined the scope of bargaining leverage in this struggle and the degree to which they could assume significant leadership positions and exercise real power.

Finally, Kenan Behzat Sharpe's article rightly underscores the fact that Turkey's precise place in the global sixties often hinges on the question of culture. Contrary to the longstanding perception that culture was an insignificant factor in Turkey,⁷⁸ Sharpe argues that—despite differences with Western countries, like France, Britain and the US—Turkey's similarities in the 1960s must not be glossed over.⁷⁹ This becomes particularly evident in music—rock

77 Demet Lüküslü rightly underlines that, although, most of the research on the 1968 generation is focused on male activity, more recent research on the movement in Turkey has shifted its focus to the 'women of 1968', and that female members of the generation have begun to share their personal accounts of this period in Turkey, thus creating their own social memories. See Lüküslü, Demet, "Turkey's 68", *Verso Blog*, 15 May 2018 (<https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3811-turkey-s-68>). For some of these studies, see Tuncer, Selda, *Women and Public Space in Turkey: Gender, Modernity and the Urban Experience* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2018); Badur, Ayşe Köse, "Türkiye 68'inde Kadınlar", in *1968: İsyan, Devrim, Özgürlük*, pp. 429–45; Akkaya, Gülfer, *Sanki Eşittik: 1960–70'li Yıllarda Devrimci Mücadelenin Feminist Sorgusu* (İstanbul: Kumbara Sanat, 2012); Şahin, Yelda, and Ezgi Sarıtaş, "Altmışlı Yıllarda Kadın Hareketi: Süreklilikler, Kopuşlar ve Çeşitlenme", in *Türkiye'nin 1960'lu Yılları*, pp. 727–58; Baydar, Oya, and Melek Ulagay, *Bir Dönem İki Kadın: Birbirimizin Aynasında* (İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 2011); Yazıcıoğlu, Ayşe, *68'in Kadınları* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2010).

78 Alper acknowledges that "insignificance does not mean inexistence"; Alper, *Jakobenlerden Devrimcilere*, p. 78.

79 See, also, Sharpe, Kenan Behzat, "A Mediterranean sixties: cultural politics in Turkey, Greece, and beyond", in *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties*, pp. 168–79.

'n' roll in particular. The first grounds of Turkey's rock 'n' roll scene were laid in the late 1950s, with the emergence on the European, Arabic and Turkish radio waves of 'surf 'n' roll' guitar groups such as The Ventures and The Tornados.⁸⁰ This flowering of musical activity coincided with the beginning of a period of intense cultural and political turmoil in Turkey, which in its turn was inextricably connected to global geopolitical developments.⁸¹ As much was made evident by the substantial growth in political publishing, but also in the booming literary production of novels, theatre plays, poems, novels and short stories, as well as essays and literary critiques. All this publishing activity fed directly into the formation of the intellectual culture of Turkey.⁸²

The military intervention of 1971 tried to put an end to the radicalizing new era without much success as the social movements of the period were revived after the end of the military regime in 1973, and even more so, after the declaration of the 1974 amnesty and the release of all the surviving members of the '68 generation. At the same time, the revival of the social movements marked a renewed violent environment, with clashes between leftist revolutionaries and their reactionary-fascist counterparts becoming a daily routine. Ideological differences aside, Bozarslan argues that violence perpetrated by the main actors in the 1970s should be understood in relation to the social, economic and political changes that were taking place in Turkey at the time.⁸³ As a result, on 12 September 1980, the total paralysis of electoral and democratic mechanisms saw the military once more take control of the state in an attempt to restructure it, although in a much more authoritarian way than in 1960 and 1971.

80 Spicer, Daniel, *Anadolu Psych (1965–1980): The Turkish Psychedelic Music Explosion* (London: Repeater, 2017), pp. 16–17; Ramm, Christoph, "Turkey's 'light' rock revolution – *Anadolu Pop*, political music, and the quest for the authentic", in *Turkey in Turmoil*, pp. 256–78; Gedik, Ali C., "Class struggle in popular musics of Turkey: changing sounds from the Left", in idem (ed.) (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 89–106.

81 Spicer, *Anadolu Psych*, p. 17.

82 See, for example, Başgüney, Hakkı, *Literary Production, Currents, and Politics in Turkey, 1960–1980* (Istanbul: Libra, 2014); Sharpe, Kenan Behzat, "The internationalist Left and world literature: the case of Nâzım Hikmet in Greece", in *Turkish Literature as World Literature*, Burcu Alkan and Çimen Günay-Erkol (eds) (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2020), pp. 129–47.

83 Bozarslan, Hamit, "Le phénomène milicien: une composante de la violence politique en Turquie dans les années 1970", *Turcica*, 31 (1999), 185–244.

Still today, the '68 generation seems to be a contested topic between the Left and the Right and the Islamists, mainly represented now by the Turkish government of the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP). In that respect, the surviving '68ers were allowed to define themselves with a *posteriori* accounts by producing memoirs, biographies and interviews. There is no doubt that these works are not only important but also invaluable. However, the fact that they revolve around their own and their own friends' heroic actions and vanguardism in the sixties, often overemphasizing, neglecting or minimizing in importance other aspects of the period, raises problems.⁸⁴

A significant portion of these accounts was deeply influenced by the emergence of Mahir Çayan as the mythical figure of the Turkish Left in the 1970s. All ascendant leftist elements claimed to descend from his discourse. Çayan and other radical youth like Deniz Gezmiş and İbrahim Kaypakaya—all of whom were killed by the Turkish state—introduced a “discourse of martyrdom”. This discourse praised their heroic and revolutionary actions⁸⁵ and was received as sacrosanct within the Turkish Left, an account that is rarely contested.⁸⁶ As Demet Lüküslü argues, “there is now a polarized analysis of the 1968 generation; one which works to mystify the 1968 generation [...], while the other lays harsh criticism of the same generation, blaming members for the anarchy and political violence of the period”.⁸⁷ The relatively recent events in the Gezi protests in May–June 2013 and the symbolism behind the enormous posters of Deniz Gezmiş prove that point. What marks the continuity of the Gezi Park protests with the history of resistance in Turkey for the Left, represents, in the eyes of the Turkish government, a danger that could easily lead to chaos.

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84 The Turkish case is not the exception. For example, Daniel Cohn-Bendit was interviewed on French radio in late 2016. According to Vinen, *The Long '68*, pp. 7, 380 n. 21, he recalled that “Sartre had seemed intimidated when the two men met in 1968, which is certainly not how Sartre remembered things”. Sartre said of Cohn-Bendit: “He was far from brilliant; I didn't like him very much”.

85 Yenen, Alp, “Legitimate means of dying: contentious politics of martyrdom in the Turkish civil war (1968–1982)”, *BEHEMOTH – A Journal on Civilisation*, 12/1 (2019), 14–34.

86 Gurpinar, Doğan, “Myths and memories of the 1968 events in Turkey: 1968 as the mirror of 2008”, *Turkish Studies*, 12/3 (2011), p. 452.

87 Lüküslü, “Turkey's 68”.

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