

The Paris Commune (18th March – 27th May 1871) and the socialist revolution in imperialist countries (in *La Voce*, n. 38, July 2011)

This year is the 140th anniversary of the Paris Commune.

With the Paris Commune, the working class seized power for the first and so far only time in one of the present imperialist countries. His 140th anniversary is a great opportunity to take stock of the progress the communist movement has made and to weigh it up, in order to better frame the work we are doing now, in the terminal phase of the second general crisis of capitalism and verify, in the light of our history, our conception of the world and our line to establish socialism in Italy, which is one of the imperialist countries.

The communist movement in the modern sense, the communist movement we are speaking of and we are part and protagonists of, began in western Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century, about 200 years ago.(1) Its first manifestations on major scale were the Chartist Movement (1838-1850) in Great Britain and the worker movement of the nineteenth century in France. The revolt of Lyon in 1831 and especially the uprising of Paris in June of 1848, which was crushed by French republican bourgeoisie with executions and deportations decimating the proletarian population of Paris, were the expressions of this worker movement with major historical role.

The communist movement was officially founded with the publication of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* written by Marx and Engels on behalf of the Communists' League in February of 1848, in the eve of European bourgeois revolution.

Since then there has been a long time when compared to the life of a human being and evaluated with the aspirations of the protagonists of the communist movement. This is however a brief period when measured on the scale of the transformations that the human species has gone through in its multimillennial evolution.

This is enough to establish that those intellectuals who talk about the “death of Communism” misrepresent reality. They do it because of not confessed purposes related to the particular interests of the classes of which they are spokespersons. They deduce the “death of Communism” simply from the fact that the communist movement has not yet made the social transformation that is its objective and that the founders of Marxism have clearly indicated in its broad outlines, basing themselves on the understanding of the laws that have governed the multimillennial evolution of the species and of the preconditions of the future placed by the bourgeois society that was the more advanced result of that evolution.

Between 1989 and 1991, the first European socialist countries and among them the Soviet Union, arrived at the bottom of the decline that began in the 50s. They decomposed and returned to a large extent in the world imperialist system. Then, in the U.S.A., the country center of the world imperialist system, the ideologue Fukuyama gave the world the cry of triumph of the imperialist bourgeoisie: “The history is over.” He wanted to announce and proclaim the final victory of the bourgeoisie and the advent of his unchallenged millennial reign, after the great fear aroused by the first wave of proletarian revolution that in the early part of the twentieth century formed the first socialist countries in some major countries (mainly Russia and China) on the edge of the world imperialist system, created the communist parties all over the world and destroyed the old colonial system.

It was not the first time that the apologists of capitalism did such resounding proclamation since the first half of the nineteenth century, when the communist movement began to contend with capitalism for the power. When they are on their way out, the ruling classes pluck up courage and try to demoralize the classes that challenge its power, proclaiming the reasons for their supremacy consecrated by tradition but close to its end. They try to prove that the system of social relations which provides for their rule is the only in accord with human nature. In order to do it each dying class defines

human nature in the image and likeness of the typical individual of the social system it defends and negates the values of the class against which it defends itself. So the feudal nobility and the clergy did against the bourgeoisie of Europe until the end of the nineteenth century. At that time, when the Pope Leo XIII was reigning on Catholic Church, just the Paris Commune, despite its defeat, terrorized the clergy and the bourgeoisie of Europe. That terror moved the clergy of the Christian countries and the bourgeoisie to join their forces in a common struggle against the communist movement. Still today a multicolored array of professors of human nature and apologists of capitalism that goes from Pope Ratzinger to repentant communists like the Italian Costanzo Preve, repeats the same theory, but now referred to the capitalist system.(2)

The communist movement in the modern sense of the term

What is the communist movement in the modern sense of the term? It is the movement of the working class created by capitalism, the oppressed class of the modern era that mobilizes and organizes itself and struggles to emancipate itself from the bourgeoisie. Communism is the system of social relations of the society that arises from the conditions created by capitalism. The working class has not created the communist conception of the world but, for many reasons, among all the oppressed classes it is the most ready and willing to assimilate it on a large-scale, that identifies itself in it, that is able to make it its own and take it as a guide in the struggle it carries out against the bourgeoisie.(3)

This excludes the direct continuity and even more the analogy between the Communism we are fighting for and the various forms of communities that have been aspects and forms of the various pre-capitalist social systems, stages of the multimillennial evolution of the human species. In fact, the modern communism grows on the basis of the following three conditions:

1. elimination of the relations of personal dependence (of the individual from the community where it was born, from slave owners, landowners, priests, etc..) characteristic of the societies that preceded the bourgeois society,
2. the affirmation of individuals as protagonists of the social life of the human species, produced by the mercantile economy generalized by capitalism,
3. stable and definitive victory of the human species in the fight to get out of the rest of nature what necessary for its own survival and progress (the domination of man over nature).

These in brief are the key conditions on which the future communist society grows, all three created by bourgeois society. The common ownership of means of production and their management by the association of workers, shaped so that the free development of each individual is the condition for the free development of all, are the fundamental traits of the communist society that will replace the capitalist society, its division into classes and its class antagonisms.(4) Just because of these characteristics, the communist society does not grow spontaneously (that is, as a result of the men who act in conformity to the dominant - that is bourgeois - conception of the world and in the ambit and with the institutions of bourgeois society). It cannot be achieved without some level of consciousness and organization of the working class and of the popular masses, without a certain progress in the elaboration of the communist conception of the world and of its assimilation by the masses. These two factors are not formed spontaneously in the same bourgeois society and must therefore be built with a specific work carried out in the very bosom of bourgeois society, as factors necessary to overcome it.

It follows that the communist movement is divided into two parts: the conscious and organized communist movement that promotes the transformation and the rest of the working class and the popular masses who performs the transformation under the direction of the first, although by its nature this transformation can only be done on the necessary basis of the experience of the working class and of the masses themselves. The oppressed class is divided into

two parts (one directing and one directed), but so related that they create the conditions to overcome the new division in the new society without a State.(5) The nature of communist society determines to a certain extent also the way of his being done, very distinct from the way in which bourgeois society has been done: a truth which was discovered by Engels in the late nineteenth century, in taking stock of the communist movement of the nineteenth century (*Introduction to "The class struggles in France from 1848 to 1850" - 1895*).

The socialist revolution and the peoples oppressed by the world imperialist system

The understanding of the progress made by the communist movement is complicated by the fact that, in the wake of the communist movement of European workers, also those peoples who have not done democratic revolution on their own account, but were still colonized and subjugated by the European bourgeoisie, mobilized themselves. In this way they entered the evolution of the human species that the bourgeoisie has set in motion. In its turn, the European bourgeoisie has become "the Christian West" because European countries were joined by the colonies populated by Europeans, particularly the U.S., which as a result of two World Wars roused by the European capitalist powers have become the center of the world imperialist system. Humanity unified itself in its process of evolution not because all peoples have done a path similar to that of the European peoples. It unified itself because the European bourgeoisie involved the other countries putting them to the fire and the sword of its colonial system. By the power of its trades that dissolved the old relations of production, the European bourgeoisie upset the system of social relations in which each one of them was arrived on the basis of its own historical development. Around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, driven by its first general crisis for absolute overproduction of capital, it has forced and dragged all the peoples into the vortex of the world imperialist system that has divided the world into a small number of imperialist powers opposed to the oppressed countries where most of humanity lived.

It was a form of unification of the world that the founders of the communist conception of the world had not taken into account: they had not considered the possibility that the socialist revolution in Europe could delay even though the objective conditions were already ripe (a certain degree of development of the productive forces and a certain level of concentration and proletarianization of the population under the orders of the bourgeoisie). That is to say, they did not considered that, just because of the delay of the necessary revolutionary change, capitalism changed entering its imperialist phase. But just the fact that, despite this, the clash now involving all humanity is the clash between capitalism and communism is the grand experimental confirmation of the communist conception of the world as science of the evolution of the human species.

Today the human species is unified by a common destiny and mobilized in a single movement all over the world. The communist conception of the world illustrates the meaning and nature of the common movement, the contradictions that determine it and the line of march in which the human species must be developed to provide a solution to the contradictions that move it.

Consequently, the social influence the bourgeois Left exerted in these years is deeply harmful. "Bourgeois Left" means all the groups and individuals who oppose the present course of things, but in their criticism of this, in their proposals and their intentions, they do not see beyond the horizon of bourgeois society and its system of social relations: so, by their nature all these groups and individuals reject the communist conception of the world. However, today their influence is great in the imperialist countries, given the weakness of the conscious and organized communist movement, which has not yet revived after the exhaustion of the first wave of proletarian revolution. That is why the Communist Party must make a great effort for educating its members and candidates on the communist conception of the world. Anyway, this is an imperative condition for its consolidation and strengthening. Only through the study and assimilation

of the communist conception of the world, the Communists make themselves able to lead the working class and the masses beyond the struggles for claims, to the construction of communist society.

The role of the revolution of peoples oppressed by the world imperialist system

The forms and timing of the transformation of bourgeois society in the communist society were deeply marked by the involvement in this process also of the countries where the capitalist mode of production had not yet become the dominant mode of production. In 1881 the first Russian Communists asked to Karl Marx, the acknowledged founder of the communist conception of the world, whether the rural community in Russia, the form still remaining at the end of the nineteenth century of the original common possession of the land, in his opinion could be transformed directly into communist form of possession of the land without going through the same process of dissolution, which had constituted the historical development of Western Europe. Marx had studied deeply the history of the development of European societies and the nature of Russian society of his time. Considering the state which the evolution of Russian society and its economic and cultural relations with capitalist countries were arrived to, he said that, if the announced democratic revolution in Russia had served as a trigger to the socialist revolution in Western Europe, so that the two should combine and complete each other, in this case it should had been plausible that the common rural property still existing in Russia could serve as a starting point for development of Russian society towards Communism (Preface to the Russian edition of 1882 of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*). The role that Russia and the Soviet Union actually played in the first part of the twentieth century during the first wave of world proletarian revolution is illuminated by this view of Marx, even if the revolutions in the two parts of the world had combined, but without completing each other because the communist movement has not established of socialism in any imperialist countries.

The Paris Commune has been so far the only case of conquest of power by the working class in a capitalist country. The communist movement has achieved its greatest success in countries with a peripheral role in the world imperialist system (“weak link of the imperialist world system”) or that were part of the oppressed and dependent countries: mainly Russia with its vast Tsarist Empire, and China. During the first wave of proletarian revolution in the first part of last century, the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China have in different ways and at different times in the world played the role of red bases of the proletarian revolution. But the communist movement has failed to establish socialism in any of the imperialist countries. This had also a prejudicial effect on the development of the first socialist country that today in different times, sizes and forms are come back within the world imperialist system, completely but still in a contradictory way as for Russia (6) and to some extent for China (7).

Why has the communist movement not established socialism in any imperialist country?

The failure in establishing socialism in the imperialist countries has given rise not only to the apologies of capitalism developed and propagated by the bourgeoisie and the clergy, but also to the reflection of the Communists. Why has the conscious and organized communist movement failed to establish socialism in any of the imperialist countries during the first wave of proletarian revolution?

The first wave of proletarian revolution was first developed as an antidote to the general crisis of capitalism for absolute overproduction of capital. It was not the result of the direction of the conscious and organized communist movement in the class struggle that was going on in most developed bourgeois societies. It was the result of the efforts by the conscious and organized communist movement in the upheaval and world wars generated over more than thirty years (1914-1945) by the imperialist bourgeoisie to deal with that crisis.

Facing the fact that Communists had not established socialism in any imperialist country, some have drawn the conclusion that they had not done it simply because it was not possible to establish it (in accordance with the view that it is possible only what actually happens). The objective conditions of the establishment of socialism were really accrued in the present imperialist countries at the end of the nineteenth century but, according to them, thanks to the exploitation of the oppressed countries, the imperialist bourgeoisie corrupted the working class and the popular masses of imperialist countries in various ways and therefore reduced their ability to fight so much that made impossible the establishment of socialism.

This explanation has been very successful because it was an explanation seemingly simple though absurd of the experience (the conception that it is possible only what is, does not explain the movement). Besides, it was quite beneficial for those who bring the bourgeois influence within the working class and the popular masses of the people, those who are against the revolution. Such explanation complied with their mentality and their personality: so, it had the support of the right wing of the communist movement, and more or less directly by the bourgeoisie itself. It was also consistent with the economicistic and determinist interpretation of Marxism: according to this interpretation the socialist revolution is not generated by the conscious and organized communist movement, but breaks out by force of the contradictions of bourgeois society. Although the role of conscious and organized is not completely denied, it is relegated to a secondary role.

This economicistic, deterministic and spontaneistic interpretation of Marxism is a conception that drives the revolutionaries guided by it to failure and just because of this it is an aspect of the influence of the bourgeoisie and the clergy within the communist movement: they are interested in the failure of its efforts. We Communists say that are the human beings who make their own history, although they certainly did not do so arbitrarily, but based on assumptions that are found as products of the history behind their back, acting in the circumstances in which they find themselves and in accordance with the laws of the transformation they must do. Their freedom is greater the more they know the nature of the world they must transform and the own laws suitable for the work they have to do (in brief: freedom is the consciousness of necessity): so as it happens in every other human activity, in every profession and trade. Marxism, the communist conception of the world, is the science of the transformation of bourgeois society in the communist society and the theory that guides the conscious and organized communist movement in its action that transforms the world.

Because the Communists in the imperialist countries have not elaborated the communist conception of the world up to the task that had to carry out!

Nevertheless, the communist conception of the world is, like all sciences, work of the human beings. The Communists must not only apply it. Even before, they need to prepare it and develop it up to the work that have to do: to build a skyscraper needs a building science more developed than that needed to build a little house. That is why we say that to be a Marxist does not mean to make the exegesis of the works of Marx and of other leaders of the communist movement (“what Marx really said”, etc..). Marxists are those who draw from the experience the science of the struggle of the working class that emancipates itself from the bourgeoisie by building the communist society. The conscious and organized communist movement has not established socialism in any imperialist country, not even during the first wave of proletarian revolution, when because of the first general crisis of capitalism the bourgeoisie itself upset its systems in each country and its system of international relations and threw the whole world in even two world wars lasted a total of more than thirty years (1914-1945). This was mainly due to the fact that Communists did not elaborate the communist conception of the world up to the task they had to carry out. Bourgeoisie and clergy’s interests conspired with the

natural ignorance (that is to say congruent with the nature of the oppressed classes) in which the ruling classes keep the oppressed classes (“you are not paid to think”, “here politics cannot be carried out,” etc.. etc..) and with the dogmatism and laziness of many communists even honestly devoted to the cause of revolution who, however, reduced Marxism to the exegesis of texts and to a religious faith in the dogmas, while in practical action, even though heroic, they were following their nose, according to common sense (that is, staying within the limits of protests and claiming struggles). The great influence of the Soviet Union on the communist movement in the imperialist countries and the aspiration “to do as in Russia,” have helped in this way the theoretical inertia of the communist movement in the imperialist countries and its own shirking its duties.

What are the main topics on which we base our response?

There are two sets of arguments.

1. The thesis of the corruption of the working class in the imperialist countries contrasts with the facts

The first set of arguments is that the explanation that rightist and lazy (dogmatic) people give contrasts with the facts. They use some aspects of reality in a such one-sided way so that to produce a complete distortion of reality.

Is it true that during the first wave of proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie and the clergy have corrupted the workers and popular masses in the imperialist countries with the superprofits they got from criminal exploitation of oppressed peoples?

Criminal exploitation of oppressed peoples was and is an undoubted fact of the world imperialist system: only the first wave of proletarian revolution has to some extent, for some time, in some countries lessened the criminal exploitation of oppressed peoples. Even today, while the bourgeoisie bustles about proclaiming the “economic boom” of the Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and of other “emerging markets”, what really happens in these countries, leaving out the large differences between them, is a fierce class differentiation. In each of these countries a handful of new rich formed. They ensure the cruel enslavement of the masses and the exploitation of country’s natural resources for the benefit of the imperialist bourgeoisie, to slow down the new general crisis of the world imperialist system. At the same time the conditions of the mass of the population are worsening in each of these countries and even old forms and conditions of life of an important part of the population are destroyed (primitive accumulation of capital, expulsion of the population from its countryside, urbanization and migration).

Anyway, let’s consider the history of the popular masses and of the working class in the imperialist countries along the 140 years since the bourgeoisie of the French Republic in the spring of 1871 suppressed the Paris Commune, killing about 23,000 insurgents and deporting about 40,000 (and it was the second time during the nineteenth century that the bourgeoisie decimated the proletarian population of Paris).

Between the end of the Paris Commune and the outbreak of First World War (1914), forty three years passed. The conditions of the vast majority of the masses in the imperialist countries were such that nobody, not even the right wing of the socialist parties (so then the parties of the conscious and organized communist movement were called) dared to say that the workers could and should be consider themselves satisfied. On the contrary, the right wing was promising that in time conditions would get better. A part of these rightists, even contradicting themselves, went even so far to urge the peoples of the colonies to be patient because they would be freed by the establishment of socialism in Europe (these were roughly the theses of the Second International, up to the *Manifesto of the International Socialist Congress* in Basel – 25th November, 1912).

In August 1914 there began thirty one years of world wars and the Nazi and Fascist dictatorships, which reduced Europe to a heap of rubble and killed and maimed tens of millions of people in Europe alone.

The war ended in 1945. From then to now we have had in Europe sixty six years without large-scale wars at home. The first thirty years (1945-1975: the “thirty glorious years”) were devoted to the reconstruction and development higher than before the war and with a real improvement in living and work conditions of the mass of the population of European countries (the famous conquests wrung from the bourgeoisie in the period of “human face capitalism”). This was the only period in which the facts might support the right wing’s argument that the socialist revolution in Europe has not been done because the bourgeoisie had lessened the contradictions of class and had corrupted (bought) the working class and the popular masses with concessions on a large scale.

In the mid-70s the bourgeoisie in all European countries (and other imperialist countries, including the U.S.) has started to eliminate the conquests of civilization and prosperity that the masses wrung in the past thirty years. The history of the last thirty six years is contemporary history. For nearly thirty years, the imperialist bourgeoisie was able to make gradual the deterioration of popular masses’ living conditions in the imperialist countries with a series of measures hinged upon the Antithetical Forms of Social Unity(8), upon the financialization of the economy, upon the increase of the unification of the world on economic, monetary and financial level that took advantage of the global supremacy of the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie, upon the integration of the first socialist countries in the imperialist world system, but most of all taking advantage of the corruption and dissolution of the old communist parties and of mass organizations (trade unions, etc..) connected to them. The conscious and organized communist movement has returned to the lowest levels of 150 years ago, on the negative side with the lessons of the defeat and on the positive side with the legacy of good ideas, feelings and experience of the first wave of the proletarian revolution. Taking now into account all the imperialist countries, we see in each one of them what we see in our country: in no country there is an authoritative direction (for prestige and for links with the mass of workers) that has learned the lessons of the first wave of proletarian revolution, and on this basis is promoting the socialist revolution. And without a proper direction the socialist revolution cannot be carried out.

I think that nobody can deny a scenario so outlined. Based on such a scenario, which support has the thesis that during the first wave of proletarian revolution, let’s say up to 50s of last century, in the imperialist countries the socialist revolution has not been done because of the concessions that the bourgeoisie would have done to the masses? Two world wars and Nazi and fascist dictatorships are the “concessions” that the bourgeoisie has at that time done to the working class and to the popular masses of the European countries!

2. What the communist parties of the imperialist countries had not understood about conditions, forms and results of the class struggle

The second set of arguments is that today, a posteriori, Communists’ limits are clear. We are talking of the limits of the left wing of the communist movement, that is of the part most devoted to the cause and most heroically dedicated to it, in the understanding of world history and of the laws of its transformation. We summarize briefly the main ones: their description is given in detail in other documents of the Party(9).

2.1. The form of the socialist revolution. The socialist revolution, by its nature is not a revolt of the popular masses that outbreaks and during which the communists, who better than others represent the interests of the masses, seize the power and implement the transformation that are in the interests of the overwhelming majority of population. Also the left wing of the communist movement more or less clearly conceived the form of socialist revolution in this way. This is a fact. The discovery announced by Engels in 1895(10) was not taken into account and even less developed in the decades that followed, until in the international communist movement about 30 years ago, mainly thanks to the impulse

of the Communist Party of Peru, it was stated that Maoism is the third higher stage of the communist conception of the world: one of the main contributions of Maoism is the protracted revolutionary people's war as a universal form of the proletarian revolution (see for details *The Eighth Discriminating Factor* in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/discr8/firstprt.html> or the *Manifesto Program (new) Italian Communist Party* in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>). The revolution did not break out, and this is another fact. Only a more advanced understanding of the nature of the socialist revolution, which Engels had paved the way for, could teach that by its nature the socialist revolution is a protracted war in which the masses led by the Communist Party are mobilized on a larger and larger scale step by step.

2.2. The class struggle in the Communist Party and the socialist countries. The conception of the monolithic party misrepresents and coerces reality and hinders the development of the party: the party grows and is strengthened by the two lines struggle in the party. In socialism there is still a ruling class and the bourgeoisie (the right wing of the ruling class, promoter of capitalism) is composed mainly of leaders who promote and support solutions borrowed from the bourgeois society for the problems of the development of the socialist society. It is unavoidable that the bourgeoisie exercises its influence in the party: it is so much possible to limit its influence as better you understand and know it. On this, see *Two lines struggle in the Communist Party* in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/twolines.html>.

2.3. The nature of the economic crisis of capitalism in the imperialist epoch. The cyclical crises fade in short-term fluctuations of small-amplitude, which the bourgeoisie manages through the Antithetical Forms of Social Unity (AFSU) which has adopted. The general crises of absolute overproduction of capital take over. They do not allow purely economic solutions, but they are resolved by the disruption of the complex of the social relations of single countries and of the international relations system through revolution or world war.

2.4. The imperialist bourgeoisie fiercely resists the socialist revolution. To this end, the imperialist bourgeoisie learns, to the extent permitted by its nature of exploiting class, from the experience of class struggle, and changes the political regime by which it manages its contradiction with the working class and with the masses in the imperialist countries. The nature of the political regime of the imperialist countries is a specific result of class struggle in bourgeois society: the preventive counter revolution (see Chapter 1.3.3 of the *Manifesto Program* in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>).

During the first wave of the proletarian revolution the conscious and organized communist movement had not been able to understand any of these four aspects of reality. They were anyway necessary for the communist parties to give themselves a right strategy and to be able to choose the right tactics for making a revolution.

The ignorance of this, not the corruption of the working class and the popular masses, have so far prevented the establishment of socialism in the imperialist countries.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this stock we take is that it is possible to make the socialist revolution and establish socialism in the imperialist countries both in Europe and in the U.S.A without waiting for the success of the new democratic revolution in the oppressed countries of the world imperialist system to deprive the imperialist bourgeoisie of the superprofits it derives from their exploitation. With this conviction based on science, the new Italian Communist Party, based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, faces the task of establishing socialism in Italy so contributing to the second wave of proletarian revolution which advances all around the world.

In actual fact, we believe that it is difficult for the new democratic revolution to grow beyond a certain level in the oppressed countries if the communist movement will not establish socialism at least in some of the imperialist countries. This is not because the force that the world imperialist system can mobilize against the revolution in the oppressed countries is overwhelmingly on the military plan: the war that it has going on in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya clearly show its limitations. This is, on the contrary, because the problems met by the Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cuban, and others Communist Party clearly show how difficult it is to successfully lead the transition to communism in the oppressed countries, even after gaining power. Even from here it rises the call we strongly address to the communist parties of the oppressed countries, particularly to the most influential ones at the international level, to “bring the war in imperialist enemy’s home”, helping the communist parties of the imperialist countries to promote the new birth of the communist movement more strongly and speedily.

Instead, we say to the Communists of the imperialist countries that in our countries there are a lot of people who say they are Communists. They sincerely believe to be and want to be Communists. The Communists who will draw the right lessons from the experience of the first wave of proletarian revolution, although at first will be few, joining their still weak forces will be able to mobilize the many existing Communists and together they will become an irresistible force and the chaos of the new general crisis of capitalism, entered its terminal phase, will overturn into its opposite: it will be the fertile soil from which new socialist countries and the new phase of human history will arise.

Umberto C.

Notes

1. When on the eve of European bourgeois revolution of 1848 Marx and Engels drew up the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, they spent the chapter 3 to establish clearly the distinctions between Communism as they were understanding it and the various Communisms and Socialisms propagandized in the current literature of the time. Today it is necessary we Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communists distinguish clearly the communist movement we are dealing with, and of which we are members and protagonists, from Communisms and Socialisms in fashion. Here we will not do, however, a detailed examination of the latter. We just indicate two big families: the socialism of the XXI century and the market socialism.

The propagandists of “**socialism of the XXI Century**” are using the prestige of the anti-imperialist movement in Latin America headed by Hugo Chavez to smuggle shapeless mixtures in which, in different doses in each case, there are the following ingredients:

1. the not proclaimed denial of the experience of the first socialist countries and of the heritage of the Communist International (founded in 1919 - formally disbanded in 1943 and dissolved in fact in the late 50s), which is “only” set aside and ignored in the name of a “true socialism”, about which they are vague in the manner typical of most of the opportunists and revisionists,
2. to waive the establishment of socialism and the confrontation with the reactionary forces justified with an assessment of the relations of force that magnifies the power of the world imperialist system (“the enemy is too strong, you cannot do more than what Venezuela and Cuba are doing, etc.. “),

3. the return to a supposed state of nature that each author invents, adding characters of primitive people he chooses at his will and separating them as he likes from the characters he does not accept but that in fact pertain to those peoples; the author emphasizes those peoples in the name of the resistance that they, in the wake of the impulse that the first wave of proletarian revolution has given to the progress of the classes and oppressed peoples, have begun to oppose their destruction by the world imperialist system. Here in Italy, a leading representative of such mixtures is prof. Luciano Vasapollo, authority in the theoretical work of the Italian organization Communists' Network.

The supporters of “**market socialism**” strengthen their position with the economic and political success of the People’s Republic of China and of the Chinese Communist Party and the still incomplete integration of the PRC in the world imperialist system. They tout a socialism that is reduced to the public planned management of economic activity, neglecting the struggle against the division into classes and against the complex of social relations, ideas and feelings related to this division and the struggle for the establishment of socialism worldwide. For these supporters of “market socialism” is negligible that the PRC and the CCP with the reforms promoted by Teng Hsiao-ping at the end of the 70s have left 1. in international relations, every aspiration and attempt to play the role of the red base of the world proletarian revolution and, 2. inside, the struggle to affirm the direction of the working class on the basis of public ownership of means of production. In Italy, exponents of this trend are within the Party of Communist Refoundation, in the Party of Italian Communists, and elsewhere.

2. In this context, the argument about **human nature** is spread again. Such argument is an old training ground for metaphysical philosophers and for priests. Basically all the metaphysical philosophers in one way or another claim that the human species and all other species were created by god in the mists of time. According to them, each species has its own character, fixed and unchanging over time. The species would not transform themselves. The metaphysical views are contradicted by the discovery and study of the evolution of species. The existing species arose from other species. In particular, the human species has undergone major changes over the millennia, both physically (that is to say, of characteristics observable and measurable by the instruments and processes of physics, chemistry, biology and similar sciences) but most of all in terms of spiritual abilities and activities of its exponents, of their organization and social activity and of their organization and their relations with the rest of nature. The practical value of the disputes of metaphysical philosophers on human nature is essentially in the support they bring to the argument that Communism is impossible to achieve because is a system of social relations incompatible with the human nature, which in its turn is something created once and for all by god and revealed and governed by its priests. We Communists on the contrary think about human species studying its manifestations and historical works and reconstructing its path and its characteristics by this study. It makes sense to speak of human nature only if it is understood as a combination of characters and abilities that changes over time and is historically determined.

3. The relationship between the communist conception of the world and the struggle of the working class for its emancipation from the bourgeoisie has been studied and described by Lenin in *What Has To Be Done?*, 1902. In this work Lenin also denounces the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie which is the origin of the trends occurring in the communist movement to neglect the communist conception of the world and to conceive the struggle of the working class on the basis of the bourgeois conception of the world, reducing it to struggles for claims and protests. These trends are still one of the two major obstacles to the new birth of the communist movement: it is the economism of which even

groups that declare themselves Maoists, as Proletari Comunisti [Communist Proletarians, or Maoist Party of Italy] make a display.

4. In 1852, in a letter dated 5th March to his comrade Joseph Weydemeyer, Marx summed up his work by saying that what new he had done compared to the previous science of human society developed by bourgeois intellectuals, was “to show

1. that the existence of classes is purely linked to certain historical phases of development of production;
2. that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat;
3. that this dictatorship itself is nothing else than the transition to the extinction of all classes and to a classless society.”

5. In this regard, see *The Political Order Of Socialist Countries* <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in090812.html>

6. In fact, the Russian Federation still does not fully recognize the supremacy that the U.S. has gained in the world imperialist system: this makes it an unusual member of the world imperialist system, in which, however, it occupies an important place on the economic and political level. Let’s compare the difference between the position of Russia and that of Germany: a great imperialist country, the largest trading power, etc. but where, not by chance, substantial U.S. forces, settled more than 60 years ago, still are stationing. What we say about Germany is also true about Japan. The Russian Federation and other former socialist countries are still in the third of the three phases through which the first socialist countries undergo, listed in the *Manifesto Program* of the (n) PCI (see Chap. 1.7.3. in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>).

7. In China the state, local governments and cooperatives’ property still today is more than 80% of the productive forces, however these are measured. These productive forces are controlled by political authorities as part of a plan and “the quantity makes quality”, although there is an area of approximately 20% of the productive forces that are privately owned by Chinese or foreign capitalists. The People’s Republic of China after all is still today in the second of the three phases through which the first socialist countries undergo, listed in the *Manifesto of the program* (n) PCI (Chap. 1.7.3. in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>).

8. The Antithetical Forms of Social Unity were described by Marx in the *Grundrisse*. See *Manifesto Program of the (new) Italian Communist Party*, chapter 1.3.4 in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>.

9. I refer in particular to *The Four Main Issues To Be Debated In The International Communist Movement*, (see <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/f-issues.html>) and *Let The Communists Of The Imperialist Countries Unite Their Forces For The Rebirth Of The Communist Movement* (see <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/lethecom.html>).

10. “The communist movement has not yet embraced the notion that the revolution does not breaks out, but has to be built as Engels already stated in 1895 in the Introduction to *Class Struggles in France from 1848 to 1850*. Both in the time of Second International and in the time of the Communist International most of the parties waiting for the revolution to break out developed activities supporting claiming struggles or propaganda of socialism. From this there

arose the two wrong tendencies that still persist as the major elements that put a check on the new birth of the communist movement, that is economism and dogmatism.

We share the conception expressed by Frederick Engels, who stated that socialist revolution cannot consist of a popular uprising that breaks out because a combination of circumstances, during which the most advanced party seizes the power. (...) the socialist revolution is a protracted revolutionary people's war led by the communist Party one campaign after another, during which the communist party strengthens and consolidates, collects and forms the revolutionary forces organizing the advanced elements of the working class and of the other classes of the popular masses, as well as in its own ranks, in mass organizations which clump around the party (revolutionary front), and builds, extends and strengthens step by step a new direction on broad popular masses, a new power which is opposed to that of the bourgeoisie and hugs him in a growing vise until it supplants it, as a rule through a civil war roused by the bourgeoisie when it is with its back on the wall, grabs the whole country and establishes socialism." (*The Four Main Issues To Be Debated In The International Communist Movement*, see Note 9).