

## MAO'S CONTRIBUTION TO MARXISM-LENINISM

Communist Party of Greece/Marxist-Leninist

A revolutionary's contribution to the defense and development of Marxism-Leninism is measured by taking into account many factors. Chairman's Mao Zedong's contribution in this case has never been evaluated in a systematic way and away from party line conformities. For such a task to be fulfilled it is necessary that the revolution must advance not only in China but all over the world.

It is not only the search for the historical truth, the objective evaluation of facts, persons or situations. It is also the determination of the new elements Chairman Mao brought to the revolutionary theory: that is the ideological, political and organizational elements comprising the working class, its natural allies, its revolutionary party and all these elements of culture, actions and ways of thought that characterize society and its advance elements.

It is safe to say that the best way to contribute to the revolutionary theory is to promote the revolution in one's own country. From this position springs an axiom, a rule that can be summed up as follows: A revolutionary who has promoted a victorious revolution in his country has also contributed resolutely to the development of the revolutionary theory, because he has managed to implement this theory in a concrete way in his country.

But when this country is vast, when her population is the largest in the world, when this country includes more than a hundred nationalities, when its place in history, its geostrategic location, its international relations are of extreme importance, then this rule is particularly important and this importance we will try to approach.

We have stressed the importance of the above rule to underline the fact that every rule has its exceptions. For instance, there were great thinkers and revolutionaries (Marx-Engels, Gramsci, Dimitrov, etc.) who for various reasons did not have the chance to see the revolution triumph in their respective countries. This does not mean that their contribution to the revolutionary theory of communism, to dialectics and historical materialism is by any means less than the others. It is also true that great revolutionaries and thinkers (either after a victorious revolution or not) adopted positions deviating from the revolutionary theory.

Thus we conclude that undoubtedly every revolutionary leader contributes in his own way to Marxism-Leninism when he leads a revolutionary process and especially a victorious one. From there on we need to determine in a most precise way the specific contribution of each one during the preparation for the revolution, his leadership at the time of the revolution and most of all during the establishment and development of the revolution. This we will try to do regarding the work of Chairman Mao and his contribution to Marxism-Leninism.

### **1. The Long March and the strategy of the revolution**

On the one hand, we have a vast country with a population exceeding half a billion. On the other hand, we have 13 communist revolutionaries representing 60 members who decided to create the Communist Party of China. The comparison between these two numbers is inconceivable. It cannot be grasped by even the most voluntaristic or utopian imagination. It is like trying to level a mountain with a shovel. But, as Chairman Mao said, even this can be done, thanks to revolutionary strength, persistence, revolutionary knowledge. And thus it came to be done.

The unsuccessful uprisings at the industrial centers (Shanghai, etc.) led to mass massacres of Chinese communists and other activists. That violent attack of the reactionary forces was aimed against the young communist nuclei and against the aspirations of the working class. The savage hunting, the persecutions and the massacres were everyday practice. The future of the revolution was

on the balance. Bold decisions were needed. Useful conclusions were needed to be extracted from these bloody struggles. A new strategy and new tactics were needed for the movement. A Great March was needed to lead the revolutionary movement of China to regroup its forces and counter attack. The man behind all these critical decisions was undoubtedly Chairman Mao Zedong.

The undisputable leadership of Mao was due to his correct analysis of the classes in China, his correct assessment of the character of the contradictions, his planning of a new strategy and tactics for the movement.

The Long March of the revolutionary communist movement in China had begun. Through untold hardships and fierce fighting, and in spite of the difficult circumstances, the revolutionary movement managed to reconstruct its forces and acquire a clear perspective. The Chinese people's protracted liberation war began in the Northern territories of the country. It had as a point of reference the great Soviet Union of Lenin and Stalin. The countryside was to become gradually the revolutionary center. The villages would surround the city. This ingenious conception of Chairman Mao was without precedent. It was the particularity and the originality of the Chinese revolution. This element contributed to and carried further the Chinese revolution. It also became the shining path for the liberation movements of the colonies and the dependent countries of the world.

This reliance on the populous and widespread peasantry was not an easy thing, nor was usual for a communist movement to have the peasantry as its main force and the working class as its vanguard.

Up to then, the revolutionary experience (the Paris Commune, the October Revolution) was that the city with the working class was the focus of the revolution which later was spread to the countryside. After the October Revolution, superhuman efforts were required to spread the revolution to the countryside. To win over the peasantry was more than necessary to the revolutionaries of the young Soviet Union. Thanks to that victory socialism in the Soviet Union was consolidated and the road became open for a new society without exploitation and oppression.

Of course, that ingenious thinking of Mao and the new strategy and tactics involved did not fall from the sky. Marx himself regarding the historical element of capitalist development – the socialization of production and the individual appropriation of the products – had noted that the revolution is possible in countries with a high degree of socialization of production. That was naturally so because the high degree in the socialization of production and the individual appropriation of the products would show this contradiction clearly and it would give society the possibility to have not only socialized production but also social distribution of the produced wealth.

Such countries, were of course, England, and some other European countries as France which had known serious political movements, the most important of these being the Paris Commune.

But through capitalist development and the concentration of production came the concentration of capital, the emergence of international markets, cartels, trusts, and monopolies. In the meantime, colonialism was spreading and the world powers, England being the foremost of them, were conquering colonies all over the planet.

That world order gave imperialists the power to pass on, to export, to the exploited countries their own internal contradictions along with their products and capital. Uneven development is characteristic of capital both at home and in the countries inside their sphere of influence. So it is no accident that Marx, referring to the emergence of monopoly and the alteration of some data noted also the “awakening of Asia” and the easternly move of the revolutionary center.

Then came Lenin who was to live during all the new changes in the capitalist system, who was to define in a precise way these changes in his work, “Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism”, and who was to defend brilliantly Marxist thought in his era by developing more the revolutionary theory. The new elements in revolutionary theory that Lenin set down were not only about the economic and political characteristics of his era but also about

the theory of the "weak link" in the capitalist chain. Lenin proved conclusively the unavoidability of the proletarian revolution.

Lenin was the dominant defender of Marxism in his era. He gave Marxism what belongs to it that is the elements of a living, scientific, revolutionary theory. A theory that evolves continuously. A theory that becomes suffocated inside "boxes" and dogmas. A theory that always searches not only for the explanation of the world but also for its revolutionary and unceasing change.

The work of Marx and Engels was defended by Stalin under the difficult conditions of the encirclement of the Soviet Union. This we note for another reason too. It was a newly traversed road, this road of socialist construction. The road of revolution, of every revolution, was, is, and always will be traversed, because if it was not so it would not be a revolution.

From this point of view, we have already said that the victorious revolution adds new elements to the revolutionary theory.

Stalin's era was a hard era. And the act of building a new society was and still is an exceptionally hard endeavor. That era carried not only the burden of building a new society on one-sixth of the earth, but also the burden of the leadership of the world communist movement, the Third International. From this aspect, the contributive elements in the revolutionary theory and Marxism-Leninism are not just a few. But what made Marxism-Leninism the current theory of revolution was the Chinese revolution, and the creator of this revolutionary transplantation to far off Asia was Chairman Mao's thought.

Going back to Mao's contribution to Marxism-Leninism, we must note that his ideas were forged and tested in the hardships of the movement's retreat, in the orderly retreat he envisioned through the Long March, and mostly in the Long March itself, which started at the countryside and proceeded to encircle the cities.

In that Long March, the resilience and the unshakable confidence in the unavoidability of the revolution were tested. Through a process of liberating, at first small parts of the countryside, an opportunity for the creation of liberated, red territories was presented. There, a new people's power was instituted and it worked. In that

“New Democracy” regime, tomorrow’s socialist and communist society was forged.

That strategy of the people’s protracted liberation war was the greatest revolutionary conception not only for China but for all countries under the yoke of colonialism, neo-colonialism and dependency. That strategy brought the ability to draw new tactics about the alliances with Kuomintang during the Sino-Japanese war. Those tactics were in harmony with the tactics of the antifascist front promoted by the Third International. But Chairman Mao proved that he knew well the road of the Chinese revolution. Relying on the unlimited powers of the Chinese people, he walked that road with resolution, even through comradely suspicion about the “original” course he followed.

This course was victorious and in 1949, the People’s Republic of China was established. The liberation of China and the 10,000 Li march had as their foundations a most important political, ideological and organizational, leading, and above all theoretical work. This work, based on dialectical and historical materialism, and its science, is the work that Mao Zedong thought gave to the world communists and revolutionaries. To Mao, the use of scientific socialism as guiding posts for the analysis of Chinese society, the political international and domestic conditions and the corresponding analysis for determining the aims of revolution and the course toward it, was not enough.

He referred to ideological, theoretical and philosophical questions with a synthetic power unknown up to then. That is why his work was easily understood by the Chinese as well as all the people in the world. That is why his work became the guiding light to movements at the “storm zones” as well as the metropolises. From the analysis of the classes in China to the philosophical essays about the contradictions and practice, from the questions about the people’s protracted liberation war to the question of building socialism from the existence of classes in the transitional period of socialism to the Cultural Revolution, from the questions of culture to poetry, Chairman Mao was an unlimited wellspring of revolutionary thinking that shone and today still lights up the way of every revolutionary on earth.

This multisided theoretical work, together with revolutionary practice, consists an important heritage, a precious contribution to the revolutionary cause. Mao is justly placed alongside the great revolutionary thinkers. He is the greatest defender and continuer of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The liberation of China and the taking of power by the people's forces through an up to then new road, was shown in the corresponding originality of building a new socialist society.

The Chinese reality led Mao and the CPC leadership, and through a degree of criticism to weaknesses of the Soviet model, to adapt the general truth of scientific socialism to China's particularities. The Chinese model of development was instructed by the existence of an enormous majority of peasants and the low development of industry. Of course, the big industrial units were not underestimated. But the small and medium production in harmony with the countryside communes gave the ability to new China to face the urgent problems of its vast population. Hunger and misery began to disappear and better days came for the hard hit Chinese people. A new great march had just begun. The march for socialist building, a march that faced many problems, domestic and external, and particularly inside the CPC itself.

The Great Leap Forward was an important point. The same is true about the debate between the Chinese communists and the Soviet revisionists. The revisionist turn in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries led to a new era. The political and ideological war waged by the Communist Party of China and the Labor Party of Albania against the Soviet revisionists is well known. We just mention that Mao's contribution to that war was enormous and he left a valuable heritage to revolutionaries in China and the whole world.

It would be worth mentioning the critique of Mao against problems in the building of socialism in the USSR. But it would be wrong to forget that Stalin himself in 1952, criticized some Soviet economists about mistakes that Mao had already noted. We all know about Stalin's work, "Problems of Socialism in the USSR". We just want to note the gravity of those critiques and their importance in

accordance with the new road for the revolution in China, the road of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The greatest contribution and the most valuable heritage of Chairman Mao to the revolutionaries of today and tomorrow were undoubtedly the many messages of the GPCR.

We know that the start of the Cultural Revolution was insignificant, that is the criticism of a theatrical play, but the causes were and still are greater, and the objectives were and are even greater. And they are great because they touch on the totality of social activities. They touch on the foundations and the structure of the transitional society. During that transitional society in China (as well as during the first twenty years of the revolution in the USSR) serious debates about the road to be followed were waged. Those debates were to leave untouched no sector of society or field.

In the fields of ideology, politics, economy, culture, the military, international relations, education, the right, customs and conceptions, even those of philosophy, the Party and its relations to society, the army and its relation to society, the state and its relations to other sectors, the Party leader and his relation to the Party and the masses, all these fields were questioned and answers in the revolutionary direction were sought.

It is true that in one way or the other, not only two different conceptions but also two lines were developed. In the process, those two lines confronted each other more and more acutely.

At that confrontation, what ammunition did both the proletarian revolutionaries and their opponents possess? Undoubtedly, the enemies of the deepening of the revolution and the socialist buildup had much more ammunition. The "easy" was on their side. The "hard" was for the revolutionaries. The force of use, the customs of thousands of years, the power of the exploitative forces, and many other factors, mostly internal but also external, contributed to the fact that the enemies of socialism fight with greater prospects both in the economy and the political field and, in general, they reproduce themselves in society and threaten to restore capitalism.

It may be noted that the proletariat was in power and it had a communist party that secured it against its enemies. But even these facts were not always standard and it was everytime necessary for these things to be reconfirmed. The correlation of powers inside the



Party leadership, before the Cultural Revolution, was not in favor of Chairman Mao. It is also well known that the main representative of Chinese revisionism was Liu Shiao Chi (president of the Republic), a person who had travelled from "ultra-left" positions, before the Great Leap Forward, to later, his well-known right opportunistic positions.

In general, the composition a a party and the uncritical and loose way its members are allowed inside its lines, is a very important factor for the fate of this party and for the future of the party's country, especially if this party is in power.

We could say that Chairman Mao summed up his own message to the coming generations of revolutionaries with these words:

"Socialist society covers a rather long historical era. In the historical era of socialism there still exist classes, class contradictions and class struggle; there still exist the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road; there is always the danger of the restoration of capitalism. We must wage socialist education. We must understand and face in a right way, the class contradictions and class struggle. We must distinguish between contradictions between us and the enemy and contradictions among the people and face them in a right way. Otherwise, a socialist country like ours will be transformed to its opposite; it will be degenerated and capitalism will be restored. From now, and every year and every day, we must remember this in order to have a balanced understanding of this problem and have a Marxist-Leninist line." (Mao Zedong: Speech at the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, 1962)