



## On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (Abridged)

### Communist Party of Peru

Preface: ["On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism" comes from the first congress of the Communist Party of Peru in January of 1988. It is a part of a series of documents known as the parties' fundamental documents. It was made with the goal of highlighting Mao's contributions to Marxism along explaining why they make a third higher stage of Marxism. It was created by the party's central committee in the midst of armed struggle. In May of 1980, the Communist Party of Peru launched their people's war. Nearly eight years later they held their first congress.]

(This text has been trimmed down from its original length for our study)

In the furnace of class struggle, the ideology of the international proletariat emerged as Marxism, afterwards developed into Marxism-Leninism and later Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Therefore, the scientific ideology of the proletariat, all-powerful because it is true, has three stages or landmarks in its dialectical process of development: 1) Marxism, 2) Leninism, and 3) Maoism. These three stages are part of the same unity which began with the *Communist Manifesto* one hundred and forty years ago, with the heroic epic of the class struggle, in fierce and fruitful two-line struggles within the communist parties themselves and in the titanic work of thought and action that only the working class could generate. Today, three unfading lights are outstanding: Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tse-tung who, through three grand leaps have armed us with the invincible ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, which today is principally Maoism.

Nevertheless, while Marxism-Leninism has obtained an acknowledgment of its universal validity, Maoism is not completely acknowledged as the third stage. Some simply deny its condition as such, while others only accept it as "Mao Tse-tung Thought." In essence, both positions, with the obvious differences between them, deny the general development of Marxism made by Chairman Mao Tse-tung. The denial of the "ism" character of Maoism denies its universal validity and, consequently, its condition as the third, new, and superior stage of the ideology of the international proletariat: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, that we uphold, defend, and apply.

As an **INTRODUCTION**, in order to better understand Maoism and the necessity to struggle for it, let us remember Lenin. He taught us that as the revolution advanced to the East it expressed specific conditions that, while they did not negate principles or laws, were new situations that Marxism could not ignore, upon the risk of putting the revolution in danger of a defeat. Notwithstanding the uproar against what is new by pedantic and bookish intellectuals, who are stuffed with liberalism and false Marxism, the only just and correct thing to do is to apply

Marxism to the concrete conditions and to solve the new situations and problems that every revolution necessarily faces. Lenin also said clearly that the revolution in the East would present new and great surprises to the greater amazement of the worshipers of following only the well-trodden paths who are incapable of seeing the new; and, as we all know, he trusted the Eastern comrades to resolve the problems that Marxism had not yet resolved.

Furthermore, we must keep well in mind that when Comrade Stalin justly and correctly stated that we had entered the stage of Leninism as the development of Marxism, there was also opposition by those who rend their garments in a supposed defense of Marxism. There were also those who said that Leninism was only applicable to the backward countries. But, in the midst of struggle, practice has consecrated Leninism as a great development of Marxism, and thus the proletarian ideology shone victoriously in the face of the world as Marxism-Leninism.

Today, Maoism faces similar situations. All new things, like Marxism, have always advanced through struggle, and similarly, Maoism will impose itself and be acknowledged.

On the **CONTENT** of Maoism, of its substance, we must point out the following basic issues:

1. **Theory.** Marxism has three parts: Marxist philosophy, Marxist political economy, and scientific socialism. The development of all these three components gives rise to a great qualitative leap of Marxism as a whole, as a unity on a superior level, which implies a new stage. Consequently, the essential thing is to show that Chairman Mao, as can be seen in theory and practice, has generated such a great qualitative leap. Let us highlight this with the following points:

In **Marxist philosophy** he developed the essence of dialectics, the law of contradiction, establishing it as the only fundamental law; and besides his profound dialectical understanding of the theory of knowledge, whose center are the two leaps that make up its law (from practice to knowledge and vice versa, but with knowledge to practice being the main one). We emphasize that he masterfully applied the law of contradiction in politics; and moreover he brought philosophy to the masses of people, fulfilling the task that Marx left.

In **Marxist political economy**, Chairman Mao applied dialectics to analyze the relationship between the base and superstructure, and, continuing the struggle of Marxism-Leninism against the revisionist thesis of the "productive forces", he concluded that the superstructure, consciousness, can modify the base, and that with political power the productive forces can be developed. By developing the Leninist idea that politics is the concentrated expression of economics, he established that politics must be in command, (applicable on all levels) and that political work is the life-line of economic work; which takes us to the true handling of political economy, not just a simple economic policy.

Despite its importance, an issue which is often sidestepped, especially by those who face democratic revolutions, is the Maoist thesis of bureaucratic capitalism; that is, the capitalism which is being developed in the oppressed nations by imperialism along with different degrees of underlying feudalism, or even pre-feudal stages. This is a vital problem, mainly in Asia, Africa and Latin America, since a good revolutionary leadership derives from its understanding,

especially when the confiscation of bureaucratic capital forms the economic basis for carrying forward the socialist revolution as the second stage.

But the main thing is that Chairman Mao Tse-tung has developed the political economy of socialism. Of the utmost importance is his criticism of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, as well as his theses on how to develop socialism in China: Taking agriculture as the base and industry as the leading economic force, promoting industrialization guided by the relationship between heavy industry, light industry and agriculture; taking heavy industry as the center of economic construction and simultaneously paying full attention to light industry and agriculture. The Great Leap Forward and the conditions for its execution should be highlighted: One, the political line that gives it a just and correct course; two, small, medium, and large organizational forms in a greater to lesser quantity, respectively; three, a great drive, a gigantic effort of the masses of people in order to put it in motion and to take it through to success, a leap forward whose results are valued more for the new process set in motion and its historical perspective than its immediate achievements, and its linkage with agricultural collectivization and the people's communes. Finally, we must bear well in mind his teachings on the objectivity and the subjectivity in understanding and handling the laws of socialism, that because the few decades of socialism have not permitted it to see its complete development, and therefore a better understanding of its laws and its specification, and principally the relationship that exists between revolution and the economic process, embodied in the slogan "grasp revolution and promote production".

In **scientific socialism**, Chairman Mao further developed the theory of social classes analyzing them on economic, political, and ideological planes. He upheld revolutionary violence as a universal law without any exception whatsoever; revolution as a violent displacement of one class by another, thus establishing the great thesis that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun". He resolved the question of the conquest of political power in the oppressed nations through the path of surrounding the cities from the countryside, establishing its general laws. He defined and developed the theory of the class struggle within socialism in which he brilliantly demonstrated that the antagonistic struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and between socialism and capitalism continues. That in socialism it was not concretely determined who would defeat whom, that it was a problem whose solution demands time, the unfolding of a process of restoration and counter-restoration, in order for the proletariat to strongly hold political power definitely through the proletarian dictatorship; and, finally and principally, the grandiose solution of historical transcendence, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as the continuation of the socialist revolution under the proletarian dictatorship.

These basic questions, simply and plainly stated but known and undeniable, show the Chairman's development of the integral parts of Marxism, and the evident raising of Marxism-Leninism to a new, third and superior stage: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism.

**2. The New Democratic Revolution.** Firstly, it is a development of the Marxist theory of the State, establishing three types of dictatorships:

- 1) Dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, in the old bourgeois democracies like the United States, a type in which the dictatorships of the oppressed nations such as the Latin American ones can be assimilated.
- 2) proletarian dictatorships, like the ones in the Soviet Union or in China before the usurpation of power by the revisionists.
- 3) New Democracy, as a joint dictatorship based on the worker-peasant alliance, led by the proletariat headed up by the Communist Party, which was formed in China during its democratic revolution, and which is concretely expressed in Perú today through the People's Committees, in the base areas and in the People's Republic of New Democracy in formation. It is fundamental to emphasize, within this development of the theory of the state, the key differentiation between a state system as a dictatorship of a class or classes that hold political power, which is principal, and a system of government, which is understood as an organization for the exercise of political power.

On the other hand, New Democracy, one of the extraordinary developments made by Chairman Mao, masterfully materializes for us the bourgeois revolution of a new type, which only the proletariat can lead. In synthesis, it is the democratic revolution within the new era of world proletarian revolution in which we evolve. The New Democratic Revolution implies a new economy, a new politics, and a new culture, obviously overthrowing the old order and upholding the new one with arms, the only way to transform the world.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that New Democracy is a democratic revolution. Although it mainly fulfills the democratic tasks, it also complementarily advances in some socialist tasks, so that the question of two stages, democratic and socialist, which corresponds to countries like ours, is thoroughly solved by guaranteeing that once the democratic stage is concluded, it will be continued as a socialist revolution, without any intermissions or interruptions.

**3. The three instruments.** The problem of the construction of the instruments of the revolution presents the Party with the problem of understanding the interrelationship between the Party, the army and the united front; and to understand and correctly handle the interconnected construction of the three instruments in the midst of war or in the defense of the new State based on the power of the armed people, expressing in that way a just and correct task of leadership. Their construction is guided by the principle that a just and correct ideological line decides everything, and it is on this ideological-political basis that the organizational construction is simultaneously developed in the midst of the struggle between the proletarian line and the bourgeois line and within the storm of the class struggle, mainly in war, as the principal form of current or potential struggle.

Regarding the **Party**, Chairman Mao starts from the necessity of the Communist Party, a new type of party, a party of the proletariat. Today, we would say a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Party: a party whose aim is to conquer political power and to defend it, and therefore it is inextricably bound to people's war in order to initiate it, develop it or wage it to defend itself. A party sustained by the masses of people, be it by way of people's war which is a war of the masses, or by the united front which, being a front of classes, is based on the broad masses. The Party

develops and changes itself according to the stages of the revolution and the periods that these stages may have. The driving of its development is the contradiction which materializes in its heart as the two-line struggle, the proletarian line and the bourgeois or in general non-proletarian line, which is in essence and mainly a struggle against revisionism. This leads to the decisive importance of ideology in the life of the party and to the development of rectification campaigns that serve a greater adjustment of all the systems of party organizations and the membership to the just and correct ideological and political lines, guaranteeing the predominance of the proletarian line and keeping the Party leadership in its iron grip.

The **revolutionary army** is of a new type. It is an army for the fulfillment of the political tasks that the Party establishes in accordance with the interests of the proletariat and the people. This characteristic is concretely expressed in three tasks: To combat, to produce in order to pose no parasitical burden, and to mobilize the masses. It is an army based on the political development of the proletariat's ideology, from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (today), and from the general political line as well as the military one that the Party may establish. It is an army based on people and not on weapons, an army that surged from the masses with whom it has always been linked, serving them wholeheartedly, which allows it to move among the people like fish in the water. Without a people's army the people have nothing, said Chairman Mao, at the same time he taught us the necessity of the Party's absolute leadership over the army and his great principle: The Party commands the gun, and we will never permit it to be otherwise. The Chairman himself called for preventing the use of the army for the restoration of capitalism by usurping the leadership through a counterrevolution coup d'état.

It was Chairman Mao who for the first time developed a complete theory on the **united front** and established its laws. A front of social classes based on the worker-peasant alliance as a guarantee of the proletariat's hegemony in the revolution, which is led by the proletariat represented by the Communist Party; in synthesis, a united front under the leadership of the Communist Party, a united front for the people's war, for the revolution, for the conquest of power for the proletariat and the people. In synthesis, the united front is the grouping of the revolutionary forces against the counter-revolutionary forces in order to wage the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution mainly through the armed people's war. The united front, obviously, is not the same in every stage of the revolution and, furthermore, it has its specifications according to the various historical periods of each stage; likewise, the united front in a concrete revolution does not equal the one on a world level, although both follow the same general laws. Apart from this, it is important to emphasize the relation between the front and the State that Chairman Mao established when the war of resistance against Japan was evolving, setting forth that the united front is a form of joint dictatorship, a question that deserves to be especially studied by those who face democratic revolutions.

4. **The People's War** is the military theory of the international proletariat; in it are summarized, for the first time in a systematic and complete form, the theoretical and practical experience of the struggles, military actions, and wars waged by the proletariat, and the prolonged experience of the people's armed struggle and especially of the incessant wars in China. It is with Chairman Mao that the proletariat attains its military theory; nevertheless, there is much confusion and

misunderstanding on this issue. And much of it springs from how the People's War in China is seen. Generally, it is considered derisively and contemptuously simply as a guerrilla war; this alone denotes a lack of understanding. Chairman Mao pointed out that guerrilla warfare achieves a strategic feature; but due to its essential fluidity, the development of guerrilla warfare is not understood as it exists, how it develops mobility, a war of movements, of positions, how it unfolds great plans of the strategic offensive and the seizure of small, mid-sized, and big cities, with millions of inhabitants, combining the attack from outside with the insurrection from within. Thus, in conclusion, the four periods of the Chinese revolution, and mainly from the agrarian war until the people's war of liberation, considering the anti-Japanese war of resistance between both, shows the various aspects and complexities of the revolutionary war waged during more than twenty years amidst a huge population and an immense mobilization and participation of the masses. In that war there are examples of every kind; and what is principal has been extraordinarily studied and its principles, laws, strategy, tactics, rules, etc. masterfully established. It is, therefore, in this fabulous crucible and on what was established by Marxism-Leninism that Chairman Mao developed the military theory of the proletariat: The People's War.

We must fully bear in mind that subsequently, Chairman Mao himself, aware of the existence of atomic bombs and missiles and with China already having them, sustained and developed people's war in order to wage it under the new conditions of atomic weapons and of war against powers and super-powers. In synthesis, people's war is the weapon of the proletariat and of the people, even to confront atomic wars.

A key and decisive question is the understanding of the universal validity of people's war and its subsequent application taking into account the different types of revolution and the specific conditions of each revolution. To clarify this key issue it is important to consider that no insurrection like that of Petrograd, the anti-fascist resistance, or the European guerrilla movements in the Second World War have been repeated, as well as considering the armed struggles that are presently being waged in Europe. In the final analysis, the October Revolution was not only an insurrection but a revolutionary war that lasted for several years. Consequently, in the imperialist countries the revolution can only be conceived as a revolutionary war which today is simply people's war.

**5. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution** in a historical perspective is the most transcendental development of Marxism-Leninism made by Chairman Mao; it is the solution to the great pending problem of the continuation of the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship: "It represents a more profound and wider new stage in the development of the socialist revolution in our country."

What was the situation that presented itself? As stated in the Decision of the Communist Party of China on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution states: "Although overthrown, the bourgeoisie still tries to avail itself of the old ideas, culture, habits and ways of the exploiting classes in order to corrupt the masses and to conquer the minds of the people in its endeavors to restore its power. The proletariat must do exactly the opposite: It must deal merciless, frontal blows to all the challenges by the bourgeoisie in the ideological arena and change the spiritual

composition of the whole society using its own new ideas, culture, habits and ways. Our present aim is to crush, through struggle, those who occupy leading posts and follow the capitalist road, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois 'authorities' in the academic fields, to criticize and repudiate the ideology of the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes, and to transform education, literature, and art and the rest of areas of the superstructure that do not correspond to the economic base of socialism, in order to facilitate the consolidation and the development of the socialist system."

The restoration of capitalism in China after the 1976 counter-revolutionary coup is not a negation of the GPCR but is plainly part of the contention between restoration and counter-restoration, and, on the contrary, it shows us the transcendental historical importance of the GPCR in the inexorable march of mankind towards Communism.

**6. World Revolution.** Chairman Mao emphasizes the importance of the world revolution as a unity, on the basis that revolution is the main trend while the decomposition of imperialism is greater each day, and the role played by the masses grows more immense each year, masses that make and shall make their transforming and unstoppable strength be felt, and reiterates the great truth: Either we all reach Communism or nobody does. Within this specific perspective in the era of imperialism, the great historical moment of the "next 50 to 100 years", and within this context the opening period of struggle against Yankee imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, paper tigers that contend for hegemony and threaten the world with an atomic war, in the face of which, firstly we must condemn it, and secondly, we must prepare ourselves beforehand in order to oppose it with people's war and make the revolution. On the other hand, starting from the historical importance of the oppressed nations and, furthermore, from their perspective both in the economic and political relationships that are evolving on account of the process of decomposition of imperialism, Chairman Mao stated his thesis that "three worlds delineate themselves". All of which leads to the necessity of developing the strategy and tactics of world revolution. Regrettably, we know little or almost nothing about Chairman Mao's writings and statements on these transcendental questions; nevertheless, the very little that is known shows the grand perspectives which he watched closely and the great outlines that we must follow in order to understand and serve the proletarian world revolution

**7. Superstructure, ideology, culture, and education.** These and other related issues have been subtly and deeply studied by Chairman Mao. For that reason, this is also another basic question that deserves attention.

In conclusion, the contents seen in these fundamental issues show clearly to whoever wants to see and understand that we have, therefore, a new, third, and superior stage of Marxism: Maoism; and that to be a Marxist in these days demands to be a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist and mainly Maoist.

All that has been explained in the contents leads us to two questions:

What is fundamental in Maoism? **Political Power is fundamental in Maoism.** Political power for the proletariat, power for the dictatorship of the proletariat, power based on an armed force led by the Communist Party. More explicitly:

- 1) Political power under the leadership of the proletariat in the democratic revolution;
- 2) Political power for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the socialist and cultural revolutions;
- 3) Political power based on an armed force led by the Communist Party, conquered and defended through people's war.

And, what is Maoism? Maoism is the elevation of Marxism-Leninism to a new, third, and superior stage in the struggle for proletarian leadership of the democratic revolution, the development of the construction of socialism and the continuation of the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship as a proletarian cultural revolution; when imperialism deepens its decomposition and revolution has become the main tendency of history, amidst the most complex and largest wars seen to date and the implacable struggle against contemporary revisionism.

On the **STRUGGLE AROUND MAOISM**. Briefly, the struggle in China for establishing Mao Tse-tung Thought began in 1935 at the Tsunyi Meeting, when Chairman Mao assumed the leadership of the Communist Party of China. In 1945 the VII Congress agreed that the CPC was guided by Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse-tung Thought, a specification suppressed by the VIII Congress, since a rightist line prevailed in it. The IX Congress in 1969 resumed the GPCR and ratified that the CPC is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought; that was as far as it advanced.

On an international level, it acquired influence from the 1950s onwards; but it is with the GPCR that it intensely spread out and its prestige rose powerfully and Chairman Mao was acknowledged as the leader of the world revolution and originator of a new stage in Marxism-Leninism; thus, a great number of Communist Parties assumed the denomination of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought. On the world level, Maoism confronted contemporary revisionism openly unmasking it profoundly and forcefully, and likewise it did so in the CPC's own ranks, all of which raised the Chairman's great red banner still more: The new, third, and superior stage of the ideology of the international proletariat. At present (1988), Maoism confronts the triple attack of Soviet, Chinese and Albanian revisionism. But today, even among those who acknowledge the Chairman's great contributions, including the development of Marxism, there are some who believe that we are still in the stage of Marxism-Leninism, and others who only accept Mao Tse-tung Thought but by no means Maoism.