

The New Democratic Revolution and the Main Force of the World Proletarian Revolution ¹



By
Communist Party of Brazil
2023

¹ Prepared by Maoism Library from <https://redherald.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/A-Revolucao-de-Nova-Democracia-a-forca-principal-da-Revolucao-Proletaria-Mundial-PCB.pdf>

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I- Introduction

December 26th will mark the 130th anniversary of the birth of the great titan of the international proletariat, Chairman Mao Zedong. Chairman Mao, Great Leader of the CPC, was directly and personally responsible for leading two great events in the 20th century: the Great Chinese Revolution (1949) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). In the course of these processes, he established and developed Maoism: the new, third and higher stage of Marxism. It propelled the ideology of the international proletariat to its highest peak, continuing the work of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, resolving decisive issues for the World Proletarian Revolution in a comprehensive manner. The Great Chinese Revolution represented the solution to the problem of how to make the proletarian revolution, uninterrupted to socialism, in colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries. The GPCR solved the question of the continuity of revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat towards the golden communism. From a theoretical point of view, Maoism constitutes a qualitative leap in the three component parts of Marxism as a whole. In Marxist philosophy, Chairman Mao made a brilliant leap by establishing the *law of contradiction* as the sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics, as well as completing the development of the Marxist theory of knowledge established by Lenin. In Marxist political economy, he makes crucial progress in establishing the economic laws of socialist construction, on how the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie remains as the principal contradiction in this stage of transition to communism. In addition, he establishes the theory of bureaucratic capitalism, a kind of capitalism that is engendered by imperialism in the colonies/semi-colonies, resulting from the export of capital. In doing so, he develops the Leninist theory of imperialism, as he shows the indissoluble relationship between imperialism and latifundium in the countries it oppresses. In scientific socialism, Chairman Mao establishes the theory of the New Democratic Revolution, the universal form of the proletarian revolution in the colonial/semi-colonial countries and its uninterrupted passage into socialism; and how to carry out class struggle in socialism, in the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to develop the transition into communism and prevent the danger of restoration, through successive proletarian cultural revolutions. Furthermore, he establishes the military theory of the proletariat in its most developed form: the Protracted People's War. Today, more than ever, to be a communist is to be a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist. Therefore, the International Communist League's (ICL) call for the celebration of the 130th anniversary of Chairman Mao Zedong's birth all over the world is of great importance. This December 26th will mark the one-year anniversary of the public announcement of the founding of the ICL, the new international organization of the proletariat created by the successful Unified Maoist International Conference (UMIC). The UMIC was the result of more than ten years of concentrated work, meetings, Regional Conferences and international action campaigns. After this resolute and heightened struggle, 15 Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and Organizations from 14 countries gave birth to the ICL and thus communicated their decision to the international proletariat:

“The Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and Organizations participating on the UNIFIED MAOIST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (UMIC) – following the path of the Third International founded by the Great Lenin and the best traditions of the International Communist Movement (ICM) – solemnly declare to the international Proletariat and the peoples of the world that the historical and transcendental decision of giving birth to the new international Maoist organization was taken, founded under the three great and glorious red banners: Maoism, the struggle against revisionism and the world proletarian revolution.

With deep communist conviction, we parties and organizations reunited here reaffirm ourselves – once more and with solemn commitment – in fulfilling the agreements of the Unified Maoist International Conference, defending and applying the almighty ideology of the international proletariat– Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

It is a firm commitment in the arduous and restless struggle for imposing Maoism as the sole command and guide of the World Revolution, the only deeply red and unfading flag which is the guarantee of triumph for the proletariat, the oppressed nations and the peoples of the world in its inexorable march towards the golden and forever shining communism.”²

The holding of the UMIC culminated a whole phase characterized by dispersion and attempts to regroup forces and, at the same time, opened a new phase of an intense two-line struggle, which ran throughout 2022, after the publication of the *Bases for Discussion* by the Coordinating Committee for a Unified Maoist International Conference. The journal *Communist International* published all the critical and supportive positions to the *Bases for Discussion*, promoting a two-line struggle that had not been seen in the International Communist Movement for a long time. The UMIC was the culmination of a stage for the organizations present and for the supporters who didn't make it to the big event. The brilliant *Political Declaration and the Principles*, published on December 26th, was the highest ideological result. The flag-waving actions in its celebration, which were carried out across dozens of countries in January 2023, were the first practical results of the founding of the International Communist League, followed by the massive May Day celebrations, the international campaign against the construction of the Interoceanic Corridor of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec (Mexico), the powerful tribute to the 50th anniversary of the fall in battle of Ibrahim Kaypakkaya (TKP/ML), the campaign to honor and glorify the memory of Filipino comrades Benito and Wilma (CPP), the internationalist actions for the release of political prisoners in the demonstrations in France and the call to the democratic, anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces to forcefully demonstrate their support for the heroic Palestinian National Resistance and to condemn and reject the Zionist state of Israel and its criminal actions throughout the 76 years of genocide of the Palestinian people.

Exactly 40 years ago, Chairman Gonzalo and the PCP launched the challenging *Campaign for Maoism*. The holding of the UMIC and the founding of the ICL have succeeded in completing

² International Communist League, *Political Declaration and the Principles*, 2022.

an important stage of this task, which represents a decisive step towards the worldwide reunification of communists, overcoming dispersion, combating revisionism and towards the future reconstitution of the glorious Communist International. It therefore represents a heavy blow to imperialism, revisionism and world reaction, which will sooner rather than later be swept away from the face of the earth by the World Proletarian Revolution! This world revolution is composed of two major currents: the international proletarian revolutionary movement (present in all countries) and the national liberation movement (present in colonial and semi-colonial countries). The first current is the existing Communist Parties or those to be constituted and reconstituted in all the countries of the planet and the ICM; the second current represents the democratic-revolutionary struggle present in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which must be led by the respective Communist Parties. The founding of the ICL plays an important role in the revolutionary fusion of these two great currents of the World Proletarian Revolution.

The brilliant revolutionary counter-offensive by the heroic Palestinian National Resistance has dealt a resounding blow to the genocidal Zionist state of Israel. The audacious attack by the Palestinian guerrillas, under the leadership of the Palestinian National Resistance (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine), against the territory occupied by Israel is a great victory of the World Proletarian Revolution. After all, it represented a resounding blow against the occupation and expansionism of the Zionist Israeli state and its master, Yankee imperialism, the greatest enemy of the peoples of the world. The masses of the whole world celebrated this great victory of the Palestinian National Resistance, which even more forcefully puts at the center of the world debate that the oppressed peoples and nations of the whole world are alive, burning with hope in a determined and bloody struggle against imperialist domination. These masses are demand for consistent ideological, political and military leadership and, therefore, it is the duty of the International Communist Movement to accelerate the pace of their struggles in order to reach the higher form of the revolutionary class struggle that is People's War.

The heroic Palestinian National Resistance, the great victory of the Taliban in expelling Yankee troops from their territory and the persistent resistance of the Ukrainian people who are fighting both the Russian imperialist occupation and the leadership of Zelensky, a lackey of Yankee imperialism and the European Union, represent the current confirmation that in imperialism the principal contradiction of this stage of capitalism is that which opposes oppressed peoples and nations to imperialist domination. This powerful banner, unfolded by Chairman Mao in the 1960s, was once again raised by the ICL, in a precise and forceful manner, in its *Political Declaration and the Principles*:

“The whole process of the capitalist society has the **contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as the fundamental contradiction**. Yet, **three fundamental contradictions** are developed in the world when it transits from non-monopoly capitalism into monopoly capitalism – or imperialism:

[...]

First contradiction: between oppressed nations, on the one hand, and imperialist superpowers and powers on the other. This is the principal contradiction in the current moment and **the principal contradiction of the epoch of imperialism** at the same time.

[...]

Second contradiction: between proletariat and bourgeoisie.

[...]

Third contradiction: inter-imperialist.”³

The forceful resurgence of the tireless struggle for national liberation in the 21st century, expressed in a condensed form in the heroic struggle of the Palestinian masses, is a clear demonstration that the World Proletarian Revolution urgently demand for Maoist leadership. For only Maoism can provide leadership to this struggle and lead it to victory against imperialism; this is because it was Maoism that, by establishing the law of contradiction as the sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics, succeeded in demonstrating that imperialism sustains national oppression in the reproduction of semi-feudality in colonial and semi-colonial countries, and thus forged the New Democratic Revolution as the universal form of the Proletarian Revolution in the countries oppressed by imperialism. Maoism will be taken up by these masses to the extent that communists support, directly participate in and lead these struggles. In this sense, the ongoing People's Wars in Peru, Turkey, India and the Philippines, and those about to initiate, are great bulwarks for the impetus and correct leadership for these struggles.

The Palestinian, Afghan and Ukrainian resistances, despite their national-semifeudal and national-bourgeois leaderships, are spontaneously approaching the postulates of Maoism through the theory of Protracted People's War, applying it in their own way, because only this way can they strike decisive blows against imperialism. However, this is not enough, it is necessary for these processes to take up Maoism as their ideological-political line and leadership, because only then will they be able to raise their anti-imperialist resistance to a national-democratic revolutionary war uninterrupted toward socialism, the only possible way to defeat and sweep imperialism away from the face of earth. However, this can only be achieved by strengthening the ICM, by constituting and reconstituting Communist Parties in each country in order to initiate and develop the People's War. With regard to national resistances, it is urgent that communists support them, directly participate in them and in this way fight to provide them with proletarian leadership.

The founding of the ICL is an important step in this direction, as it has made great strides against the danger of dispersion, by unifying 15 Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and Organizations from 14 countries in the same international organization. These include the Communist Party of Peru-PCP and the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist-TKP/ML,

³ *Ibid.* Here the ICL is paraphrasing the Communist Party of Peru

which are leading two very important people's wars in the world. At the same time, the founding of the ICL opens a new stage in the two-line struggle in the ICM. On the one hand, important parties which are leading very important people's wars but were unable to take part in the UMIC and its preparatory debates such as the Communist Party of the Philippines-CPP and the Communist Party of India (Maoist)-CPI(Maoist) have taken different positions this year on the founding of the ICL and on its *Political Declaration and the Principles*. On the other hand, organizations that were invited to the Conference took part in the public two-line struggle last year and deliberately decided not to take part in the UMIC and defend their positions there. This latter group includes two organizations that were very close to Avakianism and Prachandaism in the recent past, respectively UOC (MLM) in Colombia and PCm (Italy), which have continued to express the same critical positions towards the UMIC and the then founded ICL.

The two-line struggle around the ICL's *Political Declaration and the Principles*, which has been going on throughout 2023, is the continuation, on a new level, of the two-line struggle around the *Basis for Discussion* that served as the call for the UMIC. There are several differences and nuances in these positions, but among them there are important differences that delineate a demarcation line: those who defend the validity of the New Democratic Revolution and the principality of the contradiction between oppressed nations and peoples versus imperialism; and those who deny the crucial importance of the New Democratic Revolution and relegate the principal contradiction to a secondary condition

On the one hand, the Parties and Organizations participating in the ICL, plus the CPP⁴ and CPI(Maoist) openly stand for the proletarian, red line, which fully corresponds to the imperialist stage and the present epoch. On the other side there are the UOC (MLM) and PCm (Italy), who argue that imperialism has swept away the semi-feudal relations of the semi-colonial countries, making the new democratic revolution increasingly outdated. The former represents the defense of Maoism, the universality of the New Democratic Revolution for semi-colonial countries. The latter continue to defend the revisionist modalities of the 21st century, notably Avakianism and Prachandaism. The UOC (MLM) in a more explicit way, the PCm (Italy) in a more cunning and covert way.

The day after the historic announcement of the founding of the ICL, the Communist Workers' Union (mlm) of Colombia issued a *communiqué* in which it justified its non-participation in the UMIC to its bases. Shortly afterwards, they published a long document in which they criticized the 15 founding Parties and Organizations of the ICL, and particularly our party, the Communist Party of Brazil (P.C.B.), for alleged "*sectarianism and leftism*". In this document, the UOC (MLM) specifically attacks us for allegedly having been treated in a "*grotesque and humiliating*" way during a visit they made to Brazil in 2016. We will refute this rabid and vile lie in the end, as we consider it more important for the ICM to go into the ideological, philosophical, political, and economic content of the UOC (MLM)'s criticisms to the UMIC and the ICL's founding parties and organizations. As Chairman Gonzalo teaches us, we must raise the ideological struggle to the level of a two-line struggle in order to eliminate right-

⁴ Communist Party of the Philippines

wing and "left-wing" opportunist positions and dogmatism, thereby smashing revisionism. The document of the UOC (MLM) attacking the ICL and the P.C.B. in particular, insofar as they defend their position in detail, exposing their understanding of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in such a way that allows us to see their convergence with revisionism and consequent negation of Maoism. For, although they define themselves as "Marxist-Leninist-Maoist", they openly deny the *law of contradiction* as the sole fundamental law of dialectics, deny the validity of the new democratic revolution for the colonial/semi-colonial countries, affirming the existence of a supposed *progressive tendency* in imperialism, deny the decisive importance of the peasant struggle for the revolution in the countries oppressed by imperialism. Colombia is the country with the highest concentration of land in the world, with one of the longest traditions of peasant armed struggle in Latin America, and the leadership of the UOC (MLM) claim that there are practically no peasants left in their country and that the Colombian revolution would be immediately socialist.

A century after its founding, after very hard experiences in the struggle to establish itself as an authentic revolutionary party of the proletariat and especially in the last almost three decades of struggle for its reconstitution as a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, principally Maoist, contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo, militarized communist party, the P.C.B. in the long process of learning from its own history and international experience, rectifying errors, but always relying on the positive aspects of all international experience, considers that it is necessary and urgent to deal more thoroughly and rigorously with the deviations and prevarications on fundamental questions of Marxism and that are so crucial to the evaluation of the historical experience of the Proletarian Revolution and the International Communist Movement (ICM), particularly these deviations and their prevarications at the present time. In this document, in order to contribute to the *two-line struggle* on these questions, we do so in the form of a polemic, insofar as the criticisms and attacks by the leadership of the UOC (MLM) on the ICL and the P.C.B., positions which we characterize as Avakianism and Trotskyism, are presented in a more concentrated and explicit form. Throughout the text, in our analysis and arguments, we make use of numerous and lengthy quotations from the classics of Marxism, many of which are already well known to many, but which we have used repeatedly because we consider them to be extremely important in the currently ongoing *two-line struggle* in the ICM, to lay out its conceptual basis with all scientific rigor and, at the same time, to contemplate to all possible readers and those interested in this struggle, who are concerned on attracting the growing revolutionary activism of the new generations to them, among whom many surely still lack a better grasp of revolutionary theory.

II- The law of contradiction: sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the scientific ideology of the proletariat, it is the "*omnipotent because it is true*"⁵ doctrine, as defined by Lenin. It is ideology because it is the

⁵ V. I. Lenin, The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism (1913), Collected Works, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1977, Volume 19, p.23.

thought of a certain social class, it is scientific because it seeks and relies in truth as a weapon to transform the world:

“In a word, every ideology is historically conditional, but **it is unconditionally true** that to **every scientific ideology** (as distinct, for instance, from religious ideology), **there corresponds an objective truth**, absolute nature.”⁶

Marxist philosophy is dialectical materialism. The fundamental problem of philosophical materialism constitutes the relationship between thinking and being, in which being is primacy. Engels establishes this issue in a crystal-clear way in his work *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of classical German philosophy*, by defining that dialectical materialism defends the primary character of being in relation to thinking, and that thinking can reach knowledge by reflecting the objective laws of matter and by transforming it. Dialectics deals with the general laws of motion, the connection between processes, things and phenomena. Materialist dialectics studies the general laws of the motion of matter in its various manifestations: nature, society and thinking.

The most general formulations of dialectical materialism were developed in the course of the class struggle and the process of applying the ideology of the international proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, to the concrete revolutionary practice. Philosophy, as an indispensable part of revolutionary theory was formulated more precisely at each stage of the development of the ideology. As a product of this process, in its third stage, Maoism, the superior synthesis is achieved, the most advanced of the revolutionary content of the materialist dialectics. In his works *On Practice*, *On Contradiction* (1937), *On the correct handling of contradictions among the people* (1957), and *Where did Men's Correct Thinking Come From?* (1963), as well as in the great philosophical polemics in the CPC, which took place between May 1964 and May 1965, around the philosophical principle that everything in the universe is *one that divides into two*, Chairman Mao, in the midst of acute class struggle and two-line struggle, made a great leap in Marxist philosophy, both in its formulation and application, as well as in its ability to bring this revolutionary philosophy to the broad masses.

The leap in materialist dialectics made by Maoism can be summarized as follows: all processes of matter, that is, in the universe (nature, society and thinking) occur as the development of a unity between two contradictory aspects, the struggle between opposites runs through all the processes from the beginning to the end – or their resolution. Opposite aspects are interdependent and opposed at the same time. In the process of development of a thing or phenomenon, interdependence – or unity between opposites – is relative and struggle is absolute. In the development of the contradiction, from a stage of quantitative changes it advances to a stage of qualitative change, in which transformation is apparent and manifest. Qualitative change corresponds to the quality leap in the phenomenon, when the interdependence between opposite aspects breaks and, finally, the opposites transform into each other, forming a new unity of opposites and, like this, infinitely developing. From the

⁶ V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (1909), Collected Works, Progress Publishers Moscow 1977, Volume 14, p.136. our emphasis

affirmation of the old unity of opposites we move towards the negation of this unity, towards the transformation of the quality of the phenomenon or towards the emergence of a new process.

As we will see in more detail below, this is the highest formulation of the Marxist philosophy established by Maoism on the eve of the launch of the GPCR. It represents both a leap in the philosophical formulation of Marxism and a continuity of it. For, although Marx and Lenin did not have the opportunity or time to establish the law of contradiction in this form as the *sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics*, they have applied this same content in their theoretical and practical work. Taking *Capital*, Marx's *magnum opus*, we will find this same fundamental law applied, whose most precise and popular formulation achieved a higher development with Maoism. Likewise, we will find countless examples of the precise application of the *sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics* throughout the Leninist arsenal.

Obviously, the establishment of the *law of contradiction* by Chairman Mao constitutes a leap because it arms the proletariat with a sharper and more precise philosophy. However, philosophy is not a science above the sciences and its development is an inseparable part of the process of advancing humanity's systematized knowledge. In the same way as the advancement of the different branches of science depends on the advancement of philosophy, the advancement of philosophy also depends on the advancement of social and natural science; and they all depend on the advancement of social practice in its three fundamental types: the struggle for production, the class struggle and scientific experimentation.

Philosophy is an inseparable part of theory, so that Marx could not truly establish the objective laws of the emergence, development, crisis and replacement of bourgeois society by communism if he did not depart from the most advanced philosophy, the most revolutionary world outlook in human history which is dialectical materialism. Chairman Mao, therefore, formulates and applies materialist dialectics in its superior form, not in opposition to Marx and Lenin, but rather by fulfilling theoretical tasks that could not be previously solved. Truth does not emerge ready at once, there is no immediate knowledge in any scientific branch and this is also the case in the scientific ideology of the proletariat. Lenin highlights that:

“If Marx did not leave behind him a “*Logic*” (with a capital letter), he did leave the *logic of Capital*, and this ought to be utilized to the full in this question. In *Capital*, Marx applied to a single science logic, dialectics and the theory of knowledge of materialism [three words are not needed: it is one and the same thing] which has taken everything valuable in Hegel and developed it further.”⁷

The leap taken by Chairman Mao in Marxist philosophy constitutes precisely the elaboration, formulation and systematization of this “logic of *Capital*”. In doing so, it generates a leap, as it arms the proletariat with greater theoretical precision, which is a key issue for the solution of new problems that arise in particular revolutionary processes and in new situations

⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks – Plan of Hegel’s Dialectic (Logic)* (1915), *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers Moscow 1976, Volume 38, p.317, our emphasis

that inevitably appear in the course of history. The development of philosophy is particularly important for the conduction of two-line struggle, because as a world outlook, mastering and staying resolute in dialectical materialism is decisive for persisting in the proletarian revolutionary line, swimming against the current and tide. Chairman Mao's contributions to Marxist philosophy provided the international proletariat with it in a profound, simple and combative way. This arms the class in a special way against revisionist deviations. Consistently embodying Marxist revolutionary philosophical principles is of great importance to successfully face the turbulence of class struggle, of the process of revolution and counter-revolution in the world, and to develop the revolutionary struggle to greater heights, to persist in it until the complete victory of the World Proletarian Revolution.

In the struggle against revisionism, Marxist philosophy has a particular importance. Revisionism does not arise from a philosophical “error” *per se*; Revisionism is an inevitable phenomenon in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and emerges in revolutionary organizations as an inevitable reflection of class struggle in the consciousness of the vanguard. Revisionism increases its economic and social base with the advent of imperialism and, furthermore, it is a product of the intensification of the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, of the struggle to persist in Marxism or to capitulate by revising its truths. The most heated moments – on the eve of decisive clashes or after important temporary defeats – reflect in the consciousness of individuals in two ways: overcoming difficulties *versus* limping in facing them. Limping is the tendency towards revisionism, which initially appears in the form of a conduct, then ideas, conceptions and, then, a line.

Revisionism, therefore, finds one of its first manifestations in the change in world outlook, in the abandonment of the proletarian (dialectical materialist) conception and in assuming other ones, whether bourgeois or petty-bourgeois. In order to structure a revisionist line, revisionism will invariably have to falsify Marxist philosophy to create this way a “theoretical basis” corresponding to its class betrayal. After all, it is impossible to sustain a right and/or “left” opportunist line by seriously basing oneself on dialectical materialism. However, as the contingencies of political struggle often require important tactical modifications, revisionism always seeks to sneak and hide behind what they call “particularities of the moment”. Therefore, it is often easier to unmask a revisionist position on philosophical grounds than on political grounds. The importance of the theoretical struggle in unmasking revisionist positions or lines is that it allows the proletarian line to maintain initiative, to anticipate and crush the manifestations of revisionist positions in their outset, through two-line struggle, preventing the revisionist line to structure itself within the Party.

The importance of the latest philosophical debate in the two-line struggle in the ICM against revisionist positions has already become evident in the course of the historical experience of the RIM. In 1980, the RCP-USA and the Chilean RCP called the Autumn Conference, whose most important result was the struggle to overcome the dispersion in the ICM caused by the counterrevolutionary coup in China and to call the Conference in 1984 that gave birth to the RIM. Between 1980 and 1984, Bob Avakian and other leaders of the RCP-USA published a series of philosophical and historical evaluation articles on the experience of the first wave of the world

proletarian revolution. These documents constitute the philosophical falsification undertaken by Avakian with the aim of imposing a right opportunist line on the ICM. The fundamental of his positions is defeated at the 1984 Conference, the result of which is the founding of the RIM with a fundamentally correct declaration of principles, despite containing important revisionist contraband. With the PCP joining the RIM and the two-line struggle led by it, supported by the resounding progress of the People's War in Peru, the Avakianist revisionist positions went into defensive, waiting for the opportune moment to once again stick their heads out. This opportunity occurred after the arrest of Chairman Gonzalo, in September 1992, and principally after the “*peace letters*” scam. Avakian then jumps onto the stage attacking the leftist positions in the RIM, first covertly and then openly.

On the ICM, the impact of the reaction's blow over the PCP, as well as the *setback* that the people's war got into, had a negative impact with Avakian's opportunist line, which raises the controversy of the need to investigate whether or not Chairman Gonzalo was the author of the rotten “*peace letters*”. This position, which took the tricks of the Peruvian reaction and the Yankee CIA as truth, led, in 1994, to the demobilization of the *International Campaign in defense of the life of Chairman Gonzalo*. With this, Avakian intended to open space to advance his capitulationist and liquidationist line in the RIM, and soon, in 1998, with the absurd expulsion of the TKP/ML from the RIM, he achieved the predominance of his line in the CoRIM.

In the meantime, On February 1996, the glorious people's war in Nepal was initiated, led by the then CPN(M), which initially took a position against Avakianism, but soon started to converge with its capitulationist position in the face of the general counter-revolutionary offensive that, since the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, had free reign around the world, but concentrated its attack on the people's war in Peru. After five years of significant progress in the people's war, at the 2nd National Conference of the PCN(M), in 2001, Prachanda launched the document *Great Leap Forward* where the first philosophical falsifications of dialectical materialism already appear with his rotten “fusion theory”. In a re-presentation of the old theory of “reconciliation of contradictions”, or the revisionist conception of “*two combine into one*”. In November 2006, when the Prachandist revisionist leadership capitulated from the people's war and signed the “*Global Peace Agreement*”, the process of complete ideological-political and military capitulation, which the philosophical falsifications of 2001 had already foreshadowed, were merely being concluded.

The examples of Avakian and Prachanda illustrate the old and rotten revisionist path: capitulation – revisionism – philosophical falsification to theoretically support the change on line. Bernstein sought to substantiate his revisionism by using neo-Kantian philosophy, advocating that there was no essential difference between materialism and idealism, between metaphysics and dialectics. Bukharin and Trotsky sought the theoretical foundation of their revisionist position that sought to prevent the process of collectivization in agriculture in the philosophical falsifications of Deborin – who advocated that the contradiction only emerged at a certain moment in the process, that is, the reconciliation of opposing aspects. Khrushchev, in turn, philosophically based his revisionist position with the “*theory of productive forces*” in the rehabilitation of Deborin school in the USSR, after the capitalist restoration. Liu Shao-chi, in turn,

sought to theoretically base his rotten line of capitalist restoration on the philosophical falsification of Yang Sien-chen, a revisionist theorist, who argued that the law of contradiction meant the fusion of contrary aspects, their reconciliation, according to the revisionist principle that “*two combine into one*”, as opposed to the Maoist principle that “*one divides into two*”.

Revisionism always seeks to lead the philosophical debate to an academic ground, where the polemics appears as a quarrel over terminological or very abstract issues. Different revisionist currents often oppose each other around abstract philosophical terms, however, in essence, they defend the same bourgeois or petty-bourgeois philosophical conception. The revolutionary proletariat must clear the field of philosophical debate from these academicist quarrels in order to reach the essence of the issue in the most objective way possible and thus reveal the content of the positions in dispute. One cannot underestimate, however, the importance of the philosophical struggle for the adequate and correct development of the two-line struggle. This is clearly demarcated in the important document of Chairman Mao's left line, published by the CPC in 1971, *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front*, where it is stated that:

“The three major struggles on the philosophical front showed that the confrontation of the two opposing sides in this field **has always been a reflection of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines**, that it serves these struggles, and that **we must not take the struggle in philosophy to be merely an ‘academic controversy.’** In frenziedly attacking dialectical materialism and historical materialism, spreading reactionary idealism and metaphysics and provoking one struggle after another, Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-zhen and company were motivated by the vile attempt to shake the philosophical basis of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and create a ‘theoretical basis’ for the counter-revolutionary revisionist line aimed at restoring capitalism. The three major struggles on the philosophical front also told us that the **struggle between the two lines is, in the final analysis, the struggle between the two world outlooks**, the proletarian and the bourgeois. One's world outlook decides which line he defends and implements.”⁸

In many terminological and conceptual aspects, Prachanda's and Avakian's philosophical falsifications seem to oppose each other. Avakian formally defends the Maoist principle that *one divides into two* and criticizes Prachanda's fusion theory as being an expression of the revisionist conception of *two combine into one*. Prachanda opposes Avakian by saying that the ICM paid much attention to the principle that *one divides into two*, but very little to the principle of *unity-struggle-transformation*. Avakian condemns Marx's use of the *negation of the negation* in *Capital* as being an “*expression of quasi-religious and metaphysical determinism*” present in the first stage of the ideology of the international proletariat. Prachanda in turn will defend the *negation of the negation* by stating that this law is what explains the development of the two-line struggle in the history of the Communist Party in Nepal. Avakian would say that the *law of contradiction* is the most fundamental law of dialectics and that the *negation of the negation* must be completely discarded. Prachanda objects to this and states that he enriched the *law of*

⁸ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School under the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front* (1949-64), Foreign Languages Press, 1973 pp. 10-11, our emphasis

contradiction by adding to it the *law of quantity and quality* and the *law of negation of the negation*.

When basing themselves on the terminology and manipulation of concepts, Prachanda and Avakian seem to be in opposite positions. However, from a practical and ideological point of view, they essentially represent the same revisionist modality of the 21st century. Proletarian philosophical criticism must clear this terrain of terminological controversy to demonstrate the shared bourgeois essence of these two positions and, thus, completely destroy them as revisionist, capitulationist and traitorous positions to revolution.

UOC (MLM), in their attacks to the ICL and the P.C.B., begin their philosophical argument by rehearsing an apparent modification in their formulation on the *law of contradiction*. In their document from January 2023, they say that: “*we do not deny that the law of unity and struggle of opposites is the fundamental law of dialectics*”, furthermore they claim to recognize the law “*of the negation of negation as one of the general laws of dialectics*” and, even, that this would only be “*the third law of dialectics*”.⁹ With this declaration, the UOC (MLM) seems to agree with a basic principle of Maoism, namely, the condition of the *law of contradiction* as the sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics. This would be the least to expect from a political force that claims Maoism, but just a closer look at this same document from UOC (MLM) is enough to realize the falsity of their initial statement. For, by opposing the condition of contradiction as fundamental law of dialectics, they state that: “*What is this 'role' played by the 'negation of the negation'? Well, it is the general law which indicates the direction of movement and which manifest itself in various spheres of social and natural life*”.¹⁰ So, isn't their initial statement a falsehood? Stating that the *negation of the negation* is the law that indicates the direction of movement is not divergent with the assertion that the “*law of unity and struggle of opposites is the fundamental law of dialectics*”?

This is not, however, a conceptual or argumentative incongruity on the part of the UOC (MLM). Knowing a little about their history is enough to know the weight they give to the *negation of the negation* as the most important law of dialectics. An illustrative example: in the 1990s, their theoretical organ was called *Contradiction*, from the 2000s onwards, it was called *Negation of Negation*. Already at that time they formulated that: “*It is precisely the general law of dialectics that we call the negation of the negation that explains the meaning, the direction, of the movement: the ascension, the progress, the advancement and the replacement of the old by the new*”¹¹ And the importance they give to this issue is not restricted to a theoretical or philosophical problem, they consider the handling of the *law of negation of the negation* as a decisive factor in the course of the ICM during the experiences of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the 20th century:

“It is known how Stalin, in his work on dialectical materialism that is published in the *History of the CPSU(b)*, cuts out the law of the negation of the negation from dialectics.

⁹ UOC (mlm), *Negation of Negation Magazine*, n 6, 2023

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ UOC (mlm), *Contradiction Magazine*, n 10, our translation

And this was not left ‘unpunished.’ The proletarian revolution, which cannot but move through dialectical riverbeds, has to negate the state, to extinguish it and cannot but negate the negated, affirming the realm of freedom, in an apparent return to the stateless society of the primitive community, albeit over the base of all the economic, cultural and political development (of democracy) during the many centuries of class societies. Negation of the negation! **Not accepting and not taking opportunity of this tendency, this social law, as the programmatic postulate and political objective of the working class, has** led us to two great defeats: Russia in 1956 and China in 1976.”¹²

In other words, they state that the fact that Stalin and Chairman Mao did not adopt the *law of negation of the negation* resulted in capitalist restoration in Russia and China. Evidently, they dispute the importance of the *law of contradiction* and the leap represented by Maoism in Marxist philosophy. Conceiving that the *negation of the negation* is the law that indicates the direction of movement is a serious misunderstanding of Marxist dialectics. Saying, however, that only the *negation of the negation* would completely explain the replacement of the old by the new, since “*movement does not occur in a linear way but as apparent cycles, in which each advance is in turn a setback, but definitely an ascension*”¹³ constitutes in turn a philosophical falsification of Marxism.

This position reaffirmed by the leadership of the UOC (MLM) is erroneous for three reasons: 1st) the *law of contradiction* is what governs the process of overcoming the old by the new, and which therefore indicates the direction of the movement and transformation of matter; 2nd) to affirm that the upward spiral movement, resulting from the *negation of the negation*, would correspond to *an advance that is at the same time a setback* is to apply the revisionist theory of reconciling contradictions, of *combining two into one*, is to oppose Marxist dialectics. And, 3rd) because the *law of contradiction* is the **sole fundamental law** of dialectics, which we will substantiate below.

Chairman Mao in *On Contradiction* states that:

“We often speak of ‘the new superseding the old’. The supersession of the old by the new is a general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe. The transformation of one thing into another, through leaps of different forms in accordance with its essence and external conditions -- this is the process of the new superseding the old. In each thing there is contradiction between its new and its old aspects, and this gives rise to a series of struggles with many twists and turns. As a result of these struggles, the new aspect changes from being minor to being major and rises to predominance, while the old aspect changes from being major to being minor and gradually dies out. And the moment the new aspect gains dominance over the old, the old thing changes qualitatively into a new thing.”¹⁴

¹² UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation Magazine*, n° 3, 2008, our translation and emphasis.

¹³ UOC (MLM), *Contradiction Magazine*, n° 10, our translation and emphasis.

¹⁴ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*. *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Volume 1, p 333

This is the most objective and developed philosophical formulation about the new superseding the old, about the direction of movement. It is necessary to notice that this formulation by Chairman Mao corresponds to a major development of Marxist dialectics. For it clarifies, as never before, what the process of things and phenomena in the transformation of the two aspects into their opposites consists of. Everything and every phenomenon are *one that divides into two*, it exists as a unity of opposites; In the formation of this unity, the new aspect always emerges fragile and weak, thus as a dominated aspect. The old, initially, is the dominant aspect that determines the quality of said phenomenon, through the struggle of the new against the old, from fragile the new becomes strong, from a dominated aspect it becomes a dominant aspect and this change corresponds to an alteration of the quality of the thing and the phenomenon, a new thing and a new phenomenon appears, but there is still the struggle of the new against the old, now in new conditions, through this struggle the new strengthens even more until the old aspect gradually dies out. In this new thing and new phenomenon, as a new unity of opposites, the struggle between its two aspects never ceases.

In their argument in favor of the *negation of the negation* as the general law of dialectics that would best explain the direction of movement, the UOC (MLM) contrasts Avakian's attacks with the use by Marx and Engels of the *negation of the negation* in *Capital* and *Anti-Dühring*. However, they assume the same falsifying interpretation as Avakian that, for Marx and Engels, the *negation of the negation* would be *an advance that is at the same time a setback*. On the other hand, in their defense of the negation of the negation, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) blatantly lies to their bases and to the proletariat by presenting that Prachanda would oppose this dialectical principle, whereas in reality it was exactly the opposite. In a critique of the shameful Prachandist capitulation they state:

“Let’s start with a small sample in the field of philosophy. *The great leap forward: an inevitable historical necessity* is a document presented by Prachanda and adopted by the II National Conference of the CPN(m) Feb/2001 (...). In the attempt to silence the qualitative leaps – the law of revolutions – and **to ignore the negation of negation – the law of development, perspective, future, socialism and communism** – Prachanda argues that ‘Lenin elevated the philosophy of dialectical materialism to new heights. He broadly explained that the principle of the unity and struggle of opposites is the sole fundamental principle of dialectics’ (...).”¹⁵

They cite a document in which Prachanda was supposedly “unaware of the negation of the negation”, and it is precisely in this document where the renegade, trying to evade the *law of contradiction* and the principle that *one divides into two*, presents the history of the Communist Party of Nepal departing from the *negation of the negation*:

“The whole process of the Nepalese communist movement can also be seen as a **negation of negation**. The initial correct policy of the Party was negated by the

¹⁵ UOC (MLM), *Revolución Obrera*, nº 210, 2007, our translation and emphasis.

revisionism and later the revisionism by the correct revolutionary policy, and, eventually, the great process of People's War emerged.”¹⁶

Once again, we do not think this is a trivial error on the part of the UOC (MLM)'s leadership. Wouldn't this be an intentional forgery? After all, they repeat on other occasions, such as in this passage where they apparently differentiate themselves sometimes from Avakian and sometimes from Prachanda:

“It turns out, therefore, that the founders of dialectical materialism, according to the 'new synthesis', were, in the end, neither materialists nor dialectics, they had 'a somewhat narrow and linear vision', they took the concept of the negation of the negation from Hegel's idealist system, a horrible thing that manifests itself as 'the tendency towards reductionism' and 'can tend towards *inevitabilism* and a *simplicitic formula*'; neither more nor less like the grotesque '**refutation**' of the negation of the negation made by one of the followers of the 'Prachanda path' in *Red Star*, n° 21 (...).”¹⁷

The article in question is not a refutation of such a dialectical law, on the contrary it is entitled **Negation of Negation** and in fact makes an open defense of the revisionist positions of the CPN(M) and, particularly, of the rightist Bhattarai. This article interprets the *negation of the negation* as an “*advance that is at the same time a setback*” and thus defends taking both the Marxist classics and making a combination with their revisionist opponents.

This procedure by UOC (MLM) is the typical revisionist one: a small textual fraud to “sustain” a large conceptual falsification. Textual fraud is the one that matters least, it is only useful for us to unmask them to clear the ground so we can engage in the debate that really matters: the content of these philosophical falsifications and their political and economic consequences. As seen: Avakian “defends” the *law of contradiction* as opposed to the *negation of the negation* and the principle that *one divides into two* as opposed to *two combines into one*. Prachanda defends the *negation of the negation*, integrated with the *law of contradiction*, the *theory of fusion* and the opposition of *unity-struggle-transformation* to the principle that *one divides into two*. The UOC (MLM), in turn, defends the *negation of the negation* as a general law of dialectics in “opposition” to Avakian and hides from their militancy that Prachanda is a defender of this same position. It is necessary to clear the “terminological” ground of the controversy, clarify the development of the *sole fundamental law of dialectics, contradiction*, in the course of the three stages of the ideology of the international proletariat, and investigate the real content of the positions of Avakian and Prachanda, in order to reveal that behind the “hermeneutical” difference there is, in fact, a convergence of the UOC (MLM) with these variants of revisionism in the 21st century. In essence, all revisionism is based on one or another variant of bourgeois philosophy, as this is the capitulators' world outlook. Therefore, what are these statements of Avakian and Prachanda if not the negation of the *law of contradiction*, the

¹⁶ CPN(M), *The Great Leap Forward: An Inevitable Need of History*, 2001.

¹⁷ UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation Magazine*, n° 4, 2009, our translation and emphasis.

negation of the principle that *one divides into two* and the negation of the *Marxist theory of knowledge*?

1- The establishment of the law of contradiction in the process of development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

The development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, taken as the process of forging the scientific ideology of the proletariat, like every social and theoretical process is governed by the laws of dialectics and the Marxist theory of knowledge. By applying the *law of contradiction to the Marxist theory of knowledge*, Chairman Mao develops Lenin's *theory of reflection* establishing that:

“It is man’s social being that determines his thinking. Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world. [...] **In social struggle, the forces representing the advanced class sometimes suffer defeat not because their ideas are incorrect**, but because, in the balance of forces engaged in struggle, they are not as powerful for the time being as the forces of reaction; they are therefore temporarily defeated, but they are bound to triumph sooner or later. [...] **Often, correct knowledge can be arrived at only after many repetitions of the process leading from matter to consciousness and then back to matter**, that is, leading from practice to knowledge and then back to practice. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge, the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge.”¹⁸

Social practice and knowledge form the unity of opposites of the process of knowledge. The social being determines the thinking of men, in turn, the correct ideas, when embodied by the masses, become the material force capable of transforming the world. In its eternal process of development, matter, under certain conditions, is reflected in thinking, likewise, under certain circumstances, thinking turns into a material force. Furthermore, Chairman Mao highlights that the process of knowledge is not immediate, correct ideas do not fall from the sky, they can only come from this incessant movement that leads from practice to knowledge and from knowledge to practice. As Lenin had already established:

“Human conceptions of space and time are relative, but **these relative conceptions go to compound absolute truth**. These relative conceptions, in their development, move towards absolute truth and **approach nearer and nearer to it.**”¹⁹

This successive process of bringing knowledge closer to truth occurs in both natural and social sciences. For this reason, Chairman Mao highlights that, in social struggles, the advanced social forces can suffer setbacks even if their ideas are correct. For correct ideas to triumph over reactionary forces, the existence of certain objective conditions and the construction of

¹⁸ Chairman Mao, Five Essays on Philosophy, Foreign Languages Press, 2018. our emphasis.

¹⁹ V. I. Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism (1909), Collected Works, Progress Publishers Moscow 1977, Volume 14, p.175s, our emphasis

subjective factors are necessary to produce the leap and the new predominates over the old and, this way, crush it, which requires a certain amount of time and accumulation of strength. The defeat for the new can only be temporary and, sooner than later, it triumphs over the old. This is the revolutionary world outlook of the proletariat, this is the Marxist theory of knowledge formulated by Marx, developed and improved by Lenin and Chairman Mao.

The revisionist and renegade Avakian has been floundering against such a proletarian world outlook for a long time. Assuming the revisionist conception of the Marxist theory of knowledge, Avakian considers the temporary defeats of the proletariat to be caused by “errors” in the ideology of the international proletariat; and he takes any and all errors or insufficiency as manifestations of idealistic or metaphysical philosophical conceptions. In his obstinate search for errors, Avakian, the man who never makes mistakes by doing nothing other than giving vent to his “fantastic movement in his head”, identifies metaphysical errors in Marx, Lenin and Mao. Furthermore, he presents the development of the stages of the ideology of the international proletariat, as if each stage essentially represented the “correction of errors and insufficiency” of the preceding stage. Thus, Avakian takes Chairman Mao's *law of contradiction* as a “correction” of Marx's use of the *negation of the negation* in the final part of Book I, of *Capital*. This is yet another historical falsification woven by Avakian, aiming to present himself as the general rectifier of errors in his pure, insipid and revisionist “*New Synthesis of Communism*”.

The motive force behind the development of the ideology of the international proletariat is the social practice of class struggle. It is in this contradiction between consciousness and practice that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was forged and will continue to develop. It was in the struggle to transform the world that the titans of the international proletariat established powerful truths for the class. Did Marx, Lenin and Chairman Mao make mistakes in their practice? Certainly yes, but, as great communist leaders, they rectified their mistakes as promptly as possible, without mercy towards their individual mistakes and inaccuracies. However, what is condensed in the definition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the most correct in the practice of these great leaders and in the revolutionary processes guided by them. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is therefore a set of truths as an integral and harmonious doctrine and not a *combination of two into one*, of rights and wrongs. But the ideology of the international proletariat, like everything in the universe, is *one that divides into two*, it is composed of particular truths and universal truths. With the passage of capital from the stage of free competition to the stage of monopoly capital, the particular truths in Marx's thought, in relation to the time and place in which it was forged, that is, the 19th century and Europe respectively, from where he drew universal laws, had to be developed and overcome by the universal truths of Leninism, which managed to develop Marxism for the time of imperialism and the proletarian revolution and for regions where capitalist productive forces either barely existed or were still very backward, the immense majority of nations oppressed by imperialism. In the same way, Maoism develops and overcomes the particular truths of Lenin's thought, referring, for example, to the democratic revolution led by the proletariat in Russia, a country in which capitalism was developing, but where backward feudal and semi-feudal relations still prevailed in vast regions, but it was an autocratic empire that oppressed dozens of other nations and peoples and, i.e., were fighting against the Russian bourgeoisie itself. Thus, Chairman Mao establishes a

more universal truth, the bourgeois-democratic revolution of a new type, the new democratic revolution, as an inseparable and necessary part of the world proletarian revolution, for all colonial and semi-colonial countries. The brilliant *definition of Maoism* established by Chairman Gonzalo, with the leadership of the People's War in Peru, constituted precisely the accurate delimitation of the universal truths contained in Mao Zedong's thought that was generated from the integration of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution.

The process of developing the formulation of the *law of contradiction*, in the course of the three stages of development of the ideology of the international proletariat, follows the same laws of dialectics and the *Marxist theory of knowledge*. From correct initial formulations, they acquire greater precision as further experience is accumulated in the process of social transformation of the struggle for production, class struggle and scientific experimentation. Therefore, there is no inconsistency between the *law of contradiction* fully established by Chairman Mao in *On Contradiction*, in 1937, and the dialectics or “the *logic of Capital*”. What occurred in Marxist philosophy was the process of bringing “*relative representations*” closer towards absolute truth.

1.1- The development of the philosophical formulation in the course of the first stage of the ideology of the international proletariat

The philosophical richness of the work of Marx and Engels is enormous. There is no doubt that their proletarian world outlook, philosophically developed as dialectical materialism, was fully forged between the years 1845 and 1848. Works from this period include *The Holy Family* and *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), *German Ideology* (1846), *The Poverty of Philosophy* and *Wage Labor and Capital* (1847) and the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848). In this spectacular set of works, in which the scientific ideology of the international proletariat rises up against bourgeois and reactionary ideology, the foundations of Marx's thought, that is, of the nascent communism, are established. It contains the rupture and reckoning with the Young Hegelians, the criticism of the absolute system of Hegel's philosophy and the a-historical limits of Feuerbach's materialism; the first elaboration of dialectical historical materialism; the beginning of economic investigations; the critique against Proudhon's petty-bourgeois socialism; and the theory of proletarian revolution presented to the European working class on the eve of the great wave of democratic revolutions that swept the European continent in 1848.

However, the theoretical and philosophical development of Marxism did not end there. After years of arduous theoretical work inseparable from revolutionary practice, Marx would publish another spectacular sequence of works: Book I of *Capital* (1867), *The Civil War in France* (1871), *Critique of the Gotha Program* (1875) and, together with Engels, a last preface to the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1882), in which they address the issue of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was absent in the *Manifesto* until then. As Engels, seconding Marx, would publish *Anti-Dühring* (1877-78), Books II and III of *Capital* (1885 and 1894, respectively), *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), in addition to *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of classical German philosophy* (1886) and left the important work *Dialectics of Nature* (written between 1878-88) unpublished. This set of works, in addition to his various

correspondence and notes, splendidly completes the theoretical formulation of the first stage of the ideology of the international proletariat in its three constituent parts as a unit: Marxist philosophy, Marxist political economy and scientific socialism. The most important scientific work is undoubtedly *Capital*, in its four Books. However, after the publication of Book I, much progress was made in Marxist theory about the State, in the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the condition of socialism as a lower stage of communism. There is already progress made against the nascent revisionism expressed in the influences of Lassalle and Dühring in the German social democracy. And, with Engels, also the philosophical question is concluded, which establishes the central questions that would need to be developed in Marxist philosophy: the theory of knowledge and dialectics. These tasks were assumed and fulfilled by Lenin and Chairman Mao.

In the present philosophical polemics and the eclectic handling that the UOC (MLM) makes of the *negation of the negation*, as well as in the unmasking of the philosophical falsifications of Avakian and Prachanda, the most important thing is the analysis of the development of Marxist philosophy, particularly in the works *Capital* and *Anti-Dühring*. As part of the work of clearing the field to reach the essence of the revisionist conceptions and thus smash them by the root, it is decisive to clarify the content that Marx puts to the *negation of the negation* in *Capital* and what is the real weight of this application in his whole work. To clarify this content, Engels' work is fundamental, as one of Dühring's attacks against Marx is precisely around the use of the *negation of the negation* to explain the "*expropriation of the expropriators*". The philosophical part of Marx's polemic against Proudhon is also very important for understanding the revisionist content of the use of *negation of the negation*, as well as Marx's conception of it.

Let us see in detail at Marx's use of the *negation of the negation* in the final part of *Capital*. He begins by presenting the issue as follows:

"Private property, as the antithesis to social, collective property, exists only where the means of labor and the external conditions of labor belong to private individuals. But **according as these private individuals are laborers or not laborers, private property has a different character**. The numberless shades, that it at first sight presents, correspond to the intermediate stages lying between these two extremes." ²⁰

Marx initially departs from the opposition between collective property and private property, and then focuses on the analysis of private property over instruments of production and other external conditions of work. He then divides the process of development of private property into two contradictory aspects: the private property of laborers *versus* the private property of non-laborers. Next, Marx analyzes which were the historical conditions in which the private property of laborers over their own means of production existed as a dominant aspect in society in relation to the private property of non-laborers:

²⁰ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume I, Progress Publishers Moscow, 1954, our emphasis.

“The private property of the laborers in his means of production is the foundation of petty industry (...) But it flourishes, it lets loose its whole energy, it attains its adequate classical form, only where the **laborer is the private owner of his own means of labor** set in action by himself: the peasant of the land which he cultivates, the artisan of the tool which he handles as a virtuoso.” ²¹

Historically, Marx is referring to the process of decomposition of feudalism, of loosening the bonds of servitude, in which peasants and artisans become free owners; concretely, he is referring to the end of the 15th century in England. However, the development of this mode of production based on the private ownership of laborers of their own individual instruments of labor due to their own particular characteristics engenders the contradiction that leads to its dissolution:

“This mode of production presupposes parceling of the soil and scattering of the other means of production. (...) At a certain stage of development, **it brings forth the material agencies for its own dissolution.** (...) Its annihilation, the transformation of the individualized and scattered means of production into socially concentrated ones, of the pigmy property of the many into the huge property of the few, the expropriation of the great mass of the people from the soil, from the means of subsistence, and from the means of labor, this fearful and painful expropriation of the mass of the people forms the prelude to the history of capital. (...) **Self-earned private property, that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent laboring individual with the conditions of his labor, is supplanted by capitalistic private property, which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labor of others**”. ²²

The unity of opposites between the two extremes of private property identified by Marx, means of production belonging to the laborers themselves *versus* the private property of non-laborers, is negated by its own development. Laborers are expropriated from their means of production and the dominant private property becomes the property of non-laborers, which takes the form of capitalist property. This first negation gives rise to a new process, in which the contradictory aspects are: capitalist private property (as dominant) and increasingly social production (as dominated aspect). The development of this new unity of opposites will engender the second negation that will inaugurate a third process.

As indicated in the quote above, for Marx, the expropriation of free laborers who own the means of production constitutes the prehistory of capital. This expropriation corresponds to the transformation of laborers into proletarians and their working conditions into capital, aspects that configure the capitalist mode of production. In this new process, another process of expropriation develops, which is expropriation between the capitalists themselves, called by Marx the *centralization of capital*. In the development of capitalism, the owners of the best conditions of production tend to drive competing capitalists into bankruptcy and then, by expropriating them, centralize the means of production in an increasingly restricted number of

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

bourgeois. The centralization of capital in turn propels the opposite aspect of the contradiction, that is, the socialization of production, which becomes increasingly greater, develops thus: “(...) *the cooperative form of the labor-process, the conscious technical application of science, the methodical cultivation of the soil, the transformation of the instruments of labor into instruments of labor only usable in common*”.²³ Thus, social means of labor are increasingly monopolized by a small class of capitalists, as follows:

“The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. **The expropriators are expropriated.**”²⁴

The contradiction between capitalist property and the social character of production reaches such a level of development that the struggle for its resolution intensifies. The expropriation of the expropriators is the negation of this unity of opposites, it is a second negation, therefore, a *negation of the negation*. Marx summarizes the first and second negations in the following terms:

“The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labor of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets, with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation. **It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer,** but gives him individual property based on the acquisition of the capitalist era: i.e., on cooperation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.

The transformation of scattered private property, arising from individual labor, into capitalist private property is, naturally, a process, incomparably more protracted, violent, and difficult, than the **transformation of capitalistic private property**, already practically resting on socialized production, **into socialized property.**”²⁵

The first negation (expropriation of laborers from their own means of production) constitutes the prehistory of capital; the second negation (expropriation of the expropriators) constitutes the end of capital. Capitalist property dominates social production, places the social productive forces (laborers and means of production) under its control; The social character of production negates this unity of opposites and inaugurates a new process, the communist society that does not reestablish private property over the means of production, but rather institutes social property over them. The *negation of the negation* does not govern the development of contradiction, it explains the development and solution of two or more contradictions in a sequential process of *unities of opposites*. This is the *negation of the negation*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

used by Marx, in *Capital*. On the one hand, thrown away by the renegade Avakian, for considering it “determinism” and “expression of religious metaphysics in Marxism”, and, on the other hand, chosen by the UOC (MLM) as the “general law of dialectics that best explains the direction of movement”, as it would demonstrate that “*every advance is in turn a setback*”²⁶ Both positions are falsifications of Marxism. Let us see.

Marx analyzes here the historical movement in its broad course, he is dealing with five centuries of development of humanity, three great interconnected social processes, past, present and future: laborers owning **individual means** of production, capitalists owning **social means** of production, laborers who own **social means** of production (social property). Marx analyzes three forms of ownership of these means of production: individual property, capitalist property and social property. He describes as *negation of the negation* three distinct historical processes. Was the great Marx in disagreement with the law of contradiction when presenting the course of history in this way? No. Chairman Mao himself shows that the processes are placed in front of each other also according to the law of contradiction:

“All processes have a beginning and an end; **all processes transform themselves into their opposites**. The constancy of all processes is relative, but the mutability manifested in the transformation of one process into another is absolute.”²⁷

In turn, is describing the suppression of capitalist private property in the form of the *negation of the negation* the most developed and complete way of describing this movement and its direction? No, because in this way, different historical processes are analyzed in a succession of unities of opposites in a broader historical sequence without analyzing in detail the fundamental contradiction of the present process to be transformed, that is, capitalist society. In other words, the *negation of the negation* corresponds to the successive resolution of two contradictory unities, each corresponding to a distinct historical process and the emergence of a third process, in this case, communist society. The table below illustrates this sequence:

Decomposition of feudalism		Capitalism		Communism
Private property of laborers over the means of production	1st negation laborer expropriated	Capitalist property (developed form of private property of non-laborers)	2nd negation expropriation of the expropriators	Social property of the means of production (form of property that corresponds to the social character of production)
<i>Versus</i>		<i>Versus</i>		<i>Versus</i>
Private property of non-laborers		Social production		Individual property of laborer over articles of consumption

²⁶ UOC (MLM), Revista Contradiccion, nº 10, our translation.

²⁷ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1967, our emphasis.

The *negation of the negation*, therefore, is nothing more than the sequential resolution of two unities of opposites, of two distinct and linked social processes, which in turn relate to each other as a contradictory unity (process of decomposition of feudalism *versus* process of emergence and development of capitalism). The *negation of the negation*, therefore, is a particular case or a form of manifestation of the *law of contradiction*. As a particular case it cannot be the best way to explain the direction of movement. This is evident in the very development of the ideology of the international proletariat in its first stage, in Engels' struggle against Dühring's falsifications in his attack on Marxism, especially against *Capital*.

Another important aspect to understand is the content of the *negation* in Marx, because it is the same that is covered by Chairman Mao in *On Contradiction*. That is, for Marx, the *negation* of a unity of opposites by another unity of opposites corresponds to the suppression of the old aspect by the new and not to a combination or conciliation of the struggling aspects, much less to *an advance that is at the same time a setback*, as advocated by the UOC (MLM). To assimilate the revolutionary and non-conservative content of Marx's *negation*, it is very useful to return to Engels' brilliant refutation of Dühring. This professorial socialist, criticizing this same passage from *Capital*, slanderously states that:

(...) the Hegelian negation of the negation has in fact to serve here as the midwife to deliver the future from the womb of the past. The abolition of individual property, which has been affected in the way indicated above since the sixteenth century, is the first negation. It will be followed by a second, which bears the character of a **negation of the negation** and hence of a **restoration of 'individual property', but in a higher form**, based on the common ownership of land and of the instruments of labor. Herr Marx calls this new 'individual property' also 'social property', and in this there appears the Hegelian higher unity, **in which the contradiction** is supposed to be sublated, that is to say, in the Hegelian verbal jugglery, **both overcome and preserved** (...) Herr Marx cheerfully remains in the nebulous world of his **property which is at once both individual and social**, and leaves it to his adepts to solve for themselves this profound dialectical enigma.”²⁸

Dühring's falsification lies in presenting Marx's *negation of the negation* as identical to the Hegelian conservative system. So, according to Dühring, the Marxist *negation of the negation* would consist in a simultaneous overcoming and conservation of private property, or in a synthesis between individual property and social property. Engels rejects this falsifying interpretation of Marx's dialectic as if it were the same as the Hegelian *negation of the negation*; Referring to an earlier text by Dühring, Engels states that he had “(...) **even then committed the blunder of identifying Marxist with Hegelian dialectics**”²⁹ Regarding the Dühringian falsification presented above, Engels specifically refutes it in the following way:

“(...) so here, too, without any great effort he can, following Hegel, put Marx right by foisting on him the higher unity of a property, of which there is not a word in Marx. (...) The state of things brought about by the expropriation of the expropriators (...) **means**

²⁸ Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1976, our emphasis.

²⁹ Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1976, our emphasis.

that social ownership extends to land and the other means of production and individual ownership to the products, that is, to articles of consumption.”³⁰

Engels irrefutably clarifies the revolutionary meaning of Marx's use of the *negation of the negation*. It is not about reconciling contradictions, much less about a synthesis (taken in the sense of a combination of opposites) between social property and individual property. The expropriation of the expropriators for Marx is the complete suppression of capitalist private property, and with this the entire private property of the means of production, whether its capitalist form or its form of small ownership, is thrown into the garbage of history. What continues to exist in communism is social production that finds in social property the only corresponding form of property. However, by abolishing private ownership of the means of production, social production transforms into another historical process, thus modifying its essence. With the end of social classes, the social division of labor also ends, the difference between workers and peasants, between countryside and city, between intellectual labor and manual labor, a process that will take a long time to transition from capitalism to communism, from dictatorship of the proletariat, a period of permanent revolution, as defined by Marx. Communist production, based on the socialization of previous production, will reach a level of unprecedented development in history and will culminate in humanity's way out from the realm of necessity and entry into the realm of liberty: *Human Emancipation*. But will there be contradictions in communism? Obviously, social antagonism has come to an end, the struggle between the new and the old is incessant and infinite, as well as between the right and the wrong, as well as the struggle in an infinity of things and phenomena, just as Marx states the contradiction between social production and individual needs for consumption will continue to exist, the permanent struggle for production to surpass consumption is a condition for fulfilling the communist motto from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. This motto will not be achieved by reconciling contradictions, for only struggle can resolve any contradiction, whether antagonistic or non-antagonistic.

Both Avakian and Prachanda and also the UOC (MLM) conclude that the content of the *negation of the negation* in Marx is the same as that slanderously described by Dühring, that is, as if it were a tripod of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis type, in which the synthesis is a combination or conciliation of opposing aspects. In a relatively recent publication, the RCP-USA states that:

“In the original conception of human society's historical development toward communism, even as formulated by Marx, there was a tendency (...) toward a somewhat narrow and linear view. This was manifested, for example, **in the concept of the "negation of the negation"** (the view that things proceed in such a way that a particular thing is negated by another thing, which in turn leads to a further negation and **a synthesis which embodies elements of the previous things**, but now on a higher level). As Bob Avakian has argued, the **"negation of the negation"** can tend in the direction of

³⁰ *Ibid.*

"inevitable-ism"—as if something is bound to be negated by another thing in a particular way, leading to what is almost a predetermined synthesis.”³¹

Renegades and falsifiers, they repeat the same argument as Dühring against Marx, as if the *negation of the negation* in *Capital* indicated a synthesis at a higher level, in which elements of previous things were reconciled. Avakian turns against a supposed “inevitable-ism” of the *negation of the negation*, only to hide that he stands against the “inevitable-ism” of the *law of contradiction* fully established by Chairman Mao. After all, it is defined in the *law of contradiction* by Chairman Mao, and not in the *negation of the negation*, that: the replacement of the old by the new is the “**general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe**”. The anti-Maoist Avakian takes aim at Marx, but also seeks to hit Chairman Mao.

Prachanda and the leadership of the UOC (MLM), in turn, defend the *negation of the negation* in Dühring's slanderous sense as if this was the true one and the one used by Marx and Engels. They say that: “*movement does not occur in a linear way but as apparent cycles, in which each advance is in turn a setback*”. The renegade Prachanda, on the other hand, falsifies saying that:

“At last, while synthesizing the Nepalese communist movement, it can be said that it is marching forward by forging new unity on a new basis in accordance with the dialectical principle of unity-struggle-transformation, or **thesis-antithesis-synthesis**. (...) The whole process of the Nepalese communist movement can also be seen as a **negation of negation**.”³²

Prachanda clearly takes Dühring's slanderous interpretation of the *negation of the negation* in Marx to substantiate his rotten theory of fusion, an updated version of the old theory of reconciliation of contradictions. Lenin, like Engels, also makes clear the revolutionary and non-conciliatory meaning of Marx's *negation of the negation*:

“Still, this idea, as formulated by Marx and Engels on the basis of Hegel's philosophy, is far more comprehensive and far richer in content than the current idea of evolution is. **A development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed**, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis (“**the negation of negation**”), a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; “breaks in continuity”; the transformation of quantity into quality; **inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction** and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society; (...)”³³

Only a falsifier like Avakian can claim that the *negation of the negation* in Marx is a combination between the opposite aspects of a contradiction. As Lenin makes clear, the

³¹ RCP-USA, A Manifesto from the RCP, 2009, Our emphasis.

³² PCN(M), The Great Leap Forward: An Inevitable Need of History, 2001, our emphasis.

³³ V. I. Lenin, Karl Marx, Collected Works, 21, Foreign Languages Press, Moscow, 1977, p.54, our emphasis.

dialectical movement in an upward spiral repeats steps already taken only in appearance. Therefore, there is nothing in Marx's *negation of the negation* that represents a resurrection of the past, or a reconciliation between past and present in the future for which we fight.

Marx himself, in *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), has already criticized Proudhon's conciliatory use of the *negation of the negation* as a way of fusing contrary aspects in a contradiction. In this work, Marx destroys the petty-bourgeois positions of Proudhon, who had sought to apply a conciliatory dialectic to the critique of political economy and Utopian socialism in his two previous books. In his work *What is Property?* from 1840, Proudhon in an idealistic way begins by criticizing the legal concept of property and not its material existence. The foundation of his anarchist society is: **"Suppress property while maintaining possession, and, by this simple modification of the principle, you will revolutionize law, government, economy, and institutions; you will drive evil from the face of the earth."**³⁴ Suppressing property and maintaining possession of the means of production, there is the Proudhonian application of the conservative *negation of the negation* to the critique of political economy. In the book *The System of Economic Contradictions*, 1846, Proudhon increases his attempt to apply idealistic dialectics to political economy, seeking to deduce all the economic categories through what he considered a dialectic method.

In his response, Marx briefly presents Proudhon's miserable attempt to apply the *negation of the negation* as a conciliation of contradictions:

"The economists' material is the active, energetic life of man; M. Proudhon's material is the dogmas of the economists. But the moment we cease to pursue the historical movement of production relations, of which the categories are but the theoretical expression, the moment we want to see in these categories no more than ideas, spontaneous thoughts, independent of real relations, **we are forced to attribute the origin of these thoughts to the movement of pure reason.**

(...)

Impersonal reason, having outside itself neither a base on which it can pose itself, nor an object to which it can oppose itself, nor a subject with which it can compose itself, is forced to turn head over heels, in posing itself, opposing itself and composing itself -- **position, opposition, composition.** Or, to speak Greek -- we have **thesis, antithesis and synthesis.** For those who do not know the Hegelian language, we shall give the ritual formula: **affirmation, negation and negation of the negation.**"³⁵

Marx clearly demarcates with Proudhon's petty-bourgeois dialectic, which takes *negation of the negation*, in the form thesis-antithesis-synthesis and of synthesis as the composition between the opposite aspects of a contradiction. The Proudhonian *negation of the negation* results in anarchy, a composition between the suppression of private property and the

³⁴ Proudhon, Pierre, J, *What is Property?*. 1840, our emphasis.

³⁵ Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Peking, 1977, our emphasis.

conservation of private possession of the means of production. This idealist and conservative formula, harshly criticized by Marx, was precisely the one that Dühring slanderously attributed to him; and it is precisely the form which Avakian and Prachanda falsify as if it corresponded to Marx's use in *Capital*.

Prachanda falsifies the content of the *negation of the negation* in Marx, as if it was identical to the petit-bourgeois “dialectics”, because what he assumes in essence is the *negation of the negation* of Proudhon. The following critique of Marx, made in 1847, to the Proudhonian dialectic, serves as a complete critique of the renegade Prachanda's theory of fusion:

“(...) once it has managed to pose itself as a thesis, this thesis, this thought, opposed to itself, **splits up into two contradictory thoughts** -- the positive and the negative, the yes and the no. The struggle between these two antagonistic elements comprised in the antithesis **constitutes the dialectic movement**. The yes becoming no, the no becoming yes, the yes becoming both yes and no, the no becoming both no and yes, **the contraries balance, neutralize, paralyze each other**. The **fusion of these two contradictory thoughts** constitutes a new thought, which **is the synthesis of them**. This thought splits up once again into two contradictory thoughts, which in turn fuse into a new synthesis. (...) M. Proudhon, in spite of all the trouble he has taken to scale the heights of the *system of contradictions*, has never been able to raise himself above the first two rungs of simple thesis and antithesis; and even these he has mounted only twice, and on one of these two occasions he fell over backwards” ³⁶

The “*fusion of these two contradictory thoughts*” as a higher synthesis that appears in the Marxist work criticizing Proudhon’s petty-bourgeois socialism represents the precise description of Prachanda's philosophical falsification, which first insinuates itself into philosophy, in the so-called theory of fusion and then culminate explicitly and shamefully in the political sphere, in the capitulation of the people's war, in the proposition of a “*joint dictatorship of both the proletariat and the bourgeois class*.” ³⁷ In his overwhelming criticism of Proudhon, Marx refutes any attempt at conciliation and fusion of contradictions, he shows that society up to the present has moved through the struggle of opposites, through the antagonistic struggle of opposites, and only through this struggle can it resolve its contradictions:

“The working class, in the course of its development, will substitute for the old civil society an association which will exclude classes and their antagonism, and there will be no more political power properly so-called, since political power is precisely the official expression of antagonism in civil society. Meanwhile **the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is a struggle of class against class, a struggle which carried to its highest expression is a total revolution**. Indeed, is it at all surprising that a society founded on the *opposition* of classes should culminate in brutal *contradiction*, the shock of body against body, as its final *dénouement*? Do not say that social movement excludes political movement. There is never a political movement which is not at the same time

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ The Red Star (organ of the CPN(M)), issue 15, September 21-30, 2008.

social. It is only in an order of things in which there are no more classes and class antagonisms that *social evolutions* will cease to be *political revolutions*. Till then, on the eve of every general reshuffling of society, the last word of social science will always be: **"Le combat ou la mort; la lutte sanguinaire ou le néant. C'est ainsi que la question est invinciblement posée."** George Sand. [Combat or death, bloody battle or nothingness. This is how the question is unavoidably put]" ³⁸

Marxist dialectics is explicit: only the struggle of opposites and not their reconciliation can resolve the contradictions inherent to bourgeois society. This is the same world outlook, the same philosophy, that is present in *Capital*, the expropriation of the expropriators is the final hour of capitalist property; For Marx, the *negation of the negation* is therefore not the reconciliation of contradictions, but rather their revolutionary resolution through irreconcilable struggle.

Having clarified the content of the *negation of the negation* used by Marx, it only remains to evaluate the weight of its use in his work as a whole. In Book I of *Capital*, Marx uses the *negation of the negation* only once. Therefore, the philosophical core of *Capital* cannot be summarized as the *negation of the negation*. The whole *Capital* is based on the dialectical law of the *unity and struggle of opposites* and its content can be more easily grasped and popularized based on the Maoist principle that *one divides into two*.

Marx, when studying the concrete phenomenon of capitalism, had to analyze it in its two contradictory aspects, *the capitalist production process* (presented in Book I) and the *capitalist circulation process* (presented in Book II), the production process being the dominant aspect that ultimately determines the mode of circulation of capital. In Book I, therefore, Marx abstracts, as far as this is possible, the influence of the phenomena of circulation on production. This abstraction cannot be absolute, as the *law of value* itself, which precedes the emergence of the capitalist mode of production, results from the interaction between the two contradictory aspects: production and circulation. In Book II, Marx abstracts, in the same way, the effects of the production process in the sphere of circulation, in order to understand the circulation of capital, which is the value endowed with *surplus value*. Finally, Marx analyzes the relationship between these two aspects in Book III: the *global process of capitalist production*, where the result of the unity and struggle between the mode of production and the mode of circulation appears, making it possible for Marx to study the concrete functioning of the rate of profit, the law of distribution of *surplus value*, in the capitalist mode of production.

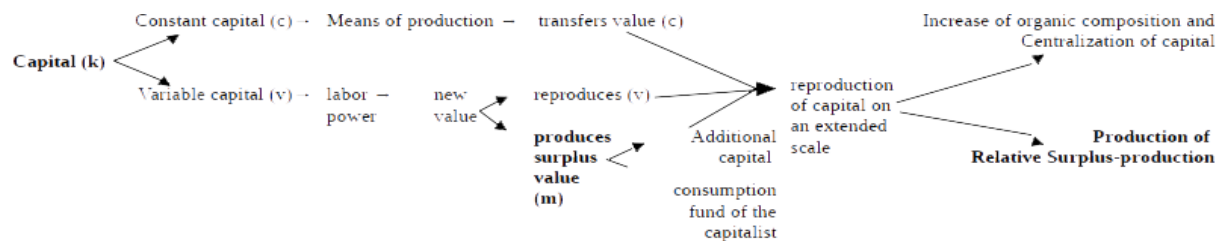
When analyzing the capitalist production process, Marx departs from the most concrete element, the most primary unit that, historically, precedes capital, the *commodity*. He demonstrates how the *commodity* is a unity of two contradictory aspects: the *use-value* and the *exchange-value* or *value*, that is, *one that divides into two*, and demonstrates how the development of the division of labor and increasing exchanges make the *exchange-value* or *value* to be the dominant aspect in this contradiction. He also demonstrates the two-fold character of

³⁸ Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Peking, 1977, our emphasis.

labor materialized in the *commodity*: the *useful labor* that produces *use-value*, and the *abstract labor* that constitutes the *substance of the value of the commodity*. He concludes, in turn, that *exchange-value* is the form of *value* and by analyzing the contradictory development of *value* in its form he arrives at the *money-form*, in which, once again, *one divides into two*. In the money-form of *value*, the unity between *use-value* and *exchange-value* is broken in the *commodity*; *Money*, in its most developed form, consists of a *commodity* whose only utility is to serve as a *general equivalent* or *measure of value* among other *commodities*. He shows how *money* impulses exchange and how this growth increases the social division of labor, then how the quantitative accumulation of values in the *form of money*, within a set of other social relations, determines the transformation of *money* into *capital*.

Marx then analyzes how capital is a value that divides into two opposite aspects: *constant* and *variable*. And how, in the production process, *constant capital* reproduces its own value while *variable capital*, by purchasing *labor power*, produces a *new value* through it. This *new value*, in turn, is also *one that divides into two*: one aspect is the *reproduction of wage*, the other is the *production of surplus value*, that is, the part of the *new value* created that is appropriated by the capitalist without costing him anything. *Surplus value* in turn is also divided into two contradictory aspects: *excess capital* and the *consumption fund of the capitalist*, which are the individual expenses of the bourgeois, for luxury and for his maintenance. *Excess capital* corresponds to the phenomenon of *reproduction on an extended scale*, which is the transformation of *surplus value* into capital. *Surplus value* constitutes the particular, specific product of the capitalist mode of production; its production conditions and is conditioned by *free competition*. The production of *surplus value*, on the one hand, and *free competition* on the other, determine that capitalist production needs to always reproduce itself, increasingly, in order to maintain the production of *surplus value*, that is, the profit of the capitalist. The necessary result of the production of *surplus value* under free competition is a growing capitalist accumulation and, consequently, a high centralization of capital. Capitalist accumulation and the centralization of capital, by increasing its organic composition, result in the final product of the capitalist mode of production: *excess overpopulation*. Thus, the *reproduction of capital on an extended scale* inevitably leads, on the one hand, to the *expropriation of the capitalists by the capitalists themselves*, and, on the other, to the production of the *colossal mass of pauper people* who will, in time, necessarily expropriate the capitalists and throw the private ownership of the means of production in the garbage of history.

This development of contradiction and the process of *one dividing into two*, in *Capital*, can be represented as follows:



The great work of Marx, *Capital*, therefore, is not based on the *negation of the negation*, but rather on the *law of contradiction*. For this reason, Chairman Mao emphasizes:

“As Lenin pointed out, Marx in his *Capital* gave a **model analysis of this movement of opposites** which runs through the process of development of things from beginning to end”³⁹

And:

“When Marx and Engels **applied the law of contradiction** in things to the study of the socio-historical process, they discovered the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, they discovered the contradiction between the exploiting and exploited classes (...). **When Marx applied this law** to the study of the economic structure of capitalist society, he discovered that the basic contradiction of this society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of ownership.”⁴⁰

In other words, Marx brilliantly applied the *law of contradiction* to the study of capitalist society. He just didn't have time to formulate it in a separate philosophical work.

As seen, Marx's use of the *negation of the negation* in *Capital* constitutes only a particular form of the *law of contradiction* in the analysis of the suppression of capitalist private property. It is important to note how the Marxist philosophical formulation develops in *Anti-Dühring*, as part of the two-line struggle against metaphysical conceptions within German social democracy. The work *Anti-Dühring* is divided into three large sections: Philosophy, Political Economy and Scientific Socialism; Engels thus presents, for the first time, the doctrine of the proletariat in its entirety, in its three component parts. As a whole, from the point of view of the development of Marxist philosophy, the book advances from the revolutionary *negation of the negation* to the *law of contradiction*.

In the first section, when refuting Dühring's falsifications, Engels, as already seen, still presents the suppression of private property in the form of the revolutionary *negation of the negation*. However, when returning to the same theme, in the last section of the work, Scientific Socialism, Engels no longer deals with the suppression of capitalist property by taking the broad course of history, but presenting in detail the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society. Expressing this development of Marxist philosophy, Engels presents the same phenomenon, described in *Capital*, now based on the unity of opposites of the capitalist process, its resolution, or revolutionary negation:

“(...) the bourgeoisie could not transform these puny means of production into mighty productive forces without at the same time taking it out from its fragmentation and

³⁹ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1967, our emphasis.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

scattering, concentrating them, transforming them from **individual means of production** into **social means of production** only workable by a collectivity of men. (...)

The means of production and production itself have become social in essence. But they are subjected to a form of appropriation which presupposes private production by individuals, and under which, therefore, everyone owns his own product and brings it to market. **The mode of production is subjected to this form of appropriation (...)** **The whole conflict of today is already present in embryo in this contradiction** which gives the new mode of production its capitalist character.”⁴¹

In other words, means of production that are only socially operable and a mode of production “social *in essence*” in contradiction with the mode of appropriation, that is, with the regime of private property, with capitalist property. And Engels highlights that, in embryo, the whole conflict of today lies “in **this contradiction**”. And so, this great titan of the proletariat continues:

“The separation of the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, from the producers now possessing nothing but their labor-power, on the other, was accomplished. **The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation became manifest as the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie.**”⁴²

Engels clearly presents the fundamental contradiction of the process, its economic basis: social production *versus* private appropriation and its social expression: proletariat *versus* bourgeoisie. Centrally departing from the contradiction of the process of capitalist society, and no longer from the *negation of the negation* in chained succession of two unities of opposites from different historical processes, Engels explains the crises of overproduction, departing from the development of the fundamental contradiction itself:

“In these crises, **the contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation ends in a violent explosion.** The circulation of commodities is for the moment reduced to nothing; money, the means of circulation, becomes an obstacle to circulation; all the laws of commodity production and commodity circulation are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its culminating point: **the mode of production rebels against the mode of exchange, the productive forces rebel against the mode of production, which they have outgrown.**”⁴³

And the resolution of this contradiction, between social productive forces and private property, between the mode of production and the mode of circulation is presented by Marx and Engels in *Anti-Dühring* as follows:

⁴¹ Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1976, our emphasis.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

“But once their [*the social productive forces*] nature is grasped, they can be transformed from demoniacal masters into willing servants (...). With this treatment of the present-day productive forces according to their nature, which is now at last understood, **a socially planned regulation of production** in accordance with the needs of the community and of each individual **takes the place of the anarchy of social production. The capitalist mode of appropriation**, in which the product enslaves first the producer and then the appropriator as well, will thus **be replaced by the mode of appropriation of the product based on the nature of the modern means of production themselves**: on the one hand, direct social appropriation as a means of maintaining and extending production, and on the other direct individual appropriation as a means of existence and enjoyment.”⁴⁴

Engels presents in detail how to resolve the fundamental contradiction, in its economic aspect: social appropriation of the means of production and planning. And from a political point of view:

*“The proletariat seizes state power and to begin with transforms the means of production into state property.”*⁴⁵

The presentation of the suppression of private property assumes its classic formula for the international proletariat in this presentation by Engels, later popularized in the work *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880). In *Capital*, the suppression of private property had to be presented based on the sequential and chained resolution of two unities of opposites; capitalism arises from the negation of the first unity, capitalism is destroyed from the negation of the second unity. This initial explanation was accurate from a scientific point of view, correct from a philosophical point of view, but it needed to be deepened and this is what happens through two-line struggle against Dühring's position. By presenting the suppression of capitalist property focusing on the analysis of the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society, the content and form of the proletarian revolution could be presented in greater detail. Presenting the upward historical movement based on the *law of contradiction* proved to be both more concrete and more universal. This constituted an important development of Marxist philosophy in the course of the first stage of development of the ideology of the international proletariat.

However, this development was not only the product of the ideological struggle against academic socialism, but also of the progress of the class struggle, after all, revolutionary philosophy advances and will always advance seeking to transform reality. *Capital* was published in 1867, *Anti-Dühring* was fully published only in 1878. In this short historical hiatus, great episodes for the world proletarian revolution and the two-line struggle in the nascent ICM took place. In 1871, the immortal *Paris Commune* took place, with the direct intervention of the First International, under the personal leadership of Marx, even though Marxists were a minority in the leadership of the *Commune*; and, in 1875, the very important two-line struggle against Lassallism emerged in Germany. From the first, Marx formulates the powerful document *The Civil War in France*, in which he highlights that the *Paris Commune* had resolved the historical

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

problem of the state form of the dictatorship of the proletariat; secondly, Marx establishes in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* that the construction of communism would go through a first stage, of socialist society; in which, after the socialization of the means of production, would undoubtedly fight against the bourgeois law still in force and the social division of labor, particularly against the differences between countryside and city, between workers and peasants and between manual and intellectual labor – differences that are an expression of the existence of antagonistic classes in socialism.

In *Capital*, as Marx's objective was to demonstrate the historical necessity of the *expropriation of the expropriators*, he considers it to be related to three qualitatively distinct social processes. Thus, in the form of the *negation of the negation* between these processes, the *expropriation of the expropriators* appears as a single act. After the *Paris Commune* and its correct assessment in *The Civil War in France*, after the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, the theoretical and practical development of ideology, in the fight against Dühring, became evident that the question could not be raised again in the same terms. Therefore, the *expropriation of expropriators* is now presented as a process, in which the fulfillment of certain stages is necessary. The *expropriation of expropriators* as a process can only be philosophically presented through the *law of contradiction*.

In *Anti-Dühring*, Engels presents a series of examples of the *negation of the negation* in different processes of development of nature, society and thinking. These demonstrations were of great philosophical importance, because by highlighting the universality of the *negation of the negation* in the different forms of motion of matter, Engels was upholding the universality of dialectics. The formulation of the universality of dialectics was a necessary step towards establishing the universality and absolute validity of the *law of contradiction*. And, therefore, the work of Engels constitutes an important progress for the development of Marxist philosophy in every sense.

However, although the *negation of the negation* is present in all forms of motion of matter, it is not present in all phenomena as is the absolute validity of the *law of contradiction*. Engels, after presenting the universal aspect of the *negation of the negation* in the process of development of the barley grain, also presents its particular aspect. Let us first see how Engels analyzes its universal validity:

“Let us take a grain of barley. Billions of such grains of barley are milled, boiled and brewed and then consumed. But if such a grain of barley meets with conditions which are normal for it, if it falls on suitable soil, then under the influence of heat and moisture a specific change occurs in it, it germinates; **the grain as such ceases to exist, it is negated, and in its place, there appears the plant which has arisen from it, the negation of the grain.** But what is the normal life-process of this plant? It grows, flowers, is fertilized and finally once more produces grains of barley, and as soon as these have ripened, **the stalk dies, is in its turn negated. As a result of this negation of the negation** we have the

original grain of barley once again, but **not as a single unit, but ten-, twenty-or thirty-fold.**" ⁴⁶

The barley grain constitutes a unity of opposites that, when negated, under certain conditions, becomes a barley plant; this same plant, in turn, under certain conditions, grows, is fertilized and produces many other grains that deny the unity of opposites that constitutes the plant. The grain is negated in the first negation, the plant is negated by the set of grains in the *negation of the negation*. Two processes of units of distinct and linked opposites that necessarily give rise to a third one distinct from the two that preceded it: the quantitative expansion of barley grains. Then, Engels indicates the limits of this sequential form of movement:

"Negation in dialectics does not mean simply saying no, or declaring that something does not exist, or destroying it in any way one likes. Long ago Spinoza said: *Omnis determinatio est negatio* -- every limitation or determination is at the same time a negation. Further, the kind of negation is here

determined, firstly, by the general, and, secondly, by the particular, nature of the process. I should not only negate, but also in turn sublate the negation. **I must therefore set up the first negation in such a way that the second remains or becomes possible.** In what way? According to the particular nature of each individual case. **If I grind a grain of barley, if I crush an insect, it is true I have carried out the first act, but have made the second act impossible.**" ⁴⁷

This is the particularity of the *negation of the negation*: the first unity of opposites must be negated in a specific way so as to ensure the possibility of the second negation. In this case, the *negation of the negation* can explain the natural, spontaneous growth of barley, but not the phenomenon of agriculture for consumption, in which another specific form of negating the barley grain emerges, which makes the *negation of the negation* unfeasible. In this case, the process of the barley seed progresses from the affirmation of the unity of opposites of the grain to the negation of this unity through the germination of the plant; however, the unity of opposites of the plant progresses from the affirmation of this unity to its (unnatural) negation in the form of its milling. The *affirmation and negation* of the unity of contraries constitutes an ensued and universal form of the *law of contradiction*; The *negation of the negation*, in turn, constitutes only a particular form present in all forms of motion of matter but which is not capable of explaining the transformation of all processes and phenomena. This understanding regarding *affirmation and negation*, as we will see later, is one of the very important philosophical results of the two-line struggle in the CPC around the Maoist principle that *one divides into two*.

Engels not only culminates the development of Marxist philosophy in the first stage, but also establishes which were the philosophical problems that the next generations of communists should focus their attention on in order to complete their resolution. In *Ludwig Feuerbach and*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

the End of Classical German Philosophy, Engels highlights what were the present tasks for revolutionary philosophy:

“In every place it is no longer a question of inventing connections out of our brains, but of discovering them in the facts. For philosophy, which has been expelled from nature and history, there remains only the realm of pure thought, so far as it is left over, that is, **the theory of the laws of knowledge process itself, logic and dialectics.**” ⁴⁸

The theory of the laws of the process of knowledge was formulated in Marxism by the great Lenin in his masterful work *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, which was brilliantly developed by Chairman Mao in *On Practice* and *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?*. Regarding logic and dialectics, Engels, in his work *Dialectics of Nature*, gave another important indication on the need for further developments:

“It is, therefore, from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development, as well as of thought itself. And indeed, they can be reduced in the main to three:

- The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa;
- **The law of the interpenetration of opposites;**
- The law of the negation of the negation.

All three are developed by Hegel in his idealist fashion as mere laws of *thought*: the first, in the first part of his *Logic*, in the Doctrine of Being; the second fills the whole of the second and **by far the most important** part of his *Logic*, **the Doctrine of Essence**; finally, the third figures as the fundamental law for the construction of the whole system

(...)

We are not concerned here with writing a handbook of dialectics, but only with showing that the dialectical laws are really laws of development of nature, and therefore are valid also for theoretical natural science. Hence **we cannot go into the inner interconnection of these laws with one another.**” ⁴⁹

Engels clarifies, therefore, that he takes the most general laws of nature, society and thought from Hegel's work *Science of Logic*. He highlights the relationship of each law with the Hegelian philosophical system: the law of *transformation of quantity into quality* as part of the *Doctrine of Being*; the *law of contradiction* as part of the *Doctrine of Essence*, highlighted by Engels as the most important part of Hegelian logic; and the law of *negation of the negation* as part of the *Doctrine of the Notion* and, at the same time, as a fundamental law of the Hegelian system. Most importantly, however, Engels indicates the need to address the internal interconnection of these laws.

⁴⁸ Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy, (1886) our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁹ Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, our emphasis.

The great Lenin, unfortunately, was unable to see the work *Dialectic of Nature*, as it was only published in 1927, in the USSR. However, in his brilliant philosophical notebooks, particularly in his studies on *Hegel's Science of Logic*, he precisely addressed the internal interconnection of these laws. In turn, it was up to Chairman Mao, largely based on what was advanced by Lenin, to offer the international proletariat the most advanced formulation of the materialist dialectic in *On Contradiction*, delivering the exposition of the law of contradiction as the *sole fundamental law of dialectics* in a straightforward way and, subsequently, its internal interconnection with its expressions or ensued laws: quantity/quality and affirmation/negation. This is what we will seek to address in the following topics.

1.2- Leninism: the law of unity and struggle of opposites as the kernel of dialectics

In the second stage of the ideology of the international proletariat, Lenin made an important leap in the theoretical elaboration of the Marxist world outlook, that is, in dialectical materialism. Marxism-Leninism drives the development of Marxist philosophy in its two central problems: the theory of knowledge and dialectics. Regarding the first problem, Lenin fully and completely established the theory of knowledge as an active reflection of matter in consciousness. In relation to dialectics, it was Lenin who, for the first time, formulated that the unity of opposites constitutes "*the kernel of dialectics*". One of Lenin's first theoretical works constitutes an important philosophical work, a polemic with Russian populists and their attacks against Marxism. In *What the "Friends of the People" are and How They Fight the Social Democrats* (1894), Lenin makes a great defense of dialectical materialism and particularly of the materialist conception of history developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, demonstrating his broad theoretical and practical grasp of Marxism very early on.

His most important philosophical work, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (1909), would be published a few years later, at a time of ideological crisis among communists in Russia. In 1905, the first Democratic Revolution took place in Russia, which massively mobilized workers and peasants in a great armed insurrection followed by a relatively protracted civil war until 1907. This first revolutionary attempt was defeated by tsarism which, after the ebb of the revolutionary wave, institutes a broad and violent counter-revolution, the Stolypin reaction. Many revolutionaries were arrested and exiled, but the biggest impact on Russian social democracy was ideological, that is, whether or not it would be possible to carry out a democratic revolution to defeat the tsarist autocracy, whether or not the revolutionary tactics of that period were correct.

At that time, Lenin was already the main communist leader in the country, heading the Bolshevik Fraction of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. At the beginning of 1905, after the start of armed uprisings of workers and peasants, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks met in separate Congresses and formulated opposing tactics for the Democratic Revolution in Russia. While the Mensheviks advocated a right-wing tactic of placing themselves at the tail of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, entrusting the latter with the leadership of the bourgeois democratic revolution; Lenin, and the Bolsheviks, in turn, established the powerful tactic that advocated that the proletariat should fight for the leadership of that revolution to take it as far as possible and

for the establishment of the worker-peasant alliance so, based on an armed contingent led by the proletariat, unleash the insurrection against the tsarist aristocracy and the liberal bourgeoisie, seeking to provide leadership to this revolution by establishing the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*.

Despite the correctness of this political line, the conditions for greater subjective development and greater organizational capacity of the Bolshevik Fraction to carry out the revolutionary tasks required in the conduct and achievement of revolution and its triumph were lacking. These subjective conditions would be obtained in the following years through the enormous effort of the then Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, reconstituted by Lenin and the left-wing Bolsheviks, in 1912, at the Prague Conference, which ensured the transformation of the democratic revolution in February, 1917, into the victorious Great Socialist Revolution of October, in this same year. However, the defeat of the democratic revolution of 1905 had caused enormous ideological vacillation in the social democratic ranks, including the Bolshevik faction. These ideological vacillations sought to theoretically justify their capitulation by assuming bourgeois philosophical conceptions, in order to, in the name of the latest advances in natural sciences, contest the validity of the revolutionary philosophy of the proletariat, dialectical materialism.

Bogdanov, Bazarov, Lunacharsky and other Bolshevik militants and leaders started to defend that the *Empirio-critical* philosophy formulated by the Austrian physicist Ernst Mach corresponded to a great philosophical advance, which represented the overcoming of the opposition between materialism and idealism. The great Lenin, following the footsteps of Engels in *Anti-Dühring*, waged a formidable two-line struggle against these positions, unmasking their philosophical falsifications, their surrender to the bourgeois world outlook, thus managing to crush this rotten revisionist position in the Bolshevik fraction. In this way, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* constitutes the decisive ideological work to overcome the setback of the defeat in 1905 and to achieve victory in 1917 and the great advances that followed.

For this “critical” empiricism, in the process of knowledge, sensation was taken as primary, but it was maintained that matter did not exist as such and that the essence of the phenomenon could not be known. Empirio-criticism mocked philosophical materialism, arguing that this revolutionary conception took matter as something “sacred”. For Empirio-criticism, objective matter outside consciousness did not exist; for this idealistic conception, the physical bodies were “*complexes of sensations*”.

Initially, Lenin unmasks the philosophical content of Empirio-criticism by showing that in Mach's philosophical foundation there was no “novelty”, but rather the reissue of the old subjectivist idealist philosophical theory of the 17th century, by Bishop Berkeley. Mach's philosophy established an absolute identity between sensation and the physical body, in this way he reduced matter to the sensation we have of it and the process of knowledge to the discoveries of the necessary relationships between our own sensations and not the material motion that is prior and, relatively, independent of our consciousness. In turn, Berkeley's philosophy maintained that things are a “set of ideas”, this way he established an indissoluble

identity between consciousness and things, thus reducing the process of knowledge to the discovery of divine ideas present in advance in all natural and social phenomena.

In opposition to this conception, Lenin will defend the two fundamental principles of philosophical materialism, systematized by Engels in *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of classical German philosophy*: 1st) matter is prior to consciousness and exists independently of it; 2nd) consciousness can reflect the objective essence of all phenomena. Next, he would develop, in a new level, the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge, that is, the communist conception of the relationship between thinking and being.

Firstly, Lenin demonstrates that there is no indissoluble link between thinking and thing, nor between sensation and physical bodies. He demonstrates that matter is prior to human consciousness, he reveals that this is a result, a product of the development of inorganic matter into organic matter and a consequence of the transformation of life in human society. Matter, therefore, is prior to consciousness and, in turn, consciousness is a product of the transformation of matter and, in this way, matter can be neither a “*complex of sensations*” nor a “*collection of ideas*”. Matter is, according to Lenin's brilliant definition:

“(…) is a philosophical category denoting the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them.”⁵⁰

Lenin precisely demonstrates the conditional and relative character of the unity of opposites between thinking and being. This unity is not indissoluble, as consciousness is neither prior to matter nor immediately arising from it; the unity between being and thinking is, therefore, a product of the *Dialectics of Nature*, as Engels brilliantly defined it. Certain conditions are necessary for this unity to arise and, without these conditions, there can be no consciousness. In turn, the conditions for inert matter to transform into organic nature and this organic nature to transform into consciousness are created by the motion and transformation of matter itself. Consciousness does not arise from nature caused by a force external to nature, but by its own motion and transformation, therefore, Lenin highlights that although matter is not a “collection of ideas” or a “combination of sensations” it is “*logical to assert that all matter possesses a property which is essentially akin to sensation, the **property of reflection***” It is the intrinsic property of inert matter to reflect, to react to mechanical, chemical, electrical motion, etc., that is, it is the contradiction inherent to eternal matter that drives its self-movement in incessant transformation.

In this way, Lenin sustains the dialectical materialist conception of the transformation of matter into consciousness, which corresponds to the first fundamental principle of philosophical materialism, or the first form of identity between *being* and *thinking*. Next, Lenin addresses the issue of the capacity of consciousness to know being, to reflect the essence of objective phenomena external to consciousness. This is the second fundamental principle of philosophical materialism, or the second form of identity between *being* and *thinking*. The first form of identity

⁵⁰ V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1972, our emphasis.

corresponds to the passive aspect of *theory of reflection*; The second form of identity corresponds to the active aspect of the *theory of reflection*. In the first form, the *being* transforms into consciousness; in the second, *consciousness* transforms into *being*. Let's see how Lenin establishes this issue on a new level when developing the *Marxist theory of knowledge*.

Lenin begins dealing with this issue by taking up Engels when he said:

“Hegel was the first to state correctly the relation between freedom and necessity. To him, freedom is the appreciation of necessity. (...) Freedom does not consist in the dream of independence from natural laws, but in the knowledge of these laws, and **in the possibility, this gives of systematically making them work towards definite ends.** (...) Freedom therefore consists in the **control over ourselves and over external nature**, a control founded on knowledge of natural necessity”⁵¹

Then Lenin brilliantly defends and develops this Marxist postulate:

“The development of consciousness in each human individual and the development of the collective knowledge of humanity at large presents us at every step with examples of the transformation of the unknown "thing-in-itself" into the known "thing-for-us," of the **transformation of blind, unknown necessity**, "necessity-in-itself," into the known "necessity-for-us." (...) in the above-mentioned argument Engels plainly employs the *salto vitale* method in philosophy, that is to say, he **makes a leap from theory to practice.** (...) The mastery of nature manifested in **human practice** is a result of an objectively correct reflection within the human head of the phenomena and processes of nature, and **is proof of the fact that this reflection** (within the limits of what is revealed by practice) **is objective, absolute, and eternal truth.**”⁵²

In this formulation, Lenin makes an important leap in Marxist philosophy, by establishing that knowledge corresponds to the **transformation of necessity**, that the process of knowledge requires **a leap from theory to practice** and, furthermore, that **practice constitutes the criterion of the objective truth of certain subjective reflection of reality in consciousness.**

Lenin masterfully resolves the problem of the identity between thinking and being, thus advancing greatly in the theoretical formulation of the Marxist conception of the issue. He thus presents the necessary relationship between thinking and being, of thinking as a product of the development of matter; he thus establishes his first form of relative unity. He shows that thinking is a reflection of social practice, in the same way that social consciousness is a reflection of social being. By showing that freedom is the knowledge of necessity, and that such knowledge is the transformation of that necessity, that this transformation occurs through the leap from theory to practice, Lenin presents the second form of identity between thinking and being, or between knowing and doing, in a superior form. And he also shows the relative character of this unity between thinking and being, of this correspondence between the subjective and the

⁵¹ *Ibid.* (Engels *apud* Lenin)

⁵² *Ibid.*

objective, by solving the problem of the relationship between the relative character and the absolute character of truth:

“From the standpoint of modern materialism i.e., Marxism, ***the limits of approximation of our knowledge to objective, absolute truth are historically conditional***, but ***the existence of such truth is unconditional, and the fact that we are approaching nearer to it is also unconditional***. The contours of the picture are historically conditional, but the fact that this picture depicts an objectively existing model is unconditional. When and under what circumstances we reached, in our knowledge of the essential nature of things, (...) is historically conditional; but that every such discovery is an advance of “absolutely objective knowledge” is unconditional.” ⁵³

Each discovery constitutes the identity between the subjective and the objective, as every unity of opposites is relative, this achieved truth will also have a relative, conditional character. However, the endless set of relative truths constitutes the unconditional, absolute, truth of the universe. The process of knowledge, therefore, is the infinite movement of consciousness approaching this objective and absolute truth. This Leninist formulation represented an important leap in the Marxist theory of knowledge.

When refuting idealist positions on the theory of knowledge, whether empiricist ones like Mach's, or subjective idealists like Berkeley's, the great Lenin harshly attacked the idealist foundation of these positions that sometimes proclaim the existence of a divine consciousness prior to nature, and sometimes the existence of an “*indissoluble connection between the environment and the self*”, as is the case with Fichte's idealist philosophy and Bogdanov's use of it. As already seen above, Lenin showed the relative character of this unity and the necessary condition of matter as prior to consciousness. However, when correctly criticizing the indissoluble unity between matter and consciousness, Lenin took the term “identity” as equal to the concept of “*indissoluble connection*” and thus put forward the following formulation:

“**‘Social being’ and ‘social consciousness’ are not identical**, just as being in general and consciousness in general are not identical. From the fact that in their intercourse men act as conscious beings, **it does not follow that social consciousness is identical with social being**. (...) Social consciousness reflects social being -- that is Marx's teaching. A reflection may be an approximately true copy of the reflected, **but to speak of identity is absurd**. (...) **For this theory of the identity of social being and social consciousness is sheer nonsense** and an *absolutely reactionary theory*” ⁵⁴

It is evident that Lenin, when speaking of the non-identity between the social being and social consciousness, is not denying that one aspect transforms into the other, under certain conditions. So much so that he emphasizes that “*social consciousness reflects social being*”. In this passage, Lenin is combating Bogdanov's philosophical falsification that established an absolute identity between social being and social consciousness. Departing from the false

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

assumption that social being = social consciousness, Bogdanov concluded that it was enough to study social consciousness to deduce the characteristics of social being from it. Besides being idealistic, this revisionist conception is metaphysical, as it takes two contradictory aspects, in this case social being and social consciousness, as if they were one and the same thing. The absolute, and not relative, identity of the opposite aspects of a contradiction is one of the metaphysical ways of *combining two into one*.

Lenin, therefore, is defending Marx's materialist conception of history, which establishes that men enter into certain social relations without initially being aware of these same relations. The social consciousness of these relationships is a product of the dialectical development of social practice and social consciousness, and therefore cannot be immediately given. As established by Lenin, only under certain conditions there is this identity, which is not absolute but relative; the approximate reflection of the subjective in relation to the objective.

This passage of *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was later used by revisionist philosophers in China, epigones of Liu Shao-chi, as a way to combat Maoism. We will look at this issue in detail later. Here, we shall only highlight the following: in Lenin's passage cited above, there is no error of philosophical conception, but there is an inaccuracy in the formulation of the question, in the handling of the dialectical concept "*identity*", which encompasses at the same time the difference and equality. It will be Lenin himself who will resolve this conceptual issue in the *Philosophical Notebooks*, but here it is important to see that just as in the class struggle, not every defeat corresponds to an error in political line or philosophical conception; Also in the theoretical struggle, not every imprecise or insufficient formulation corresponds to a manifestation of idealism or metaphysics. Philosophy corresponds to the theoretical formulation of the world outlook of a certain class; This formulation is also a process in which one approaches more exact and precise forms. This is what happens in the present case. The importance of highlighting it consists in pointing out the importance of Lenin's struggle against the absolute identity of aspects in a contradiction. Because as we will see, there are two ways of *combining two into one*; Prachanda does so through the reconciliation of contradictory aspects and Avakian does so through the absolute identity between the opposites. Both correspond to revisionist perspectives of Marxist philosophy, as ultimately, both suppress the struggle of opposites.

In relation to the other major problem for Marxist philosophy, highlighted by Engels, dialectics, the great leap made by Lenin in this field is condensed in the aforementioned *Philosophical Notebooks* (1914-1915), which were published in the USSR in 1929 and 1930. In this vast material, two manuscripts are the most important: the *Conspectus of Hegel's Book "The Science of Logic"* (1914) and *On the Question of Dialectics* (1915). The first constitutes a notebook of Lenin's notes from his studies of Hegel's book *The Science of Logic*; the second is a systematization of Lenin's conclusions about materialist dialectics. This material contains a series of brilliant Leninist philosophical formulations on dialectics and some essential finishing touches to his *theory of reflection*.

In relation to the dialectical materialist world outlook, he formulates that:

“(...) the inner contradictions lead to the replacement of the old content by a new, higher one.” ⁵⁵

This formulation, as is generally known, would later be brilliantly developed by Chairman Mao. Regarding the concept “*identity*”, Lenin fully completes his understanding of it, precisely formulating that:

“*Dialectics* is the teaching which shows how *Opposites* can be and how they happen to be (how they become) *identical*, —under what conditions they are identical, becoming transformed into one another, —why the human mind should grasp these opposites not as dead, rigid, but as living, conditional, mobile, becoming transformed into one another.” ⁵⁶

The development of Lenin's philosophical thought in the course of his own work is clear in this and other passages. Just as Marx and Engels advanced from the *negation of the negation* to *contradiction* in explaining the suppression of private property, Lenin advances from the absolute non-identity between social consciousness and social being to the understanding that opposites are and become identical under certain conditions. The concept is the same, but the formulation took a significant leap. The advance in the understanding of dialectics allows Lenin to formulate the *Marxist theory of knowledge* in an even more developed and clear form, particularly regarding the problem of the *identity between thinking and being*:

“The abstraction of matter, of a *law* of nature, the abstraction of *value*, etc., in short *all* scientific (correct, serious, not absurd) abstractions reflect nature more deeply, truly and *completely*. From living perception to abstract thought, and from *this to practice*, —such is the dialectical path of the cognition of *truth*, of the cognition of objective reality.” ⁵⁷

Here Lenin fully presents the two leaps in the process of knowledge, fully developed later by Chairman Mao in *On Practice*. Regarding the issue of transforming the subjective into objective, Lenin highlights that:

“Man’s consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it. i.e., that the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity.” ⁵⁸

Regarding *practice* as the principal aspect in the process of developing knowledge, Lenin formulates that:

“Practice is higher than (theoretical) knowledge, for it has not only the dignity of universality, but also of immediate actuality.” ⁵⁹

⁵⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Philosophical Notebooks*, *Collected Works* Volume 38, our emphasis.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

And:

“The result of activity is the test of subjective cognition and the criterion of objectivity which truly is.” ⁶⁰

In relation to the Leninist leap in the formulation of dialectics, in Marxist philosophy, present in *Conspectus of Hegel's Book the Science of Logic*, it appears in the immortalized and fully developed passage in *On Contradiction*:

“In brief, **dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. This embodies the essence of dialectics, but it requires explanations and development.**” ⁶¹

In the Manuscript *On the Question of Dialectics* (1915), Lenin goes further in establishing the *law of contradiction* as the *sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics*. Laying the foundations for the revolutionary principle that everything in the universe is *one that divides into two*, Lenin establishes that:

“**The splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts is the essence of dialectics.**” ⁶²

Developing the formulation of the *unity of opposites* as the kernel of dialectics, Lenin establishes that:

“The identity of opposites (...) is the recognition (discovery) of the contradictory, *mutually exclusive*, opposite tendencies in *all* phenomena and processes of nature (including mind and society). **The condition for the knowledge of all processes of the world in their “self-movement,” in their spontaneous development, in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a unity of opposites.** Development is the “struggle” of opposites.” ⁶³

Lenin, following the footsteps of Engels, brilliantly establishes the relationship between objective dialectics and subjective dialectics. All processes in nature advance as an *identity and struggle of opposites*, therefore, the condition for knowing these processes is to consider them as a *unity of opposites*. Lenin upholds in classical way the dialectical materialist world outlook, in his broadly known formulation:

“The two basic (...) conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, *and development as a unity of opposites (the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation).*” ⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

In a single passage, the *law of contradiction* and the principle that *one divides into two* is summarized. Furthermore, Lenin establishes the proletarian revolutionary principle of Marxist dialectics:

The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) **of opposites is conditional**, temporary, transitory, relative. **The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute**, just as development and motion are absolute.”⁶⁵

There is no doubt about the gigantic role of the great Lenin, in these two great works *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and in the *Philosophical Notebooks*, for the establishment of the *law of contradiction* as the *sole fundamental law of dialectics*. Therefore, what causes the UOC (MLM) to insist that it is the *law of negation of the negation* that “best explains the direction of movement” constitutes a complete absurd. This is not only in clear opposition to Maoism, but also, of course, to Marxism and Leninism.

Finally, it is necessary to dedicate a few words to the role of the great comrade Stalin in the development of Marxist philosophy. Stalin was Lenin's continuer and took on the extremely difficult task of continuing socialist construction with great aptitude, after Lenin's premature death in 1924. He then led with great mastery the complex two-line struggle against Trotskyism and, later, against Bukharinism. In the fight against Bukharin's revisionist line, which opposed the completion of the NEP (New Economic Policy) and socialist collectivization, Stalin faced a more structured restorationist line than Trotsky's openly counter-revolutionary and treacherous position. Bukharin, a loyal follower of the Trotskyist current, started to defend that the socialist economic base should combine capitalist and socialist elements for a long period. To support his position, he relied on the philosophical formulations of the School of Deborin, a revisionist philosopher who defended the theory of conciliation of contradictions. According to Deborin, in the course of a given process, contradictions only arise from a given moment, before which only differences would subsist, but not contradictions. In other words, for him, difference is not contradiction.

Stalin managed to crush Bukharin's restorationist line in time to prepare the USSR for the great clash that was announced in the world with the rise of Nazi-fascism in Italy, Germany and Japan. He also defeated Deborin's school by vigorously upholding the flag of the struggle of opposites contrary to the rotten theory of conciliation of contradictions. Comrade Stalin's theoretical formulation that condenses the foundations of the proletarian line to crush the revisionist line is contained in the work *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, which constitutes a chapter of the very important work *History of the CP(b)USSR Short Course* (1937). However, two important errors of unilateralism by Comrade Stalin in fighting the positions of Bukharin and Deborin stand out. In the struggle over the collectivization of the countryside, Stalin excessively emphasizes the importance of the productive forces regarding revolutionizing the relations of production. This was a difficult error to avoid, as it was simply the first experience of socialist construction. However, when dealing with the “*The principal features of the Marxist dialectical*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

method”,⁶⁶ Comrade Stalin commits important errors in presenting materialist dialectics. These were errors that could be avoided, as they were issues already advanced by Lenin in the *Philosophical Notebooks*. For this reason, Stalin's presentation of dialectics in this work constitutes a setback.

It is decisive to emphasize that, despite the errors, the presentation of the Marxist philosophical conception was principally correct and the errors constituted the secondary aspect, but needed to be overcome by the subsequent development of the ideology. Comrade Stalin formulates four fundamental features of Marxist dialectics as: 1) everything is connected; 2) everything changes; 3) the transformation of quantity into quality; and 4) the struggle of opposites. Stalin rightly establishes that:

“Further, if the world is in a state of constant movement and development, if **the dying away of the old and the upgrowth of the new is a law of development**, then it is clear that there can be no "immutable" social systems, no "eternal principles" of private property and exploitation, no "eternal ideas" of the subjugation of the peasant to the landlord, of the worker to the capitalist.”⁶⁷

As Chairman Mao highlights, the replacement of the old by the new is a “*general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe*” and, therefore, a central issue in the world outlook of Marxist philosophy. Another very important aspect highlighted by Stalin in this text is that a phenomenon can only be resolved through its internal contradictions and through the struggle between opposites. In this way, he correctly emphasizes the absolute character of the struggle of opposites, highlighted by Lenin and later developed by Chairman Mao:

“Further, if development proceeds by way of the **disclosure of internal contradictions**, by way of collisions between opposite forces on the basis of these contradictions and so as to overcome these contradictions, then it is clear that the class struggle of the proletariat is a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon. Hence, we must not cover up the contradictions of the capitalist system, but disclose and unravel them; we must not try to check the class struggle but carry it to its conclusion. Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must pursue an uncompromising proletarian class policy, not a reformist policy of harmony of the interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, **not a compromisers' policy of 'the growing of capitalism into Socialism.'**”⁶⁸

With this formulation, Comrade Stalin sought to smash Bukharin's revisionist line and Deborin's philosophical theorization and his defense of the reconciliation of contradictions.

However, Comrade Stalin ends up unilaterally emphasizing the *struggle of opposites*, treating it in a way that is dissociated from the *unity of opposites*. And he treats in incomplete way the *identity of opposites* in its most important content: the mutual transformation of

⁶⁶ J. V. Stalin, *History of the CP(b)USSR Short Course*, International Publishers Co, 1939, our emphasis

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

opposites and how the conditions for this transformation are created. When dealing with what he lists as the first fundamental feature of the dialectical method, Stalin deals with the mutual dependence between phenomena, the *“inseparable connection with surrounding phenomena, as one conditioned by surrounding phenomena.”*⁶⁹ He thus addresses one of the aspects of the *unity of opposites*, their *interdependence*, but he errs in treating it in a way dissociated from the struggle, since what connects the different phenomena, as well as the opposing aspects in a contradiction, is not an indissoluble connection, but the *absolute struggle* and *relative unity* between opposites.

On the other hand, when he addresses what he classifies as the fourth feature of the dialectical method, the *struggle of opposites*, Stalin does so separately from the *unity of opposites*, and does not analyze the transformation of phenomena based on the *struggle and identity of opposites*, thus not revealing that the qualitative leap in a process constitutes the mutual transformation between the new and old aspect in the contradiction, with the new assuming the principal, dominant condition and the old becoming the secondary, dominated condition. Thus, the comrade formulates the quality leap as follows:

“(...) the process of development from the lower to the higher takes place not as a harmonious unfolding of phenomena, but as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, **as a "struggle" of opposite tendencies** which operate on the basis of these contradictions.”⁷⁰

As Lenin had already highlighted, the process of development of a phenomenon is a process of unity and struggle between opposites, and that through the absolute struggle of opposites under certain conditions each opposite transforms into its opposite and this constitutes the most important aspect of the identity of opposites.

Not sufficiently understanding the relationship between *unity and struggle of opposites* and, particularly, this aspect of the *identity of opposites*, constituted the errors of metaphysical conception that Comrade Stalin sometimes incurred, errors that were criticized and rectified by Chairman Mao. This conceptual error is related to Stalin's other errors, such as not considering the identity of contraries in the contradictions between productive forces and relations of production, between economic base and superstructure. That is, although the productive forces and the economic base are, ultimately, the dominant aspect compared to the relations of production and the superstructure, under certain conditions of the development of the social process, relations of production and the superstructure become the principal aspect of the contradiction.

However, it is necessary to emphasize that an important part of these errors was corrected by Comrade Stalin himself in the course of the process of developing his leadership. For example, in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR* (1952), Stalin rectifies his view on the importance of the development of productive forces for the construction of socialism and

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

focuses his attention on the problem of the development of the relations of production. However, in this work the other error of underestimating the importance of revolutionizing the superstructure to fully complete the revolution of relations of production in socialist society appears. In an earlier work, *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics* (1950), however, Stalin had correctly established that:

“The superstructure is created by the base precisely in order to serve it, to actively help it to take shape and consolidate itself, **to actively fight for the elimination of the old, moribund base together with its old superstructure.**” ⁷¹

Here Stalin correctly deals with the conditions in which the superstructure assumes the principal aspect in the contradiction, from the active role in the destruction of the old economic base of society as a condition for the flourishing and development of new relations of production. This shows how Comrade Stalin's world outlook was fundamentally correct, and, at the same time, how errors in the theoretical formulation regarding this conception hinder ideological development.

Contrary to what UOC (MLM) states, Stalin's philosophical error is not that he “*cut out*” the *negation of the negation* from the fundamental laws of dialectics. The issue lies in the handling and development of the law of contradiction, in moving forward from what was established by Lenin in his work *Philosophical Notebooks*. The problem is not in the *negation of the negation*, but in the lack of understanding of Lenin's advances and the recognition of the great philosophical leap taken by Chairman Mao in 1937, with *On Practice* and *On Contradiction*.

1.3- The law of contradiction and its scientific-popular expression in the principle that “one divides into two”

The leap in Marxist philosophy made by Chairman Mao, in turn, does not arise from the correction of the errors of Stalin. The development of Marxist dialectics and the *Marxist theory of knowledge*, achieved shortly after the epic *Long March*, emerges as a necessary leap to Marxism-Leninism to the development of the military line and the line of democratic revolution in China. Without this leap in dialectics, it would not have been possible to establish the method of *two-line struggle* in dealing with internal contradictions in the Communist Party, the *theory of Protracted People's War*, the *Three fundamental instruments of revolution* -party, people's army and revolutionary united front - and of the *six laws* of this for the New Democratic Revolution. The struggle to resolve the concrete problems of the Chinese revolution takes place in the midst of important *two-line struggles*, assumed and applied by Chairman Mao's leadership, against the right and “left” opportunist positions and the dogmatic ones in the CPC and are, therefore, the origin of the great leap in Marxist philosophy achieved by Chairman Mao Zedong.

Maoism, as a whole, begins its development as the third stage in the development of the ideology of the proletariat when solving the problem of the Proletarian Revolution in colonial/semi-colonial countries. This development, in turn, begins through the application of the

⁷¹ J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*

universal truths of Marxism-Leninism, notably the contributions of Stalin's thought, including the definition of Leninism, the main contribution to the ideology of the international proletariat, to the concrete reality of the Chinese revolution. Among Stalin's contributions, the justified and correct international line of the anti-fascist united front during the course of the Second imperialist World War also stands out. It was by applying these universal contributions to the Chinese revolution that Chairman Mao forged the theory of the New Democratic Revolution and the theory of the three instruments of Revolution.

The development that Maoism contributed with the precise formulation of the Marxist political economy of socialist construction and the resolution of the problem of the continuity of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, necessarily implied the correction of Comrade Stalin's philosophical errors. This was a pressing need for the development of the ideology, but it was not the reason for its development, as pointed out by the capitulationist and revisionist assessments of Avakianism and Prachandaism.

The works *On Practice* and *On Contradiction* were written after a major setback in the Chinese revolution. The fifth major campaign of encirclement and annihilation personally led by Chiang Kai-shek against the revolutionary base areas, mainly against the most consolidated one located in the Tchincan Mountains, which resulted in a significant defeat for the revolution, mainly for the contingents of the Red Army led by CPC. On October 16, 1934, the Red Army managed to break the siege and began the strategic withdrawal that would become the 12,500 km *Long March*. The principal cause of this defeat was subjective, the predominance of Wang Ming's "left" opportunist adventurist line of "attacking in all directions" and seeking to quickly conquer large cities; and, soon, after breaking the Kuomintang siege, the line of aimless "escape". This opportunist line resulted in the loss of many living forces of revolution and all the territory liberated by the agrarian revolutionary war. Chairman Mao, however, knowing that a defeat of the proletarian revolution could only be temporary, persisted in the two-line struggle in the CPC and crushed, firstly, Wang Ming's military line and then his line for the democratic revolution in China. Thus, it was established, in 1935, that the increasing expansion of the Japanese invasion to the interior of China, which began in 1931 from Manchuria, corresponded to the modification of the principal contradiction in the Chinese revolution and, in this way, the *Long March* turns towards northern China, defeating Chang Kuo-tao's line of capitulation and escape. The Shensi base area was established in Yen-an, to place itself in the first lines of resistance against the Japanese offensive and turning Yen-an into the great general rearguard of the revolution and the anti-Japanese national war.

The aforementioned philosophical works, among others, prepared by Chairman Mao immediately represented the ideological consolidation of the left-wing line in the CPC, something similar to what *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* represented in the Bolshevik Party. The philosophical principles he presented in mid-1937, however, were already present in their applied form in military theory, in the very important work *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, which was prepared in December 1936. In the study of the *laws of war*

revolutionary revolution in China, Chairman Mao establishes the cardinal principles of the *law of contradiction*:

1) He highlights that war is the highest way to resolve antagonistic social contradictions:

“War is the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups, and it has existed ever since the emergence of private property and of classes.”⁷²

2) He points out that there are only two types of war and one way to eliminate war:

“War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not-too-distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter-revolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war. History knows only two kinds of war, just and unjust. We support just wars and oppose unjust wars. All counter-revolutionary wars are unjust, all revolutionary wars are just.”⁷³

3) He Analyzes all the military problems from the perspective of unity and struggle between two opposing aspects:

“Giving proper consideration to the distinction as well as the connection between losses and replacements, between fighting and resting, between concentration and dispersion, between attack and defense, between advance and retreat, between concealment and exposure, between the main attack and supplementary attacks, between assault and containing action, between centralized command and decentralized command, between protracted war and war of quick decision, between positional war and mobile war, (...) between civil war and national war, between one historical stage and another, etc., etc.”⁷⁴

4) He establishes the question of the fundamental contradiction in the course of the development of the process of war:

“These are the two aspects of China's revolutionary war. They exist simultaneously, that is, there are favorable factors and there are difficulties. This is the fundamental law of China's revolutionary war, from which many other laws ensue.”⁷⁵

⁷² Chairman Mao, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, Selected Works, Peking, 1967, our emphasis.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

5) He establishes the two basic forms of combat and their necessary intercalation in the revolutionary war in China:

"(...) there are only two basic forms of fighting, attack and defense. (...) It is a strategic defeat for the enemy when his "encirclement and suppression" campaign is broken and our defensive becomes an offensive, when the enemy turns to the defensive and has to reorganize before launching another "encirclement and suppression" campaign." ⁷⁶

6) He highlights the need to create the conditions to reverse the contradictory aspects of war:

"The object of strategic retreat is to conserve military strength and prepare for the counteroffensive. (...) In the past, however, many people were stubbornly opposed to retreat, considering it to be an "opportunist line of pure defense". Our history has proved that their opposition was entirely wrong. To prepare for a counter-offensive, we must select or create conditions favorable to ourselves but unfavorable to the enemy, so as to bring about a change in the balance of forces, before we go on to the stage of the counter-offensive."

7) In turn, he emphasizes that only through struggle can a leap in quality be achieved and the contradictory aspects of war reversed:

"(...) the presence of these conditions and of a situation favorable to ourselves and unfavorable to the enemy does not mean that we have already defeated him. Such conditions and such a situation provide the possibility for our victory and his defeat, but do not constitute the reality of victory or defeat; they have not yet brought actual victory or defeat to either army. To bring about victory or defeat a decisive battle between the two armies is necessary. Only a decisive battle can settle the question as to which army is the victor and which the vanquished." ⁷⁷

8) He emphasizes that in the mutual transformation, in identity, of contradictory aspects, the difference and struggle of opposites continues to exist:

"Whether in a counter-offensive or in an offensive, the principles with regard to these problems do not differ in their basic character. In this sense we may say that a counter-offensive is an offensive. Still, it is not exactly an offensive. The principles of the counter-offensive are applied when the enemy is on the offensive. The principles of the offensive are applied when the enemy is on the defensive. In this sense, there are certain differences between a counter-offensive and an offensive." ⁷⁸

In summary, Chairman Mao's military line establishes that the fundamental contradiction of the revolutionary war in China has the opposite aspects of favorable conditions (a vast semi-

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

colonial country and a just war led by the Communist Party) *versus* unfavorable ones (facing a powerful enemy with a small and weak army). The only way to resolve this contradiction is through a protracted revolutionary war. Faced with the enemy's offensive, its campaigns of encirclement and annihilation, the revolutionary forces put up an active defense, as part of the counter-campaign of encirclement and annihilation. The objective of the defensive phase in the campaign is to create the conditions to go on the counteroffensive; This is only possible when we manage to create the conditions to fight a decisive battle that allows us to temporarily reverse the correlation of forces and impose a tactical offensive against an enemy that is strategically superior. The succession of tactical offensives in the protracted people's war, throughout its three strategic stages (defensive, stalemate and offensive), makes it possible to change the correlation of forces as a whole in order to achieve the annihilation of the enemy and conquer power throughout the country.

In *On Contradiction*, Chairman Mao philosophically develops this brilliant dialectic in his military thought, already successfully applied in the first four campaigns of encirclement and annihilation by the Kuomintang against revolutionary base areas in southern China (1930-1933) and during the epic *Long March* (1934-1936). *On Contradiction* generalizes and develops this dialectic, arming the Chinese and international proletariat with an all-powerful philosophy established in a deeply scientific way and, at the same time, genuinely popular way.

He begins his work by establishing that there are only two world outlooks regarding the development of a thing and phenomenon: the dialectical conception according to which things develop as an "*internal and necessary self-movement*" through quantitative and qualitative changes; and the metaphysical conception according to which movement occurs due to external causes and changes are only quantitative. He establishes that the "*universality of contradiction or absolute character of contradiction*" has two aspects:

- 1) contradiction exists in the process of all things and phenomena; and
- 2) that contradiction runs through the entire process from beginning to end.

Chairman Mao, in turn, when studying the "*particularity and relativity of contradiction*", he analyzes it on five levels, demonstrating:

- 1) that each form of movement of matter has its particular contradictions;
- 2) that in a given form of movement of matter, each of its processes has a particular, or fundamental, contradiction that distinguishes it from the other processes of this form of movement;
- 3) that this contradiction is composed of two particular opposing aspects;
- 4) that the development of a process is divided into stages, and each stage also has a particular contradiction;
- 5) that the particular contradiction of a stage of a process also has two particular contrary aspects.

Chairman Mao concludes the study of the particularity of contradiction, showing the dialectical relationship between universality and particularity in the study of all things and phenomena:

“Since **the particular is united with the universal** and since the universality as well as the particularity of contradiction is inherent in everything, **universality residing in particularity**, we should, when studying an object, try to discover **both the particular and the universal and their interconnection**, to discover both particularity and universality and also their interconnection within the object itself, and to discover the interconnections of this object with the many objects outside it.” ⁷⁹

Furthermore, of the 5 plans mentioned in the study of the *particularity of contradiction*, Chairman Mao analyzes two other issues in particular:

- 1) the principal contradiction; and
- 2) the principal aspect of the contradiction.

He thus highlights that every complex process is composed of countless contradictions, but that only one of these will be the principal contradiction, at a given stage or phase of development of this process. Furthermore, he formulates that the solution of the principal contradiction determines and conditions the resolution of secondary contradictions; and that the study of the principal aspect of the principal contradiction in a given phenomenon is decisive to achieve the resolution of its contradictions.

After studying universality, the particularity of contradiction, and the dialectical relationship between both of them, Chairman Mao moves on to the study of *the identity and struggle of the aspects of a contradiction*. He then establishes that identity has two meanings:

- 1) the existence of an aspect presupposes the existence of its opposite; and
- 2) under certain conditions, each aspect transforms into its opposite.

Furthermore, he establishes that the second meaning is the most important, as it is what indicates the change in phenomena, as well as their direction. Regarding the relationship between identity and the struggle of opposites, Chairman Mao, based on what was established by Lenin, formulates that:

“All processes have a beginning and an end; all processes transform themselves into their opposites. The constancy of all processes is relative, but the mutability manifested in the transformation of one process into another is absolute.” ⁸⁰

He then establishes the relationship between the identity and struggle of opposites, with the previously called *law of transformation of quantity into quality*:

“There are two states of motion in all things, that of **relative rest** and that of **conspicuous change**. Both are **caused by the struggle between the two contradictory elements** contained in a thing. When the thing is in the first state of motion, it is undergoing only **quantitative** and not qualitative **change** and consequently **presents the outward appearance of being at rest**. When the thing is in the second state of motion, the

⁷⁹ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*, Foreign Languages Press Peking, 1967, our emphasis.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

quantitative change of the first state has already reached a culminating point and gives rise to the dissolution of the thing as an entity and thereupon a **qualitative change** ensues, hence the appearance of a **conspicuous change**. Such unity, solidarity, combination, harmony, balance, stalemate, deadlock, rest, constancy, equilibrium, solidity, attraction, etc., as we see in daily life, are all the appearances of things in the state of quantitative change. On the other hand, the dissolution of unity, that is, the destruction of this solidarity, combination, harmony, balance, stalemate, deadlock, rest, constancy, equilibrium, solidity and attraction, and **the change of each into its opposite** are all the appearances of things in the state of qualitative change, the transformation of one process into another. Things are constantly transforming themselves from the first into the second state of motion; **the struggle of opposites goes on in both states but the contradiction is resolved through the second state**. That is why we say that the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and relative, while the struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute.”⁸¹

This passage is very significant in the process of establishing the *law of contradiction as the sole fundamental law of dialectics*, since for the first time in the development of Marxist philosophy the transformation of *quantity into quality* is based on the unity and struggle of opposites, that is, through the *law of contradiction*. Chairman Mao divides the movement of all things and phenomena into two stages: relative rest and conspicuous change; establishes that the movement in these two stages has its origin in the struggle of opposing aspects. That in the first stage, quantitative changes that occur create the conditions for the manifest change, the leap in quality. In the first stage, harmony, balance between contradictory aspects are manifestations of the stage of quantitative change; in the second stage, the contradictory unity dissolves and one aspect or process transforms into its opposite. He emphasizes that the struggle of opposites takes place in both stages, but that the contradiction is only resolved in the second stage, that of manifest change. He thus substantiates Lenin's definition of the unity of opposites being relative and the struggle between opposites absolute.

The work *On Practice*, which for reasons of length we cannot deal with in detail in this document, appears a few months before *On Contradiction* and constitutes the application of the *law of contradiction*, in its most elaborate form, to the process of knowledge. In this way, it also constitutes a philosophical leap in this key issue of dialectical materialism. In this work, Chairman Mao analyzes social practice and knowledge as a unity of opposites, truth is the result of the unity and struggle between these two contrary aspects, but mainly of the struggle between them. Through social practice, the human brain reflects objective reality, and returns to this same reality that confirms or refutes these reflections. Social practice and reflection of this practice in consciousness constitute the contradictory aspects that originate the movement of human thought. Human knowledge in turn, in its movement towards truth, also has two stages: 1) sensitive knowledge, and 2) rational knowledge. Through the first stage, human consciousness collects an immense amount of information that allows it to reflect the appearance of things and phenomena. The accumulation of this information, the analysis of this data, create the

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

conditions for a leap in quality: sensitive knowledge transforms into rational knowledge, the analysis of objective data transforms into a synthesis that seeks to reflect the essence of things and phenomena. However, the movement of knowledge does not end in this subjective synthesis, as rational conclusions need to be confirmed by social practice. The process of knowledge is never immediate, therefore, the search for truth is the infinite movement from practice to theory and from theory to practice. In the unity of contraries between social practice and social consciousness, social practice constitutes the principal aspect, as it constitutes the origin of knowledge and, at the same time, the criterion of truth. Theory is born from practice and only through practice can it be confirmed. In turn, in this contradictory movement, one aspect transforms into its opposite: practice becomes rational knowledge and rational knowledge, when true, transforms objective reality through practice. Furthermore, Chairman Mao highlights, in *On Contradiction*, that under certain conditions consciousness becomes the principal aspect of the contradiction.

In the final session of *On Contradiction*, Chairman Mao further analyzes *the place of antagonism in contradiction* as part of the study of the struggle of opposites. He establishes that although the resolution of the contradiction can only occur through the struggle of opposites, this in turn has two forms of development, which vary according to the character of the contradiction:

- 1) antagonistic contradictions; and
- 2) non-antagonistic contradictions.

The struggle of opposites is absolute, present in all processes, things and phenomena; However, contradiction is not the same as antagonism, antagonism is a particular form of contradiction that requires a different and corresponding method to resolve it. When misidentified, a non-antagonistic contradiction can turn into an antagonistic contradiction, thus making its resolution difficult. On the other hand, a given contradiction can be antagonistic in a given process and non-antagonistic in an opposite process, as is the case of the contradiction between countryside and city, which is antagonistic in capitalism, but which in socialism must be resolved with non-antagonistic methods.

In *On Contradiction*, Chairman Mao establishes in a profound way, and for the broad masses, extremely complex questions in philosophy, never before resolved at this level in the entire history of bourgeois philosophy. Clearly, he advances towards the establishment of contradiction as the sole fundamental law of dialectics, by analyzing it in its various aspects and by substantiating the *transformation of quantity into quality* in the *law of contradiction*. That is why Chairman Mao concludes this magnum opus of Marxist philosophy with the following brilliant synthesis:

“The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the fundamental law of nature and of society and therefore also the fundamental law of thought.”⁸²

⁸² *Ibid.*

By establishing the *law of contradiction as the fundamental law of dialectics*, the universality and particularity of contradiction and, in particular, the two forms of struggle of opposites (antagonistic and non-antagonistic), Chairman Mao completely smashes the conceptions of the School of Deborin, also fought by Comrade Stalin. In this way, *On Contradiction* served as an important contribution from Chairman Mao to the two-line struggle in the ICM against Bukharinism and against Trotskyism, as emphasized in an important article during the Great Philosophical Polemic, in the CPC, between 1964 and 1965 (a question that we

“Deborin distorted the law of the unity of opposites as the reconciliation, integration or synthesis of opposites. He excluded the struggle of opposites within things. Proceeding from this theory, he also disavowed the existence of class contradictions in Soviet society. Thus, **Deborin's anti-dialectical philosophy was useful as the ideological weapon to the Bukharin-Trotsky anti-Party gang.**”⁸³

The positions pro-capitalist restoration and against socialist construction in a single country by Bukharin and Trotsky sought their theoretical foundation in Deborin's philosophy. They sought to support their right-wing line, of maintaining the NEP (New Economic Policy) after it had essentially fulfilled its objectives for the reconstruction of the country after the civil war (1918-1922), in the rotten theories of class reconciliation, integration of opposites and in defense of the non-existence of class struggle in the USSR. Stalin fought this position, but only the developments in Marxist philosophy carried out by Chairman Mao completely smashed the philosophical falsification of the Deborin School.

In the same way as in the Bolshevik Party, revisionist lines sought to theoretically base themselves through the philosophical falsifications of dialectical materialism in the CPC. In this case, the same phenomenon occurred after the conquest of Power throughout the country, in 1949. During the fifteen years from 1949 to 1966, the principal two-line struggle in the CPC, against capitalist restoration, took place against the right-wing opportunist line of the renegade and worker-seller Liu Shao-chi. On several occasions, Chairman Mao's red line had to smash revisionist restorationist positions. Through this important two-line struggle, the concrete experience of the Socialist Revolution in China (from 1949) and the beginning of the GPCR (which culminates the struggle against Liu Shao-chi's line), Mao Zedong thought develops and transforms into Maoism: third, new and higher stage, as Chairman Gonzalo would later define it. In the course of this two-line struggle (1949-1966), which is inseparable from the development of class struggle in the socialist society, new and significant advances occurred in Chairman Mao's philosophical formulations.

This long and decisive two-line struggle in the CPC took place around the problems of the principal contradiction in socialist society, of the general line for the transition period (socialization of industry/commerce, small businesses and handicrafts and the co-operation and collectivization movement of the countryside) and the general line for socialist construction (which included the construction of the People's Communes and the Great Leap Forward). It is

⁸³ Jao Ching-huang, Persist in “one divides into two”, oppose “combine two into one” – A talk to basic-level on the Great Polemic on the Philosophical Front, edited and compiled, Nafang Ribao (Canton), January 11, 1965, translation and bold by us.

important to emphasize that an important part of this two-line struggle against Liu Shao-chi's right-wing line took place in the midst of the two-line struggle in the MCI against Khrushchev's modern revisionism, whose peak occurred between 1963-64, in the Great Debate, with which the CPC, under the leadership of Chairman Mao's red line, crushes the Khrushchevite positions.

The conquest of total power in China marks the opening of the two-line struggle of Chairman Mao against Liu Shao-chi. In March 1949, a few months before victory at the II Plenary Session of the CC of the CPC, Chairman Mao pointed out that, after the conquest of all power, the principal contradiction in Chinese society became the "*contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie*." ⁸⁴ At the end of 1952, Chairman Mao establishes the *general line for the transition period*, that is, the course of the Socialist Revolution:

"(...) bringing about, step by step, the socialist industrialization of the country and the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce." ⁸⁵

In opposition to the advancement of the Socialist Revolution, Liu Shao-chi formulates the right-wing opportunist line of "consolidation of the new-democratic system". This position was smashed by Chairman Mao in 1953, in his speech on the Party's general line for the transition period:

"After the success of the democratic revolution, some people stand still. Failing to realize the **change** in the character of the revolution, they continue with their *new democracy* instead of undertaking socialist transformation. **Hence their Rightist errors.**" ⁸⁶

The application of the CPC's general line for the transition period in the countryside of China has made flourish the agricultural co-operation movement, driven by the socialist initiative of poor peasants and lower middle peasants. The reaction of the right to the socialist offensive in the countryside was to reformulate the theoretical foundations of their restorationist line, from the struggle to "consolidate the new-democratic system" into defending that the socialist superstructure would be based on a "synthesized economic base" during the transition period, that is, both socialist and capitalist and that the dictatorship of the proletariat should promote and serve both. The theoretical formulation of this opportunist line was entrusted by Liu Shao-chi to the revisionist philosopher Yang Xian-zhen, who wrote the reactionary pamphlet *On the Question of the Base and the Superstructure During the Transition Period in the People's Republic of China*.

⁸⁴ Chairman Mao, apud The Theory of the "Synthesized Economic Base" Must be Thoroughly Criticized, Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front, Foreign Languages Press, 1973.

⁸⁵ Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front, 1971, Peking Review, Foreign Languages Press, 1973.

⁸⁶ Chairman Mao, apud The Theory of the "Synthesized Economic Base" Must be Thoroughly Criticized, in Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front, 1973, our emphasis.

This right-wing offensive initially resulted in a reduction in the “*number of co-operatives*.”⁸⁷ However, the position of the “synthesized economic basis” was smashed by the struggle waged by Chairman Mao in 1955, who, with the document *On the Question of Agricultural Co-operation*, attacked the essence of that bourgeois right-wing position: the reissue of the rotten *theory of productive forces* adapted to Chinese conditions, which advocated that the relations of production in the countryside in China could only advance towards socialist relations after the mechanization of the countryside. As the industrial base of the country was very backward, this would be a process that would take a long time. Chairman Mao razes these positions and demonstrates how the relations of production could actually take precedence over productive forces and boost their development. In this way, agricultural co-operation advanced rapidly in China, even with still precarious and insufficient mechanization. This was a major contribution by Chairman Mao to the socialist political economy.

After this second defeat, Liu Shao-chi's right-wing opportunist line tried to regain momentum after the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which took place in February 1956 and which gave the slogan for a fast pace towards capitalist restoration in the USSR, with Khrushchev's revisionist offensive and his rotten and lying *Secret Speech*. Based on the revisionist and restorationist theories of that Congress and the temporary defeat of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, Liu Shao-chi's right-wing bourgeois clique launched the offensive at the 8th Congress of the CPC, held in October of the same year, and managed to approve the setback in the ideological definition of the Party that removes part of that was adopted by the 7th Congress, in 1945, from “*Marxism-Leninism, and the ideas of Comrade Mao Zedong*” to “*Marxism-Leninism*”, precisely at a time when Mao Zedong thought was advancing in great strides towards transform into a new, third and higher stage of Marxism. From the point of view of the general line for socialist construction, after the defeat of the theory of “*synthesized economic base*”, the right-wing opportunist line tries to create a new ruse, approving still at the 8th Congress the position that the principal contradiction in China was “*the contradiction between the advanced socialist system and the backward social productive forces*.”⁸⁸ thus, proclaiming the old and revisionist *theory of productive forces* with a new label, arguing that only after the advance of mechanization could socialist relations of production advance.

Despite the setback at the 8th Congress of the CPC, Chairman Mao's revolutionary proletarian line maintains the initiative and launches new blows against Liu Shao-chi's right-wing line. Still in 1958, Chairman Mao wins in the CC, establishing the general line for socialist construction:

“Going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism.”⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, *The Theory of the "Synthesized Economic Base" Must be Thoroughly Criticized*, in *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front*, 1973.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

With this powerful line, the masses in China, under the leadership of the CPC and under the leadership of Chairman Mao, boldly launched themselves into socialist construction, promoting the Great Leap Forward and the construction of People's Communes, economic-social and political units, where the struggle to overcome the differences between the city and the countryside, between workers and peasants, and between manual work and intellectual work was promoted. Furthermore, to ensure greater rights for working women by guaranteeing their broad participation in production, class struggle and scientific experimentation.

The difficulties caused mainly by inevitable natural calamities (drought, floods, earthquakes, plagues, etc.) and other performance difficulties in implementing a bold plan such as the Great Leap Forward, which involved hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, intellectual workers, women and youth, in addition to counterrevolutionary sabotage, were used by Liu Shao-chi's right-wing clique to attack Mao Tse-tung thought. Once again, the right-wingers use the revisionist philosopher Yang Xian-zhen to attack the red line in the CPC, who, also in 1958, wrote the reactionary article A Brief Discussion of Two Categories of 'Identity.', in which he stated that the defense of identity between thought and being was an idealistic conception. This document was used to theoretically substantiate, based on the falsification of the Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge, the revisionist position that criticized Chairman Mao's line of socialist construction, as if it were subjectivist. He thus pointed out that the setbacks in the application of the socialist construction plan were products of an idealistic conception of the theory of knowledge, of a theory that would be subjectivist, as it believed it was possible to adapt reality to the Party's plans.

These philosophical falsifications by Yang Xian-zhen in 1958 were crushed by Chairman Mao's red line. In this clash, the Maoist cadre and proletarian philosopher Ai Szu-chi stood out, as highlighted by the *Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School, subordinate to the CC of the CPC*, in 1971:

“Because they are decadent and moribund reactionaries and a handful of fools blinded by inordinate ambition, the enemies invariably miscalculate the situation. While they were in the midst of their wild counter-attacks, the proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao sharply pointed out: Yang Hsien-chen and company had for a long time deliberately distorted Engels' words to buttress up their reactionary fallacy and they had to be criticized. With the proletarian headquarters' guidance, Ai Szu-chi and other comrades published articles exposing and criticizing theoretically and politically the fallacy that ‘there is no identity between thinking and being.’”⁹⁰

The ruse of Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line was to falsify Marxist philosophy to theoretically substantiate his attack on Chairman Mao's line for socialist construction. To cover up with pseudo-Marxist phraseology his rotten bourgeois line of capitalist restoration. This revisionist counterattack was once again smashed by Chairman Mao, who pointed out:

⁹⁰ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Momentous Struggle On the Question of the Identity Between Thinking and Being, Peking Review, issue 15, April 09 1971.

"The period of transition is full of contradiction and struggle. Our present revolutionary struggle is even more profound than the armed revolutionary struggles of the past. **It is a revolution that will forever bury the capitalist system and all other systems of exploitation.**" ⁹¹

The understanding that socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat should be a period of permanent revolution until communism, as upheld by Marx in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, was acquiring a higher development, supported by the concrete experience of the struggle for socialist construction and against capitalist restoration. In the midst of this two-line struggle in the CPC, the theory of the need for successive Proletarian Cultural Revolutions to achieve communism was forged.

The two-line struggle against Liu Shao-chi, the "*Chinese Khrushchev*", was essentially focused on ideological questions and socialist construction, in defense of Mao Tse-tung thought and his general line for socialist construction. However, this two-line struggle expressed itself in a special way as "*Three Great Struggles on China's Philosophical Front*" in the period from 1949 to 1964:

1st great struggle: against the theory of the "synthesized economic base" (1949-1955)

2nd great struggle: in defense of the conception of dialectical identity between thinking and being (1958-1959)

3rd great struggle: in defense of the dialectical principle that *one divides into two* (1964-1965)

All these philosophical struggles were in essence ideological clashes between Chairman Mao's red line and Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line. In all these philosophical struggles, Liu Shao-chi used his follower Yang Xian-zhen aiming to create a theoretical basis and public opinion favorable to his revisionist line. As the article *Three Great Struggles on China's Philosophical Front* synthesizes:

"Between 1949 and 1964, three major struggles of principle took place on China's philosophical front, centering around the question of China's economic base and superstructure, the question of whether there is identity between thinking and being, and the question of one divides into two or "combine two into one." These struggles were provoked one after another by Yang Hsien-chen, agent of the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi in philosophical circles, at crucial junctures in the struggle between the two classes (the proletariat and the bourgeoisie), the two roads (socialism and capitalism) and the two lines (Chairman Mao Zedong's proletarian revolutionary line and Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line). They were fierce struggles between dialectical materialism and historical materialism on the one hand and idealism

⁹¹ Chairman Mao, apud *The Theory of the "Synthesized Economic Base" Must be Thoroughly Criticized*, in *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front*, 1973, our emphasis.

and metaphysics on the other, and were a reflection on the philosophical front **of the acute class struggle at home and abroad.**" ⁹²

These two-line struggles, as a reflection of the class struggle in the socialist Revolution and construction in China, pushed the development of Marxist philosophy forward. Among the ideological works that mark the philosophical advance of the ideology of the international proletariat during the course of the Socialist Revolution in China, the following stand out: *On the Problem of Agricultural Co-operation* (1955), *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* (1957), *A Dialectical Approach to Inner-Party Unity* (1957) and *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* (1963).

As previously mentioned, in *On the Problem of Agricultural Co-operation*, Chairman Mao tears to pieces, in theory and in practice, the rotten and revisionist "*theory of productive forces*". In *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, Chairman Mao advances the Marxist dialectics in decisive questions for socialist construction, such as how to treat the unity and struggle of opposites when it is necessary to seek relative equilibrium between the aspects of a contradiction. In other words, how to achieve equilibrium between: production and consumption, industry and agriculture, centralism and democracy. Chairman Mao demonstrates that this equilibrium can only be achieved through the struggle of opposites and not through the reconciliation of the contradiction:

"Equilibrium is nothing but a temporary, relative, unity of opposites. By the end of each year, this equilibrium, taken as a whole, is upset by the struggle of opposites; the unity undergoes a change, equilibrium becomes disequilibrium, unity becomes disunity, and once again it is necessary to work out an equilibrium and unity for the next year. Herein lies the superiority of our planned economy. As a matter of fact, this equilibrium, this unity, is partially upset every month or every quarter, and partial readjustments are called for." ⁹³

The recognition of the contradiction and the appropriate method of struggle to resolve the contradiction are decisive for progressively advancing socialist construction. Neither in socialist society, not even in communism, a point will be reached where there will be no contradictions. The equilibrium between production and consumption can only be achieved by recognizing the contradiction between these two opposing aspects, this equilibrium will not be achieved by reconciling the contradiction; after all, the resolution of every contradiction is only possible through struggle, so the desired equilibrium between these two aspects can only be achieved through a resolute struggle against the disequilibrium that arises "monthly and every quarter year", between these two contradictory aspects. This was an important philosophical development established by Chairman Mao, essential for the correct formulation of plans for socialist construction, towards the shining communism.

⁹² Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front, Peking Review, issue 4, January 22, 1971, our emphasis.

⁹³ Chairman Mao, On the Correct Handling Of Contradictions Among The People, SW, Foreign Languages Press.

By dealing with the particular contradictions of socialist construction, Chairman Mao reaffirms the universal and absolute character of the *law of contradiction*. For this reason, in 1957, he reaffirmed in a more incisive way the condition of the *law of contradiction* as the *fundamental law of materialist dialectics*:

“Marxist philosophy holds that **the law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe**. This law operates universally, whether in the natural world, in human society, or in man's thinking. Between the opposites in a contradiction there is at once unity and struggle, and **it is this that impels things to move and change**. Contradictions exist everywhere, but their nature differs in accordance with the different nature of different things. In any given thing, the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary and transitory, and hence relative, whereas the struggle of opposites is absolute.”⁹⁴

By restating the *law of contradiction as the fundamental law of the universe*, Chairman Mao also emphasizes that it is contradiction that produces the movement and transformation of things and phenomena. Therefore, it is nothing more than a falsification of the leadership of UOC (MLM) to claim to be Maoist and at the same time defend that it is the *negation of the negation* that best explains the direction of the movement and the transformation of things. In this case, the difficulty is not in identifying the falsification, but in analyzing the relationship of this falsification with other ideological and political distortions, a question that we will also address later.

As mentioned previously, *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* (1963) constituted a significant development in the *Marxist theory of knowledge* in that it gave greater emphasis to the question of the *identity between thinking and being*. This development was also a product of the concrete struggle for socialist construction and the two-line struggle against the revisionist Liu Shao-chi and his scribe Yang Xian-zhen. Yang Xian-zhen's theoretical foundation was based on the philosophical falsification of the Leninist work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. As we saw in the previous session, in this work, Lenin develops the *Marxist theory of knowledge* by establishing the *theory of reflection*, defending the contradictory unity between theory and practice, as well as the identity between both aspects, that is, the *identity between thinking and being*. However, Lenin also fought another revisionist philosophical falsification that advocated an **absolute identity** between the social being and social consciousness. This was, for example, the position of the Empirio-critic-revisionist Bogdanov, who applied Mach's theory that linked the absolute identity between sensation and matter to the theory of knowledge, presenting this eclectic mix as overcoming the “dualism” between materialism and idealism. Yang Xian-zhen uses Lenin's criticism of Mach and Bogdanov, taking it out of context to falsify its content, denying any and all possibilities of dialectical identity between thinking and being, as analyzed by the comrades of the red line in the CPC, in 1971:

“In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, **Lenin thoroughly criticized the Machist theory of the sameness of social being**, that is, the reactionary subjective idealist fallacies Ernst

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Mach & Co. advocated, such as ‘things are complexes of sensations,’ and the **sameness of social being and social consciousness**. Deliberately confusing the theory of the identity between thinking and being with the Machist fallacy that thinking and being are the same, Yang Hsien-chen alleged that Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* ‘criticized the identity between thinking and being from beginning to end.’”⁹⁵

Chairman Mao, in *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?*, smashes these revisionist falsifications and develops the formulation of the *identity between thinking and being* in the following terms:

“It is man’s social being that determines his thinking. Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, **these ideas turn into a material force, which changes society and changes the world.** (...) At first, knowledge is perceptual. The leap to conceptual knowledge, i.e., to ideas, occurs when sufficient perceptual knowledge is accumulated. This is one process in cognition. It is the first stage in the whole process of cognition, the stage **leading from objective matter to subjective consciousness, from existence to ideas.** (...) Then comes the second stage in the process of cognition, the stage **leading from consciousness back to matter, from ideas back to existence,** in which the knowledge gained in the first stage is applied in social practice to ascertain whether the theories, policies, plans or measures meet with the anticipated success. Generally speaking, those that succeed are correct and those that fail are incorrect, and this is especially true of man’s struggle with nature.”⁹⁶

Chairman Mao formulates in an even more crystal-clear way the resolution of the important philosophical question of the *identity between thinking and being*. He shows the dialectical movement of mutual transformation of thinking and social existence. He highlights that, on the one hand, social existence determines the thinking of people; on the other hand, the correct ideas, when adopted by the masses, become a material force capable of transforming society and the world. He shows how objective matter transforms into subjective consciousness in the first stage of cognition, and how subjective consciousness transforms into material force in the second stage of cognition. The two quality leaps in the process of cognition, that is, from practice to theory and from theory to practice, correspond to the double movement of *identity between thinking and being*, when being becomes thinking and when thinking becomes being. In this formulation, Chairman Mao refutes Yang Xian-zhen’s conception, which denies the transformation of thinking into material force. Furthermore, he attacks the falsification made by Yang Xian-zhen, who transforms Lenin's criticism of the absolute identity between thinking and being into a negation of the dialectical identity between these contrary aspects. After all, if this absolute identity between thinking and being existed, cognition would be immediate; however,

⁹⁵ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, *Momentous Struggle On the Question of the Identity Between Thinking and Being*, Peking Review, issue 15, April 09 1971, our emphasis.

⁹⁶ Chairman Mao, *Five Essays On Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Press, 2018, our emphasis.

as the Marxist theory of knowledge establishes, cognition is a process of approaching, reflecting, objective reality through thinking, a process mediated by social practice.

Yang Xian-zhen's criticism of the absolute identity between social being and social consciousness was completely farcical, what he was pursuing was attacking the *Marxist theory of knowledge*. As a revisionist philosopher, Yang Xian-zhen shared the same essence of Bogdanov's bourgeois positions and, just like him, negated knowledge as a process of successive approach to objective truth. As the articles by the *Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group* highlight:

"Yang Hsien-zhen totally denied the necessity of a process for man's cognition of objective phenomena. In his eyes, it was "idealism" when the subjective could not readily conform with the objective. Proceeding from this fallacy, he used the tactics of attacking one point to the total disregard of the rest and grossly exaggerated the temporary, isolated shortcomings which were difficult to avoid in our actual work, labeling them all 'idealism.'"⁹⁷

As already demonstrated pages before, we insist, Chairman Mao, in 1963, completely refuted this position of the revisionist Yang. Departing from the rich experience of socialist construction in China, he further defined the *Marxist theory of knowledge*, allow us to repeat it:

"In social struggle, the forces representing the advanced class sometimes suffer defeat not because their ideas are incorrect, but because, in the balance of forces engaged in struggle, they are not as powerful for the time being as the forces of reaction; they are therefore temporarily defeated, but they are bound to triumph sooner or later. (...) Often, correct knowledge can be arrived at only after many repetitions of the process leading from matter to consciousness and then back to matter; that is, leading from practice to knowledge and then back to practice. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge, the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge."⁹⁸

Chairman Mao, developing the *Marxist theory of knowledge*, touches on ideological questions that are extremely important for the ICM today. This is a scientific and proletarian way of facing errors and defeats. Even departing from a just line, a certain proportion of errors, in its application, will be inevitable, after all, *"failure is the mother of success"*, which is much more valid for those who pursue the truth. Only after repeated application of a just line is it possible to create the objective conditions that allow for a reversal in the correlation of forces between revolution and counter-revolution. For the forces that represent the future, for revolutionary causes, defeats can only be temporary and fleeting, therefore, there is no definitive defeat for the proletariat. Certainty in the future, the certainty that the proletariat will achieve success sooner or later, must constitute an unshakable conviction of communists. Only by overflowing this revolutionary optimism can communists overcome all obstacles to the destruction and

⁹⁷ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, *Momentous Struggle On the Question of the Identity Between Thinking and Being*, Peking Review, issue 15, April 09 1971, our emphasis.

⁹⁸ Chairman Mao, *Five Essays On Philosophy*, Foreign Languages Press, 2018, our emphasis.

sweeping away of imperialism and all reaction, as well as class society. This is not subjectivism, this is the embodiment of revolutionary ideology, it is a *Marxist theory of knowledge*, this is an important contribution from Chairman Mao.

Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?, the important successes of socialist construction in the early 1960s and the beginning of the Great Debate against Khrushchev revisionism in July 1963, with the publication of the famous *Chinese Letter*, pushed the revisionist positions in the CPC into a position of total defensive. After the smash of the rotten theory of the “*synthesized economic base*” and the “*impossibility of identity between thinking and being*”, Liu Shao-chi, through Yang Xian-zhen, tries one last trick. Departing from a more abstract argument about dialectics, he goes on to argue that the *law of contradiction, the identity of opposites*, could be synthesized in the philosophical principle that “*two combine into one*”. This was a surreptitious attempt to attack the principle formulated by Chairman Mao that everything in the universe is *one divides into two*. Still, in 1957, Chairman Mao, in *A Dialectical Approach to Inner-Party Unity*, established this important philosophical synthesis:

“One divides into two -- this is a universal phenomenon, and this is dialectics.”⁹⁹

Furthermore, he established in greater detail the universality of this phenomenon:

“Everything divides into two.” “In society as in nature, **every entity invariably breaks up into its different parts**, only there are differences in content and form under different concrete conditions”¹⁰⁰

By raising the principle that “*two combine into one*”, Liu Shao-chi sought to renew the rotten theory of reconciliation of contradictions of Deborin School, which was fought by Stalin and Chairman Mao in the 1930s. However, the formulations of Yang Xian-zhen were more dangerous, as they sought to present themselves as the correct and non-unilateral interpretation of the law of contradiction. As is typical of revisionists, Yang Xian-zhen presented his argument surreptitiously. He presented his philosophical falsification through articles by some of his pupils and with the argument that the *law of contradiction* could only be fully understood starting from the two principles together: *one divides into two* and *two combine into one*.

The publication of the first revisionist article took place in May 1964, in the philosophical magazine *Kuangming Ribao*. From then on, other revisionist articles were published, but what occurred was mainly an avalanche of articles from the left combating and attacking the revisionist conceptions hidden in the false attempt to integrate two antagonistic philosophical principles. Among the three great philosophical struggles, the debate in defense of the dialectical principle that *one divides into two*, due to the great dimension that involved the two-line struggle, became known as the *Great Debate on the Philosophical Front*. Just as the

⁹⁹ Chairman Mao, *A Dialectical Approach to Inner-Party Unity*, SW, Foreign Languages Press.

¹⁰⁰ Chairman Mao, apud *Three Major Struggles on China's Philosophical Front*, Peking Review, issue 4, January 22, 1971, our emphasis.

conversations on political economy in the experience of socialist construction in the USSR, which took place in the late 1950s, whose notes were made public during the GPCR through the Red Guards, the *Talks on Questions of Philosophy of Chairman Mao Zedong*, which took place in August 1964, dealing precisely with the themes of the philosophical polemic about *one divides into two*, also their minutes were published during the GPCR, of which, only its English version is known abroad. All the materials of the philosophical polemic were published in important newspapers and magazines of the CPC such as *Remin Ribao* and *Hongqi* and constituted a very important mass two-line struggle against revisionism, representing a culminating point in the establishment of the *law of contradiction* as the *sole fundamental law of materialist dialectics*.

The right-wing arguments, despite being fallacious and falsifying, were not simple to refute and, for this very reason, they demanded and implied a significant development of Marxist philosophy in the course of the process of Maoism itself.

Yang Xian-zhen presented his rotten position as follows:

The idea of unity of opposites **merely means that the two sides of a contradiction are inseparably linked together**. All things are two combined into one. Therefore, in observing problems, **it is necessary to 'divide one into two,' to adopt the method of one dividing into two**. To learn the law of the unity of opposites is to acquire the ability to link two ideas together. It is necessary to remember always that the two sides of a thing are inseparably linked together, to grasp the opposites in the unity of opposites. In this way it will be possible to avoid one-sidedness in practical work.”¹⁰¹

The revisionists' philosophical falsification turns the interdependence of aspects in contradiction into an inseparable link between opposing aspects. They unilaterally take only the first meaning of the identity of opposites, interdependence; and they hide the second and most important meaning of identity: the transformation of an aspect into its opposite. Furthermore, they formulate the eclectic principle that when analyzing a problem or contradiction it is necessary to *divide one into two*, but that the resolution of this problem or contradiction must *integrate two into one*. They thus generalize that analysis would correspond to *dividing one into two* and synthesis would correspond to *integrating two into one*:

“[according to Yang Xianzhen] the method of knowing things and solving problems includes the two aspects of analysis and synthesis, and that **one dividing into two applies only to analysis while 'combining two into one' applies to synthesis**.”¹⁰²

When presenting this philosophical falsification, the revisionists never presented examples related to the class struggle, as this would facilitate its unmasking. None of the revisionist articles, for example, argues that the resolution of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie would occur through the combination of both aspects, or

¹⁰¹ Yang Xianzhen, apud Ai Si-chi, *Surreptitious Substitution of Theory of Reconciliation of Contradictions and Classes for Revolutionary Dialectics Must Not Be Permitted*, *Remin Ribao*, May 20, 1965.

¹⁰² Ai Si-chi, *Surreptitious Substitution of Theory of Reconciliation of Contradictions and Classes for Revolutionary Dialectics Must Not Be Permitted*, *Remin Ribao*, May 20, 1965, our emphasis.

through the reconciliation of the contradiction between the two. Defending this after the smashing of the opportunist line of the “synthesized economic base” would be a blatantly bourgeois position. As a rule, revisionists gave as an example the need to *combine two into one* precisely those types of contradictions in the course of socialist construction in which a relative equilibrium is sought between contradictory aspects. This ruse of the opportunists is pointed out by Ai Si-chi:

“Comrade Yang Xianzhen and his friends concentrate their main energies on issues not directly appertaining to class struggle, in which they **can conceal with comparative ease their true ideological colors**. They concentrate on redness and expertness, work and rest, quality and quantity, industry and agriculture, and such questions of **synthesis and coordination**.” ¹⁰³

As they sought to coordinate the advancement of industry with agriculture, as there was a struggle to be red and experts, the revisionists sought to confuse public opinion by maintaining that this type of contradictions could be resolved by the method of *integrating two into one*. And that the principle that *one is divided into two* was useless for this type of contradiction, as it would lead to unilateralism and a supposed separation of industry and agriculture, etc. This revisionist ruse was the same one copied by Prachanda when he launched his revisionist “*theory of fusion*” in 2001. Initially, he presented the need to merge the insurrectionary path with the siege of the city by the countryside, then, the need to merge parliamentary work with the people’s war to present, in 2008, the ultimate result of his “dialectic” combinations of “*theory of fusion*”: the “*joint dictatorship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*”. ¹⁰⁴ If Prachanda presented this explicit falsification back in 2001, he would obviously have been defeated in the Party. That’s why he presented it in more confusing terms, with which he paved the way in the leading center of the Party, only to later smuggle all his revisionist capitulation. As for the left of the then CPN (Maoist), it would be up to everyone to be alert to these revisionist falsifications, as this is where the danger of smuggling bourgeois positions with the appearance of Marxist positions lies.

Like Prachanda, Yang Xian-zhen’s followers always used the metaphor of “*walking on two legs*” as a way to combat the supposed unilateralism of the Maoist principle that *one divides into two*. This revisionist falsification is formulated as follows in its first article, from May 1964:

“In the work of building socialism in China, there are many opposite aspects. First, conditions must be found for connecting together and uniting the opposites, and uniting and integrating the opposites in work. To use symbolic language, this is “**to walk on two legs**”. For example, the general line of building socialism by exerting our utmost efforts and pressing consistently ahead to achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results gives expression of the law of the unity of opposites. Greater, faster, better and more economical results are mutually opposed to and connected with one another, and also condition one another. There is contradiction between greater and faster results on

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ The Red Star (organ of the CPN(M)), issue 15, September 21-30, 2008.

the one hand and better and more economical results on the other. However, greater and faster results cannot be divorced from better and more economical results.”¹⁰⁵

Revisionists intentionally confuse the need for coordination, relative equilibrium, balancing between two contradictory aspects, in a non-antagonistic contradiction, with the principle of *integrating two into one*. As was already established by Chairman Mao in *On the correct handling of contradictions among the people*, in unities of opposites in which a relative equilibrium between the two aspects is sought, as in the case between greater and faster results, one must depart from the recognition of the contradictions between the two and through struggle achieving equilibrium on a new level. As they are opposites, a disequilibrium will always arise, this disequilibrium can only be resolved by the struggle between the aspects and not by the fusion or integration of both. Equilibrium, therefore, can only be achieved through the struggle to maintain the principal aspect as dominant in the contradiction. As Chairman Mao establishes in *On Contradiction*, the contradictory aspects in a unity always develop unequally and a struggle is always necessary so that the most advanced and necessary aspect predominates in the unity of opposites.

Regarding the principal aspect in a contradiction, the revisionists falsify by arguing that in some types of contradiction either aspect can be the principal one:

“Concerning the **contradiction between democracy and dictatorship**, because contradictions among the people and those with the enemy are intermingled and can easily be confused each with the other, we must distinguish clearly between them so as to prevent the enemy from exploiting the situation when we are talking about democracy, and to avoid giving false impressions to some people when we are talking about dictatorship. Also, dictatorship will eventually have to be eliminated, leaving only Communist all-people unity. **Of the two aspects, democracy and centralism, either often takes precedence over the other in real life.**”¹⁰⁶

The revisionists, distorting the Maoist principles regarding the *correct handling of contradictions among the people*, falsify the *law of contradiction* and start to defend that in certain contradictions it does not matter which is the principal aspect of unity. Once again, they use a contradiction where a relative equilibrium between aspects is sought as an example, after all, whether in the Party or in socialist society, there must be both centralism and democracy, both dictatorship and democracy. But this does not mean that between the two aspects there is not one of them that is the principal one. To negate the principal aspect of contradiction and the struggle for the new to prevail is to negate the upward direction of the resolution of contradictions. Thus, in the contradiction between centralism and democracy, although an equilibrium must be sought between both, centralism is the principal aspect of the contradiction. After all, democracy in party life aims to achieve unity of action, as only the

¹⁰⁵ Ai Heng-wu and Lin Ch'ing-shan, “Dividing One into Two” and “Combining Two into One” Some realization gained in the study of Chairman Mao’s thought in materialistic dialectics, Kuangming Ribao, May 29, 1964, our emphasis.

¹⁰⁶ P’an Hsiao-yuan, The Law of Contradiction Should Be a Dialectical Unity of “Dividing One into Two” and “Uniting Two into One”, Hsin Chien-she, July 20, 1964, our emphasis.

centralized action of the proletariat is capable of destroying capitalism. This contradiction relates to the unity between the collective and the individual, where, ultimately, the collective is the principal aspect of the contradiction. However, under certain conditions, democracy or the individual necessarily assume the principality of contradiction.

The articles of the left manage to refute and unmask the revisionist philosophical falsifications one by one, revealing their vile objective of creating a theoretical basis and public opinion that justify capitalist restoration. By doing so as a two-line struggle, these articles contribute greatly to emphasizing very important elements of the philosophical works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and, principally, Chairman Mao Tse-tung, which sometimes go unnoticed in a study outside the heat of polemics. Let us now look at some of the arguments from the left that crushed the revisionist positions in those struggles.

Refuting the revisionist falsification that in contradictions in which a relative equilibrium between opposites is sought, the principle of *combining two into one* should be applied, and that the motto of “*walking on two legs*” formulated in the CPC's line of socialist construction is used as if it corresponded to this revisionist principle, the article by the Maoist left in the CPC states that:

“At the present stage in China, between industry and agriculture and between the workers and peasants connected with them, there exists not only two different systems of ownership, two different kinds of production relationship and two different kinds of laborers. Moreover, **as far as the development of industry or agriculture itself is concerned**, there also exists objectively a constant imbalance, and **such imbalance is also a contradiction**. In order to develop the national economy, the way to deal with industry and agriculture is not to implement the “combination of two into one”, that is, **to deny the contradiction between them**, but to formulate guidelines and policies on the foundation of **looking the contradiction in the face**. The general line of the Party for developing the national economy with agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor was formulated on the foundation of analyzing the objective contradiction. **The line of “walking on two legs” and not on one was precisely designed for correctly handling the contradiction between them.**” ¹⁰⁷

The concept of “walking on two legs” departs precisely from the recognition of the contradiction and the correct handling in resolving it. The resolution of any contradiction can only occur through the struggle of opposites, and the struggle of opposites corresponds to making the advanced aspect the dominant one in the contradiction. All equilibrium can therefore only be relative, and relative equilibrium, when necessary, only leads to historical progress, when the most advanced aspect predominates in the unity of opposites. In the contradiction between industry and agriculture, the general line of socialist construction envisaged the gradual predominance of industry over agriculture and, at the same time, the elimination of the

¹⁰⁷ Chin Jan, Revolutionary Dialectics or Reconciliation of contradictions? - A Debate with Comrades Ai Heng-wu, Lin Ch'ing-shan and P'an Ch'ing-pin, Hsin Chien-she, No 7, July 20, 1964, our emphasis.

difference between countryside and city, between workers and peasants, between intellectual and manual work.

Only with the predominance of industry could we advance in this direction, however, only by taking agriculture as a base could we move forward in socialist construction. The complete resolution of this contradiction, based on a relatively balanced predominance of industry over agriculture, is to move towards the transformation of the entire society, the countryside and the city, into a higher form of social organization that are the People's Communes.

Refuting the falsification that non-antagonistic contradictions would be resolved by *combining two into one*, an article by the Maoist left, in November 1964, maintains that:

"A life-and-death struggle is a form of struggle of antagonistic contradictions; the opposite is a form of struggle of non-antagonistic contradictions. (...) But like all other contradictions the contradiction between redness and proficiency **must be resolved through a tit-for-tat struggle of the two aspects of contradiction**, by overcoming one aspect with the other, and not by the way of "uniting two into one".¹⁰⁸

The contradiction between redness and proficiency is a non-antagonistic contradiction, but like all contradictions it can only be resolved through struggle, not a struggle in general, but a tit-for-tat struggle between the two aspects of the contradiction, by replacing one aspect by the other. This is not a life-and-death struggle; however, it is still a frontal, albeit gradual, struggle between the two aspects of the contradiction. Regarding the problem of the principal aspect of contradiction, in the same article it is highlighted that:

"In the contradiction between redness and proficiency, **redness is the principal aspect of the contradiction and is the commander and soul of proficiency**; when the contradiction between redness and proficiency is developed and intensified, there will be only proficiency and no redness.

Therefore, this contradiction between redness and proficiency cannot be resolved without involving the question redness; a struggle to 'promote the proletariat and destroy the bourgeoisie' must be conducted before both redness and proficiency can be achieved."¹⁰⁹

The revisionist Yang Xian-zhen falsifies the concept of analysis and synthesis by pointing toward the conclusion that the resolution of every contradiction occurs through the *combination of two into one*. Presenting the analysis as *one divides into two* was only a ruse to camouflage his antagonism towards Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Yang Xian-zhen's philosophical falsification transformed the unity of opposites into an indissoluble bond between opposing aspects. As this

¹⁰⁸ Kao Ta-sheng and Feng Yu-chang, Refute the "combine two into one" theory about the contradictions between redness and proficiency, Peking Ribao, November 15, 1964, our emphasis.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

link would be indissoluble, the resolution of the contradictions, according to the revisionists, could only be achieved by harmonizing or reconciling the two contradictory aspects.

The offensive of the Maoist left in the *Great Philosophical Polemic*, when countering this fallacy, will highlight Chairman Mao's important arguments on the issue. They demonstrate that both the beginning of a process occurs as *one that divides into two*, and its resolution also occurs through the division of the unity of opposites, through the dissolution of this unity. When an aspect transforms into its opposite, the quality of the phenomenon changes or a new process emerges. If the unity of opposites were indissoluble, the dominated aspect could never become the dominant aspect. This mutual transformation of contraries occurs through the dissolution of the old contradictory unity. The identity of opposites, therefore, in its most important sense is also *one that divides into two*. When a given pair of opposites disappears and a new process emerges from a new unity of opposites, this resolution of the contradiction is also *one that divides in two*: from the old unity of opposites, the aspects detach, the old aspect goes to the trash of history and the new aspect is divided into two, starting a new process.

Taking up Engels, the article by the Maoist left, in the *Peking Review*, from 1971, highlights that:

“Materialist dialectics holds that the nature of a thing is the contradictoriness within the thing and its separability. Engels pointed out: ‘Dialectics has proved from the results of our experience of nature so far that **all polar opposites** in general are determined by the mutual action of the two opposite poles on each other, that the **separation and opposition of these poles exist only within their mutual connection and union**, and conversely, that their union exists only in their separation and their mutual connection only in their opposition.’ (*Dialectics of Nature*.) That is to say, we cannot talk about the links between the two opposite aspects apart from their struggle and separability. **The struggle of the opposite aspects inevitably leads to the breaking up of their interconnection**, to the disintegration of the entity, and to change in the nature of the thing. Therefore, **the interconnection between the opposite aspects is conditional and relative while their separability is unconditional and absolute.**”¹¹⁰

The refutation of Yang Xian-zhen’s philosophical falsification regarding the inseparable bond of aspects of contradiction sheds light on previous formulations of Marxist philosophy that precisely emphasize the unity between interdependence and separability in all contradictions. Thus, highlighting that unity affirms mutual connection and the struggle leads to the separability of contrary aspects, leading to a change in the nature of the thing. This foundation was already contained in *On Contradiction*, but the course of the two-line struggle highlights these aspects, pointing to their development. In 1937, Chairman Mao established that:

¹¹⁰ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Theory of 'Combine Two into One' is a Reactionary Philosophy for Restoring Capitalism, *Peking Review* 14, no. 17, 23 April 1971, our emphasis

“When we speak of understanding each aspect of a contradiction, we mean understanding what specific position each aspect occupies, what concrete forms it assumes in its interdependence and in its contradiction with its opposite, and what concrete methods are employed in the struggle with its opposite, when the two are both interdependent and in contradiction, and also **after the interdependence breaks down.**”

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In this passage, Chairman Mao already points out that the resolution of the contradiction occurred through the breakdown of interdependence, through the division of the unity of opposites into two, thus disintegrating the contradiction and giving rise to a new process or phenomenon. The fight against revisionist philosophical falsification encouraged the left to return to this principle and develop it with new arguments to smash the right. In the article by the Maoist left in July 1964, this problem is stated as follows:

“As we see it, however, different qualitative processes cannot be mixed with one another. Different constituent opposites which form different processes cannot be viewed in the same light. **If a new process has begun**, then this new process is by no means the outcome of “combination of two into one,” that is, the combination of the two opposites of the contradiction in the old process, but **is one in which one aspect of the contradiction in the old process has triumphed over the other aspect**, thus bringing this old process to an end with the contradiction resolved and replacing it with a new 111 process.”¹¹²

As previously highlighted, in a unity of opposites the new aspect emerges as the dominated aspect, through quantitative accumulation in the fight against the dominant aspect, the new aspect develops until it becomes the dominant one. From weak and dominated to strong and dominant, this is the qualitative leap that transforms the nature of the phenomenon. The continuity of the same contradictory pair, in inverted positions, in the new phenomenon develops with the old aspect seeking to restore dominance and with the new aspect (now dominant) seeking to liquidate the outdated aspect. The resolution of the contradiction or its objective synthesis constitutes the separation, the dissolution of this unity, in the complete triumph of the new over the old and in the emergence of a new process.

The *Great Philosophical Polemic* ends publicly with the publication of Ai Si-chi's article, in May 1965. This article summarizes the formulation most developed during the polemic and clearly points to the *law of contradiction as the sole fundamental law of dialectics*:

“Unity of opposites is the unity of ceaselessly struggling opposites within things. (...) **The ceaseless struggle between the opposites puts their unity constantly in a tendency toward splitting and disintegration.** Moreover, the splitting and disintegration will be a reality sooner or later, so that things will change from their old form of movement to a new form of movement, **from quantitative change to qualitative change, from**

¹¹¹ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction, SW, Foreign Languages, Peking, V. 1, our emphasis.

¹¹² Chin Jan, Revolutionary Dialectics or Reconciliation of contradictions? - A Debate with Comrades Ai Heng-wu, Lin Ch'ing-shan and P'an Ch'ing-pin, Hsin Chien-she, No 7, July 20, 1964, our emphasis.

affirmation to negation. This is exactly a process of one dividing into two, **the essence of the law of unity of opposites.**" ¹¹³

The struggle in defense of the dialectical principle that *one divides into two*, in the *Great Philosophical Polemic*, drove the resolution of the question raised by Engels in *Dialectics of Nature* regarding the connection between the three basic laws of dialectics established by Hegel in *Science of Logic*. As previously highlighted, Chairman Mao, in *On Contradiction*, had already demonstrated that the basis for *converting quantity into quality* was the *law of contradiction*. During the defense that *one divides into two*, the last link of the question is completed. The *negation of the negation* is explained based on the *law of contradiction* and particularly through the synthesis that *one divides into two*.

When in the course of the debate it is emphasized that both the beginning of a process and its resolution occur in accordance with one single and the same dialectical principle of the division of unity, of its separability, it becomes clear that the process of origin, development and resolution of a contradiction advances from quantitative changes to qualitative changes, and: **from the affirmation of that unity of contraries to the negation of the same unity of contraries.** It is thus demonstrated that the dominant aspect is that which seeks to affirm the unity of opposites, to impose its domination through struggle and through this to prevent the dissolution of unity. The new and dominated aspect, in turn, is what seeks through struggle **to negate that unity of opposites**, to dissolve that unity, and through struggle to transform itself into the dominant aspect – thus negating the old contradiction, inaugurating a new process, or a phenomenon with a new quality.

In this formulation presented by left cadres and by Ai Si-chi in the last article of the *Great Philosophical Polemic*, it appears in a single formulation, around one single dialectical principle, what were the three basic laws of dialectics: *one is divided into two* as the essence of the *law of contradiction* revealing that the *conversion of quantity into quality* and the transformation of *affirmation into negation* do not constitute laws separate from the *law of contradiction*. The *conversion of quantity into quality*, and the transformation of *affirmation into negation* of the unity of opposites are inseparable elements of the *law of contradiction*. In each and every thing and phenomenon, contradiction arises immediately, that is, a thing or phenomenon only exists as a unity and struggle of opposites. The resolution of every contradiction, in turn, is never immediate, but always the result of a process. The process of resolving every contradiction invariably goes through a stage of quantitative changes that convert into a qualitative change. The struggle of contrary aspects, in turn, is always a struggle for the affirmation of the unity of opposites by the dominant aspect against the struggle for the negation of the unity of opposites by the dominated aspect.

By basing the *negation of the negation* departing from the *law of contradiction*, defining it in its universal form as the movement from *affirmation to negation* of a unity of opposites, the *Great Philosophical Polemic* sheds light and is linked to the first contributions of the great Marx

¹¹³ Ai Si-chi, *Surreptitious Substitution of Theory of Reconciliation of Contradictions and Classes for Revolutionary Dialectics Must Not Be Permitted*, Remin Ribao, May 20 1965, our emphasis.

in the formulation of dialectical materialism. An article from the Maoist left makes use of important quotes from *The Holy Family* (1845), in which Marx and Engels settled accounts with the metaphysical conceptions of the Young Hegelians. These passages illustrate in an enlightening way how the basis for the *affirmation and negation* of a unity of opposites is the *law of contradiction*:

“Proletariat and wealth are opposites; as such they form a single whole. They are both creations of the world of private property. **The question is exactly what place each occupies in the antithesis.** It is not sufficient to declare them two sides of a single whole. Private property as private property, as wealth, is compelled to maintain *itself*, and thereby its opposite, the proletariat, in *existence*. **That is the positive side of the antithesis**, self-satisfied private property. The proletariat, on the contrary, is compelled as proletariat to abolish itself and thereby its opposite, private property, which determines its' existence, and which makes it proletariat. It is the **negative side of the antithesis**, its restlessness within its very self, dissolved and self-dissolving private property. (...) Within this antithesis the private property-owner is therefore the *conservative* side, the proletarian the *destructive* side. From the former arises the action of preserving the antithesis, from the latter the action of annihilating it.” ¹¹⁴

Proletariat and bourgeoisie form a unity of opposites. The bourgeoisie occupies the dominant position in the contradiction and is therefore forced to maintain its existence and also the existence of its opposite, the proletariat – which constitutes the source of its wealth. The bourgeoisie is the positive side of the contradiction, as it affirms this unity of opposites, it is therefore the conservative side that seeks by all means to keep this unity intact. The proletariat is the negative side of the contradiction, which needs to abolish bourgeois domination and with this also abolish itself as a class; The proletariat is, therefore, the destructive side, which seeks to revolutionarily negate the unity of opposites that shapes bourgeois society.

Affirmation and negation are universal to all phenomena. The *negation of the negation*, as already seen, is particular to some types of phenomena in which a chained and necessary sequential resolution of two unities of opposites occurs. Therefore, contrary to what the UOC (MLM) says in its latest tergiversation about *negation of the negation*, when Chairman Mao talks about *affirmation and negation*, he is not changing the name of the law, he is also changing its content, accordingly, as seen, with the revolutionary and proletarian conception of the world, by Marx and Engels.

This significant philosophical development originated by the class struggle in socialist society and the sharp two-line struggle in the CPC, preceded and served as fuel and spark for the flames of the GPCR. As the article in the *Peking Review*, from 1971, summarizes:

“As soon as Yang Hsien-zhen’s counter-revolutionary theory “combine two into one” appeared, the proletarian headquarters with Chairman Mao as its leader hit the nail on the head and exposed its counter-revolutionary nature and led the people in openly

¹¹⁴ Karl Marx, *Holy Family*, Collected Works, Volume 4, our emphasis

criticizing this renegade. Following this, the onrushing torrent of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution swept Yang Hsien-zhen along with his sinister master Liu Shao-chi and the bourgeois headquarters all into the garbage heap of history.”¹¹⁵

At the same time, this *Great Philosophical Polemic* that precedes and helps prepare the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, was centered around the *law of contradiction*, as highlighted in an article from the Maoist left:

“The center of this polemic is whether or not the core of materialistic dialectics - **the fact that the law of the unity of opposites is the basic law of things** - should be acknowledged, and whether or not materialistic dialectics should be acknowledged as the world outlook and methodology of the proletariat.”¹¹⁶

This was the question posed. And it was up to Chairman Gonzalo, at the leadership of the PCP and the people’s war in Peru, to recognize, put forward and sustain, with the most rigorous scientific foundation, that the *law of contradiction* constitutes the heart of dialectical materialism. Furthermore, Chairman Gonzalo was the first to apply the *law of contradiction* to the study of the development of the ideology of the international proletariat and to affirm it as the sole scientific ideology. In this way, Chairman Gonzalo takes Marxism as a process in the course of which necessary stages of its development are delimited, corresponding to the movement of objective reality, of societies and of the world. He highlights that a new stage corresponds to a necessary development in the three constituent parts of Marxism as the realization of a great leap in quality as a unit. Masterfully handling the *law of contradiction* in the fire of the class struggle of the protracted people’s war, he will *define Maoism* as a new, third and higher stage in the development of Marxism, Marxism-Leninism, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism: ideology of the proletariat international, almighty because scientific, true. In this *definition*, he describes Maoism as this great leap in the three constitutive parts of the ideology as a unit, firmly gathering among other conclusions to establish that the *law of contradiction* is the *sole fundamental law of dialectics*, since it is the law that governs eternal matter in its incessant transformation, in all its manifestations, nature, society and human thought. He thus manages to definitively resolve the relationship between the universal aspects of the stage of ideology with the particular aspects of its concrete application as a unity of opposites, fully formulating the theory of guiding thought as a peremptory necessity for each communist party in the leadership of the revolution of their respective country, resulting from the creative application of the universal truths of the ideology of the international proletariat, in its most developed and high stage, to the concrete and particular reality of that country and their integration with the practice of revolution in that same country. Thus, Chairman Gonzalo points out to the communists of the world to reconstitute/constitute militarized communist parties to unleash more people’s wars for revolution in their countries and in the service of the

¹¹⁵ Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School Under the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Momentous Struggle On the Question of the Identity Between Thinking and Being, Peking Review, issue 15, April 09 1971, our emphasis.

¹¹⁶ Jao Ching-huang, Persist in “one divides into two”, oppose “combine two into one” - A talk to basic-level on the Great Polemic on the Philosophical Front, edited and compiled, Nafang Ribao (Canton), January 11, 1965, our emphasis.

World Proletarian Revolution and to place Maoism as their sole command and guide and sweep away imperialism and all reaction from the face of the Earth.

2- Avakian and Prachanda: revisionism, capitulation and philosophical falsification

The rich process of establishing the *law of contradiction* as the *sole fundamental law* of materialist dialectics spanned more than a century of development of the ideology of the international proletariat. The most advanced theoretical formulation of Marxist philosophy resulted from extremely important two-line struggles, led by Chairman Mao in the CPC and the ICM, to provide the necessary solution to the challenging problems of the proletarian revolution. In the course of this process, it is confirmed that the phenomenon of revisionism, as a reflection of the class struggle – from the point of view of the bourgeoisie within the communist vanguard – tends to get stronger in situations of major changes in objective reality or from the demand of these changes, when new and crucial problems present themselves to the revolutionaries, whether *triumphs* or *defeats*. Two historical examples illustrate this phenomenon: after the *triumph* of the new democratic revolution in China in 1949 and the challenge of passing uninterruptedly to the socialist revolution, the struggle against Liu Shao-chi's line deepened; After the *defeat* of the 1905 revolution, the *Empirio-critic* influence took hold in the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia. Revisionism is the ideological expression of capitulation, whether in situations of great setbacks or in positive situations, given that they represent great challenges and risks for revolutionaries. Furthermore, revisionism, as a reactionary bourgeois current within the proletariat and its vanguard, seeks to base its capitulation with a Marxist color in order to hide its class content. It is impossible for revisionism to be theoretically based on dialectical materialism, which is why it is inevitable for renegades, in one way or another, to falsify Marxist philosophy, in a vain attempt to base themselves theoretically to cover up their bourgeois positions and create public opinion that justifies them. Therefore, the mastery of dialectical materialist philosophy, its principles and foundations, by the class and its vanguard constitutes an essential weapon for formulating and keeping the line red and for the necessary unmasking and obliteration of revisionist positions.

The detailed study of the establishment of the *law of contradiction* and its essential principle that *one divides into two* arms us not only to have a correct evaluation of the process of the WPR and the ICM and to solve new problems of the revolution, but also to distinguish the exact content of the philosophy of Avakian, Prachanda, Miriam's ROL and other revisionists. It allows us to clearly see that behind the formal divergence between them there is the same content, the same reactionary, idealistic and metaphysical bourgeois philosophy. Avakian argues that the *law of contradiction* is the “basic law of dialectics”, in turn, Prachanda argues that, in addition to it, the *law of quantity and quality* and the *negation of the negation* must also be included; however, they are all against and are covertly, but antagonistically, opposed to the revolutionary content of the *law of contradiction*. Avakian formally defends the principle that *one divides into two*, Prachanda in practice applies the fusion between the two antagonistic principles: *one divides into two* and *two combine into one*. However, both apply in different ways the revisionist principle of *combining two into one*.

These two recent varieties of revisionism, Avakianism and Prachandism, share the same ideological essence: the essentially negative assessment of the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the 20th century, the absurd criticisms of Comrade Stalin and Chairman Mao, the cowardice before Yankee imperialism, the defense of lasting unity with the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie in socialism and the need for a refoundation of communist ideology. Both represent the same type of opportunist right-wing revisionism. Avakianism bears the responsibility for having initiated this revision and denial of Marxism within the ranks of Maoism itself; a falsification systematically undertaken by Avakian since 1981. Prachandism is responsible for having put these conceptions into practice in a concrete revolutionary process, shamefully betraying the People's War in Nepal.

The UOC (MLM), since the beginning of its formation, in the 1990s, has shared many of these Avakianist dogmas of the early 1980s. Although they do not openly recognize it, an important part of their ideological formulations, their analyzes of imperialism, of their conception that there are no longer semi-feudal relations in the Colombian countryside, that the character of the revolution in their country is already immediately socialist, are based on revisionist theses formulated by Avakian. The UOC (MLM) upholds the Avakianist position against the universality of the new democratic revolution for all colonial and semi-colonial countries in the world, which is why they consider the RIM Declaration of 1984 to be a setback in relation to the Autumn Conference Declaration from 1980. The founders of UOC (MLM) state, for example, that:

“Before proceeding to examine the way in which the RIM and its members have referred to the problem [of revolution in countries oppressed by imperialism], it seems pertinent to mention the warning made by comrade Avakian (...). This anti-Marxist, anti-materialist tendency, on some occasions, reaches the point of authorizing itself of using Comrade Mao Zedong, taking literally his words ‘colonial or semi-colonial’ which are only referred to in his work ‘*On New Democracy*’ to the oppressed countries in which the revolution should go through two stages.”¹¹⁷

In their belated, insufficient and lacking any self-criticism of Prachandism and Avakianism, the UOC (MLM) presents the Nepali revisionist as right-wing opportunism and the 'hero' of the “*New Synthesis*” as a “centrist”, respectively. They do this for two reasons, to camouflage their former affiliation with Avakian's revisionist theses from the 1980s and to deny their convergence with Prachandism from 2001 to 2006, when Prachanda's capitulation and philosophical falsification were becoming increasingly evident. In their newspaper, the UOC (MLM) was never tired of exalting the People's War in Nepal as *the vanguard of the*

World Proletarian Revolution, even in 2005, when the signs of revisionism were already very evident¹¹⁷. And this support was not restricted to the justified enthusiasm for the military conquests of the Nepalese revolution, but extended to the convergence with Prachandist revisionist theses:

¹¹⁷ UOC (MLM), Revista Contradicción, n 07, 1991, our translation.

“Led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), the People's War advances its offensive strategy and, as part of the **creative combination between armed struggle and peaceful struggle**, in a four-month unilateral ceasefire, the support of the masses for the Party guidance and the union of the political forces of society against the Nepalese monarchy.”

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Blatant defense of the Prachandist *theory of fusion*, integration, combination, conciliation of two opposing aspects: armed struggle and peaceful struggle. They do not raise the problem that the principal form of struggle is the armed struggle, nor even the question that peaceful struggle is only justified when it serves the armed struggle. On the contrary, they openly defend conciliation between the two opposing aspects of this contradiction. This conciliation can only lead, as it did, to the disarming of the masses and the betrayal of the revolution. In March 2006, the UOC (MLM) praised the revisionist leadership of the CPN(M) and its rotten revisionist line in the following terms:

“Since the beginning of the People's War, **the party [CPN(M)] has maintained a correct line (...). The correct political line held by the CPN(M)**, based on a firm strategy and **flexible tactics**, has allowed it to achieve great advances in the war, to the point that today the communist forces have control over more than 80 percent of Nepalese territory, because **due to its flexible tactics it has managed, without sacrificing the strategy**, which is the State of New Democracy, **to win over the parliamentary parties to form a united front against the monarchy.**”¹¹⁹

In the same year of 2006, the UOC (MLM) loudly attacked the capitulation of the CPN(M) leadership and Prachanda's revisionism. It boasted of having been the first organization in the world to have made this public criticism and spared no words in its accusations against comrade Miguel Alonso, from the Committee for the Reconstitution of the Communist Party of Galicia, demanding a public self-criticism of him. However, the UOC (MLM) never made any mention of its previous convergence with Prachandist theses, nor the slightest self-criticism about them.

Armed with the analysis of the process of establishing the *law of contradiction* and the principle that *one divides into two* in the development of the ideology of the international proletariat, let us move forward to unmask the philosophical falsifications of Avakian, Prachanda and the convergence of the UOC (MLM) with these.

2.1- Avakian's philosophical falsifications from the early 1980s

In the late 1970s, the RCP-USA acted positively when it denounced the counter-revolutionary coup d'état by Teng Siao-ping's revisionist clique and the arrest of the leaders of the CPC's left line, notably Comrade Chiang Ching and Comrade Chang Chung-chao. Furthermore, together with the RCP-Chile, it convened the *1980 Autumn Conference*, which brought together revolutionary Parties and Organizations seeking to reverse the dispersion of

¹¹⁸ UOC (MLM), *Revolución Obrera*, n 182, February 2006, our translation and emphasis.

¹¹⁹ UOC (MLM), *Revolución Obrera*, n 184, March 2006, our translation and emphasis.

communist forces after the capitalist restoration in China. Despite the positive initiative, the limitations of the ideological and political content of the document for the discussion at the *Autumn Conference* already revealed Avakian's capitulationist positions. Analyzing the international policy of Teng Siao-ping's revisionist China, the document concludes that:

“(...) if China were a socialist country, its international line today would represent carrying to an extreme certain **very serious errors made before by the international communist movement** and in particular the Soviet Union when it was a socialist country, especially in relation to World War 2 (...)” ¹²⁰

The document insinuates that the renegade Teng's international line was a continuation of Comrade Stalin's line. This and other contraband present in the document proposing the *Autumn Conference* were just a sample of Avakian's typically petty-bourgeois ideological vacillation in the face of the temporary defeats of the proletariat. The ebb of the revolutionary struggle in the USA with the end of the war in Vietnam, in 1975, with the capitalist restoration in China, in 1976, and with the challenging situation faced with the defeat of Yankee imperialism in Vietnam (1975), in Nicaragua (1979) and in Iran (1980) – in this case the Islamic theocratic regime that was conformed had carried out the most brutal repression against communists – was the environment in which Avakian's ideological rupture was consolidated. From this came Avakian's sinister path of searching for “errors” in the ideology of the international proletariat with which he could present them as the cause for those temporary defeats. Avakian thus denies the Marxist theory of knowledge and starts to consider, like the revisionist Yang Sien-chen, every error and every temporary defeat as a consequence of flaws in the philosophical conception.

From 1981 to 1984, Avakian and his consorts worked systematically on the philosophical falsification of Marxism with the aim of providing a theoretical basis for their revisionist line and influencing the *founding Conference of the RIM*. In 1981, Avakian presents his philosophical falsifications in the following articles: *Once again on the question of dialectics*, *On the philosophical basis of proletarian internationalism* and *Main and fundamental contradictions at the world level*. In these articles, Avakian attacks the foundations of *the law of contradiction* fully established by Chairman Mao. Still in 1981, Avakian presents his capitulationist and defeatist assessment of the history of the ICM in the document *Conquer the World?*, where he throws mud at the work of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao. In 1984, they completed the theoretical foundation of their revisionist line through the book published in the name of Raymond Lotta, *America in Decline*, where they presented their rotten position that the inter-imperialist contradiction is the principal contradiction in the world in the imperialist stage of capitalism.

Reviewing these documents is important to demonstrate how the novelty of the “*New Synthesis*” was not something produced in the 21st century, but rather a revisionist line that had already been, for a long time, generated and cooked in the sauce of arguments that were already formulated by Avakian before the founding. of the RIM, in 1984. Analyzing these texts is

¹²⁰ RCP-USA and RCP-Chile, *Basic Principles for the Unity of Marxist-Leninists and for the Line of the International Communist Movement*, 1980, our emphasis.

important to demonstrate how the *1984 Conference* mainly represented a defeat for the Avakianist line, as most of its theses were rejected by the group of participating parties. The rejected Avakianist theses are precisely the points that the UOC (MLM) regrets, which were in the *1980 Declaration*, but not in the one of 1984. At the same time, analyzing this manual of sophisticated revisionism reveals that the negative aspects still contained in the *Declaration of 1984* are all Avakianist contraband formulated in the early 1980s.

The assessment of the development of the ideology of the international proletariat made by the renegade Avakian, in the early 1980s, can be summarized in this statement of his:

“Marxism without Leninism is Eurocentric social-chauvinism and social democracy. Maoism without Leninism is nationalism (and also, in certain contexts, social-chauvinism) and bourgeois democracy.” ¹²¹

In a pretend defense of Leninism, which would elevate Marxism and at the same time substantiate Maoism, Avakian throws mud at the ideology of the international proletariat. Although he formally declares that the principal aspect in this ideology would be positive, his entire assessment leads to the opposite; ideologically broken in the face of temporary defeats, Avakian can only accept Marxism as a pile of errors. It is clear that his defense of Leninism is false, so much so that Avakian in the same text states that:

“(...) there is a certain bourgeois logic to Lenin’s argument here.” ¹²²

And regarding Chairman Mao, Avakian shamelessly declares that:

(...) even in Mao, despite and in contradiction to his contributions to and development of materialist dialectics, there were some metaphysical tendencies which interpenetrated with nationalist tendencies on this question.” ¹²³

Here is the ideological assessment of the renegade Avakian, applauded by the UOC (MLM) in the 1990s and characterized as centrist in the early 2000s. Later, in their criticism of Prachanda's evident capitulationism, Avakian would try to present his dismal assessment of the ICM disguised as revolutionary dialectical principle:

“(...) Marxism-Leninism-Maoism – is ‘dividing into two’: its revolutionary, correct and scientific kernel is both validated and is advancing to new levels, while secondary but nonetheless real and damaging errors in politics and theory have been identified and can and need to be struggled against as part of making the leap that is required.” ¹²⁴

¹²¹ Bob Avakian, *Conquer the World?* Revolution Magazine 50, our emphasis.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ RCP-USA, *Letter to Participating Parties and Organizations of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement*, 2012, our emphasis.

Another one of Avakian's petty-bourgeois philosophical falsifications. It is evident that the ideology of the international proletariat, in each of its stages, dealt with successes and errors and progressed, mainly, by relying on the former, and through the rectification of the latter, gaining experience in their handling, in an increasingly greater approach to objective truth. But in each of the stages, what were defined as the elements of the doctrine of the proletariat, in its three constituent parts, are the true aspects proven by the revolutionary practice of the class struggle, over the course of more than 170 years. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is, therefore, a set of countless integrated truths, as a scientific doctrine and not a pile of successes and errors. Like everything in the universe, the ideology of the international proletariat is *one that divides into two*, but not into rights and wrongs, but into universal truths and particular truths. There are truths forged in Marxism that were valid only for Europe in the 19th century, they were particular truths that are no longer universal today. But that doesn't mean they became errors. The ideology of the international proletariat, the leap in its stages, moves mainly according to the need to solve new problems that arise and will always arise in the arena of international class struggle and in each country.

Avakian, in his pseudoscience, is a hunter of “errors”, a typical petty bourgeois without any revolutionary practice, beyond his readings and speculative formulations about the revolutionary practice of others, without the risks of the real practice of class struggle. From the pulpit where he delivers his verdicts, he emits judgments against those who actually risk doing revolutionary work and who, in doing so, inevitably make a certain number of errors and suffer defeats, persist in the fight, rectifying their errors and advance forward with victories, suffer new defeats, persist until the fight is completely triumphant. Against this type of people Lenin powerfully declared:

“Capitalists and their lackeys (including Mensheviks and right socialists) shouted that we have made mistakes. **Behind 100 mistakes, there were 100 great and heroic actions which were common, inconspicuous, and hidden in the daily lives of a factory or a village.**” ¹²⁵

To sustain this capitulationist evaluation of the ideology of the international proletariat, it was essential for Avakian to attack the heart of dialectical materialism, that is, the *law of contradiction*. Like every revisionist, Avakian makes this attack while supposedly defending Chairman Mao's formulations. Avakian's ruse is to attack Marx and Engels' use of the *negation of the negation* by targeting one of the foundations of the *law of contradiction*. Attacking Engels' exemplification of the barley cycle departing from the *negation of the negation*, Avakian declares:

“[Engels states] that crushing this grain [of barley] will not lead to the negation of the negation by arguing that ‘every kind of thing has its characteristic kind of way of being negated’ (*Anti-Duhring*). But what has this to do with dialectics? Why, and who said, that everything has its ‘characteristic’ way of being negated? This to me **smacks of**

¹²⁵ V. I. Lenin, apud Cheng Hsin, in Expose Comrade Yang Sien-chen's substitution of the metaphysical mechanical theory for dialectical materialism, Kuangming Ribao, December 25 1964, our emphasis.

predetermination and of the notion of the unchanging essence of things. Mao opposed this kind of thinking when he pointed out that heredity and mutation are a unity of opposites. (...) Here we can see **how the concept of the negation of the negation comes into antagonism with the actual fundamental law of materialist dialectics**, the unity of opposites (contradiction).” ¹²⁶

Here it is possible to see a typical procedure of Avakianist falsifications: it pits one of the classics against the other in order to attack the essence of the position of both. In this case he places Chairman Mao in an antagonistic position in relation to the great Engels. He puts a Chinese wall between the *negation of the negation* in its use by Marx and Engels and the Maoist *law of contradiction*. He does this to find a major “error” in the first stage and a supposed “resolution” in the third one. Then he accounts for everyone's error and emerges as the redeemer who rectifies them all in his “new synthesis”. This is a shameful, falsifying procedure. As we were able to analyze previously, in the course of the first stage, particularly in the work of Engels (*Anti-Dühring*), the theoretical formulation of Marxist philosophy advances from the *negation of the negation* to the *contradiction*. We also saw that there is no such antagonism between the *negation of the negation* and the *contradiction*; after all, the *negation of the negation* is just a particular form of resolving the unity of opposites. Furthermore, Avakian's falsification is so vile that he claims that it was Chairman Mao who identified the unity of opposites between heredity and mutation in the life cycle of barley, and it is Engels himself who points out this contradiction:

“(...) from the simple cell – onwards the theory of evolution demonstrates how each advance up to the most complicated plant on the one side, and up to man on the other, is effected by the **continual conflict between heredity and adaptation**.” ¹²⁷

A typical maneuver of revisionism: a small textual fraud to smuggle a large falsification in ideological content. Avakian says that the *negation of the negation* “smacks of *predetermination*”, he considers Engels' reasoning that each thing has a characteristic way of being negated to be absurd. For the renegade Avakian, such a conclusion would constitute determinism, teleology. Discovering the necessary laws in a phenomenon is the task of science; Marxism discovered the necessary laws of capitalism and, therefore, constituted itself as a scientific ideology. It is Marx himself who summarizes his scientific discoveries as follows:

“Now as for myself, I do not claim to have discovered either the existence of classes in modern society or the struggle between them. Long before me, bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle between the classes, as had bourgeois economists their economic anatomy. My own contribution was:

1. to show that the existence of classes is merely bound up with certain historical phases in the development of production;

¹²⁶ Bob Avakian, More on the question of dialectics, March 6, 1981, Revolutionary Worker, n 95, our emphasis.

¹²⁷ Friedrich Engels, Dialectics of Nature, our emphasis.

2. that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat;

3. that this dictatorship itself constitutes no more than a transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society” ¹²⁸

The need for the dictatorship of the proletariat is a social law discovered by Marx and not a teleological predetermination constructed by him. Bourgeois society has a particular way of being negated and this way is the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transition to overcoming social classes, communism. Chairman Mao, contrary to what the juggler Avakian claims, does not turn against this. On the contrary, he establishes as a universal law that the new aspect in a unity of opposites will necessarily become the principal aspect of the contradiction, that is, it will negate the old unity of opposites:

“We often speak of ‘the new superseding the old’. The supersession of the old by the new is a general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe. **The transformation of one thing into another**, through leaps of different forms in accordance with its essence and external conditions -- **this is the process of the new superseding the old**. In each thing **there is contradiction between its new and its old aspects**, and this gives rise to a series of struggles with many twists and turns. **As a result of these struggles, the new aspect changes from being minor to being major and rises to predominance**, while the old aspect changes from being major to being minor and gradually dies out. And the moment the new aspect gains dominance over the old, the old thing changes qualitatively into a new thing.” ¹²⁹

Every process has a particular way of being negated: the new aspect negates the old process, becomes the dominant aspect and modifies the quality of the phenomenon. The antagonism between Engels and Chairman Mao is nothing more than Avakianist falsification. What he wants to negate is the *Marxist theory of knowledge* which establishes that in the active process of humanity, through social practice, human consciousness is able to reflect the essence of phenomena, discover their laws and, this way, to transform reality according to their goals. For bourgeois science, for its reactionary relativist philosophy, this is determinism. For the proletariat this is science, it is materialism, it is dialectics.

Avakian, criticizing Marx and Engels' use of the *negation of the negation* in the early 1980s, intended to smuggle philosophical relativism masquerading as scientific criticism. Much in line with the petit-bourgeois philosophy of Michel Foucault and company, precursors of the rotten *post-modernism* that is now popular in academia, Avakian rises against the *law of contradiction* which states that the replacement of the old by the new “**is a general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe**”. Avakian is against this universal truth, and through one of his minions states that:

¹²⁸ Karl Marx, Letter to Joseph Weydemeyer, March 5, 1852, our emphasis.

¹²⁹ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction, our emphasis.

"This is the process of *synthesis*, **the creation of the new**, which can only proceed through struggle ¹³⁰ against and **eventual** overcoming of the old." ¹³⁰

And:

"In a certain sense, **the more fully an idea corresponds to reality the more unpredictable will be the ways** in which it changes that reality." ¹³¹

In the early 1980s, Avakian presented his relativistic idealism in ridiculous paradoxes like this. In the 2000s, he used even cruder forgeries to pass off his contraband. Analyzing the quoted passage from Marx that speaks of the imprescriptible ¹³² necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Avakian quibbles as follows:

"Regarding the word "necessarily": I have to say that it is not entirely clear to me exactly what Marx meant by "necessarily" in this context, but the relation—and in particular **the difference—between "necessity" and "inevitability" is a very important question.**" ¹³³

Charlatan as always, Avakian initially tries to make a distinction between "necessity" versus inevitability. To then achieve his true goal:

"The goal of communism, **the necessary process leading to that**—revolution and the thorough transformation of society, and ultimately the world as a whole (...) **and the possibility (not the inevitability but the possibility) of this revolution**: all this is established not through some kind of subjective, and utopian, fantasy but on a *scientific* basis (...). Here, as indicated in the observation **contrasting possibility with inevitability**, is a crucial distinction and a profound question of methodology. In the history of the communist movement, **from the time of its founding**, there has been a tendency to "inevitability"—the mistaken belief that historical development will inevitably lead to the triumph of communism (...)" ¹³⁴

Avakian opposes necessity to inevitability and then inevitability to possibility; He thus surreptitiously negates Marx's assertion that "*the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat*", transforming the necessity of communism into a mere possibility. Negating the need for communism, converting it, to petit-bourgeois taste, into one possibility among many, this is the ideological objective of Avakian's philosophical falsification. Therefore, when he opposes Chairman Mao to Engels, he apparently aims at using the *negation of the negation*, to hit, in essence, the *law of contradiction*.

But Avakian does not only negates the *Marxist theory of knowledge*, that is, the possibility of reflecting the objective laws of society to transform it, acting in accordance with

¹³⁰ Lenny Wolf, *The Science of Revolution*, RCP Publications, 1983, our emphasis.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² Probably a mistranslation. Likely should be 'Indispensable' —ML

¹³³ Bob Avakian, *Breakthroughs*, 2019, our emphasis.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

these laws, transforming necessity. Avakian, in addition to being a relativist, is a metaphysist and opposes the dialectical world outlook that predicts that the transformation of all things and phenomena occurs from their internal causes; that external conditions influence the development of the phenomenon, but always act through its internal contradictions.

As part of his capitulationist assessment of the ICM, Avakian identifies a supposed nationalist “error” in the practices of Engels, Stalin and Chairman Mao. According to him, this “error” would be linked to a metaphysical conception of the relationship between internal and external factors in a given process. Handling the opposing aspects in a non-antagonistic contradiction in a sophistic way, exactly as the revisionist defenders of the principle of *combining two into one* did, Avakian presents his pastiche as follows:

“[For Mao] ... internal causes are in fact principal over external. (...) But, to a certain extent there was the tendency to conceive and apply this principle itself metaphysically, which was linked to a certain amount of nationalism in the Chinese Party, including among the genuine Marxist-Leninists, even Mao. In fact, this tendency was in opposition to another principle stressed in ‘*On Contradiction*’: that ‘Because the range of things is vast and there is no limit to their development, what is universal in one context becomes particular in another,’ and vice versa. **This means that what is internal in one context becomes external in another, and vice versa.** China, for example (or the U.S., or any other country) has its own particularity, its own particular contradiction; and in one context, the rest of the world (and struggle and change in it) is external (to China, or the U.S., etc.). But it is also true that, in another context, China, the U.S. and the rest of the countries in the world form parts of the world (of human society) as a whole, with its **internal contradiction** and change; determined in an overall way by the fundamental contradiction of the bourgeois epoch, between socialized production/private appropriation. This means that in an overall sense the development of the class (and national) struggle, **the development of revolutionary situations, etc., in particular countries are more determined by developments in the world as a whole than by developments in the particular countries**—determined not only, as a condition of change (external cause) but as a basis of change (internal cause).” ¹³⁵

Avakian is a sycophant who intentionally seeks to confuse things. Firstly, he says that Chairman Mao conceives the dialectical relationship between internal causes (as basis) and external causes (as conditions) in a metaphysical way, that is, as if there were no identity of opposites between these two opposing aspects. This is a blatant lie, because in *On Contradiction* itself, Chairman Mao provides us with a historical example and how internal transformations in a country can imply a qualitative modification of external conditions, that is, of the world as a whole:

“Does materialist dialectics exclude external causes? Not at all. It holds that external causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change, and that

¹³⁵ Bob Avakian, On the Philosophical Basis of Proletarian Internationalism, Revolutionary Worker, n° 96, March 13, 1981, our emphasis.

external causes become operative through internal causes. (...) There is constant interaction between the peoples of different countries. In the era of capitalism, **and especially in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the interaction and mutual impact of different countries** in the political, economic and cultural spheres **are extremely great. The October Socialist Revolution ushered in a new epoch in world history as well as in Russian history.** It exerted influence on internal changes in the other countries in the world and, similarly and in a particularly profound way, on internal changes in China. These changes, however, **were effected through the inner laws of development of these countries,** China included.” ¹³⁶

What is nationalism in Chairman Mao's conception of the relationship between the Revolution in a given country and the World Revolution? What is metaphysics in the Maoist formulation of the relationship between the internal and external conditions of a given process? In no way does Chairman Mao negates the identity of opposites between internal and external conditions. As is evident in the passage above, the Socialist October Revolution, that is, the internal transformation in a given country determined a change in the world situation as a whole, inaugurating a new era in world history. What does this mean philosophically? That the internal condition of a country has become the dominant aspect of contradiction, determining and influencing each and every country in the world. However, this identity of opposites does not negate the dialectical principle that it is always the internal causes that constitute the basis of development and transformation of a process. After all, as Chairman Mao highlights, the change that the Russian Revolution determines in the international situation operates in each country according to and through its internal contradictions. That is, the GSOR determined, for example, the change in the character of the Chinese Revolution, which from an old-style Democratic Revolution would then have to be a New Democratic Revolution; however, the GSOR did not change the character of the French Revolution, which continued as before demanding a socialist revolution.

In addition to falsifying and lying about Chairman Mao's philosophical and ideological conclusions, Avakian distorts the content of the identity of opposites. According to materialist dialectics, the transformation of an aspect into its opposite means that the dominant aspect becomes dominated, and vice versa. Avakian falsifies this content and claims that in a given context an opposite becomes equal to its contrary, thus eliminating the difference between the two. That is, for Avakian, in certain contexts, external = internal and vice versa. Thus, he reaches the apex of sophistry when he states that in a given context the world, that is, the external becomes the internal, the basis of change. In this way, he attributes the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process (social production x private appropriation) to the **internal contradiction** of this world. If the world becomes the “internal”, what would be the external? Each particular country or the galaxy? Neither, because Avakian's identity of opposites is the old absolute identity of opposites, for him mutual transformation is not one in which the opposites fight each other, change position while maintaining their differences and their mutual struggle. For Avakian, mutual transformation is the equalization of opposites, there is no longer a

¹³⁶ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction, our emphasis.

difference between internal and external, and a “revolution” that is immediately international emerges. But this can only be a speculative “revolution”, because by negating that the World Proletarian Revolution takes place in each country, Avakian negates that there is an uneven development of the revolutionary situation between these countries. This theory is nothing new, it is just the reissue of the rotten Trotskyist conception that denies the possibility of socialism in a single country. Not by chance, he shamelessly states:

“(...) we have to forge further ahead under the glorious ideological banner of “national nihilism.” ¹³⁷

Avakian's attack to the *law of contradiction* does not stop there. With a pseudo-leftist position, Avakian rises against the principal contradiction, in a supposed defense that the proletarian revolution can only win if it fights the enemy in all directions and at the same time. Thus, after attacking the supposed “nationalism” of Chairman Mao who “did not take external conditions as internal”, Avakian states that:

“And there is, along with this, a certain tendency recurring in Mao to make a principle out of the policy of making use of contradictions among the enemies, *defeating the enemies one by one.*” ¹³⁸

And:

“There’s no principle that says I should defeat you one by one; *if I’m capable of defeating you all at one time*, I should just take you all on and wipe you out and so much the better for the international proletariat.” ¹³⁹

This is Avakian in the early 1980s, the farce of a Wang Ming, a general of no battles. The philosophical falsifications are: 1) subjectivist idealism: transforms the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat into a mere “*possibility*”; 2) denies that internal causes are the basis for the transformation of phenomena and external causes are the conditions for transformation; 3) denies the existence of a principal contradiction in a phenomenon and advocates resolving all contradictions at once. These philosophical falsifications were part of the Avakianist devise to formulate his revisionist line. From the point of view of historical materialism, Avakian, still in 1981, turned against the law discovered by Marxism that “(...) *class struggle is the immediate motive force of history*” ¹⁴⁰. *According to the renegade:*

“It is the anarchy of capitalist production which is, in fact, the driving or motive force of this process, even though the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and proletariat is an integral part of the contradiction between socialized production and private appropriation. While the exploitation of labor-power is the form by and through which surplus value is created and appropriated, it is the anarchic relations between capitalist

¹³⁷ Bob Avakian, Conquer the World? Revolution Magazine 50, our emphasis.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Circular Letter to Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke and others, September 17-18, 1879.

producers, and not the mere existence of propertyless proletarians or the class contradiction as such, that drives these producers to exploit the working class on an historically more intensive and extensive scale. **This motive force of anarchy** is an expression of the fact that the capitalist mode of production represents the full development of commodity production and the law of value. **Were it not the case** that these capitalist commodity producers are separated from each other and yet linked by the operation of the law of value **they would not face the same compulsion to exploit the proletariat—the class contradiction between bourgeoisie and proletariat could be mitigated. It is the inner compulsion of capital to expand** which accounts for the historically unprecedented dynamism of this mode of production, a process which continually transforms value relations and which leads to crisis.”¹⁴¹

The shamelessness of a revisionist has no limits, Avakian transforms the anarchy of production, the contradiction between capitalists, into the driving force of the capitalist process. Marx in *Capital*, as seen above, analyzes the importance of competition between capitalists, shows how capitalist property through competition engenders the expropriation of the means of production among the bourgeoisie itself. This is indeed a dynamic factor indispensable to capitalist development, but transforming this contradiction into the driving force of history is nothing more than cheap revisionism. Furthermore, Avakian concludes that if it were not for the contradiction between the bourgeoisie, the exploitation of the proletariat could be mitigated; This is the same reasoning as the renegade Kautsky who argued that the monopolistic tendency of imperialism could soften the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Avakian says that it is competition between capitalists and not the search for *surplus value*, which leads these “producers” to exploit the working class in a more intense and extensive way.

For Marxism, the self-expansion movement of capital has a clear origin: the social contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This relation of production has *surplus value* as its particular product, characteristic of the capitalist mode of production. *Surplus value* is the labor unpaid by the capitalist that is transformed into capital. Capital produces *surplus value*, accumulated *surplus value* becomes capital. This is the economic process of self-expansion of capital discovered by Marx. Free competition acts as an indispensable external cause of this process, but the basis is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between social production and private appropriation. Surplus value, unpaid work, profit constitutes the *leitmotif* of capitalist production. The self-expansion of capital is its unavoidable result; The freer the competition between capitalists, the faster this self-expansion will be, the faster the centralization of capital will be, the more acute the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society will be and the better the conditions will be for its resolution. However, the resolution of this contradiction can only occur through the ideological strengthening of the dominated aspect in the contradiction, that is, the proletariat, as this is the social and political representative class of social production in the struggle against private property. Capitalists are the individual representatives of the dominant aspect of the

¹⁴¹ Bob Avakian, apud Raymond Lotta in On the “Driving Force of Anarchy” and the Dynamics of Change, Demarcations n 3, 2014, our emphasis.

fundamental contradiction, the contradiction between them, whether in the stage of free competition or in the stage of monopolies, the imperialist one, they influence the resolution of the contradiction, but do not determine it. Only the struggle between the opposing aspects of a contradiction can resolve that contradiction.

In 1984, in the book *America in Decline*, Avakian and Lotta attempt to substantiate this falsification in historical and dialectical materialism through Marxist political economy. As a typical procedure of revisionists, they depart from a small textual fraud to create a major falsification of Marxist principles. Lotta states that:

“There are two manifestations, **two forms of motion**, of the contradiction between socialized production and private appropriation: (1) the contradiction between the organized character of production in individual enterprises (or at higher and more integrated levels of ownership) and anarchy in social production overall; and (2) the contradiction in class relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. **According to Engels: ‘The capitalistic mode of production moves in these two forms of the antagonism immanent to it from its very origin.’** (...) the theoretical and political implications of this passage from *Anti-Dühring* necessitate further interpretation and elaboration. First, the fundamental contradiction of capitalism constitutes the material foundation for these two forms of motion. (...) But, to stress the point again, **movement compelled by anarchy is the principal form of motion of the contradiction between socialized production and private appropriation.**” ¹⁴²

Lotta states that Engels had established two forms of movement of the fundamental contradiction, but that there was a lack of further development of this formulation, duly done by him and Avakian when they established which of these forms would be the principal one. They falsify Engels' quote, to intentionally seek a false foundation in Marxism for their rotten theory that the anarchy of social production, the inter-bourgeois and inter-imperialist contradictions are more important than the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and between the oppressed nations and imperialism. Let us go back to Engels' complete passage to see precisely in what terms he puts it:

“The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation reproduces itself as the antagonism between the organization of production in the individual factory and the anarchy of production in society as a whole. **The capitalist mode of production moves in these two phenomenal forms of the contradiction immanent in it by its very origin (...)**” ¹⁴³

Therefore, the two forms of movement of contradiction highlighted by Engels are: 1) social production versus private appropriation, and 2) organization of production versus anarchy of social production. The two forms are inseparable, but the first is evidently the principal one, as it constitutes the basis of the production of *surplus value*. The anarchy of production results from

¹⁴² Raymond Lotta, *America in Decline*, Banner Press, our emphasis.

¹⁴³ Friedrich Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, our emphasis.

the relationship between capitalist production, that is, the production of *surplus value*, and its corresponding mode of circulation: free competition. Production of *surplus value* and *free competition* result in *anarchy of social production*. Lotta falsifies this passage by saying that the two forms of movement would be: 1) the anarchy of social production and 2) the class contradiction.

But this small textual fraud by Avakian and Lotta, countless times contained in the publications of the RCP-USA over the last few decades, is nothing compared to the content of the revisionist international political line that they seek to substantiate with this falsification. Based on this set of philosophical falsifications and the capitulationist ideological assessment that they make of the process of the world proletarian revolution and the ICM, Avakian formulates his international line based on the following dogmas: 1) imperialism implies the transformation of the world into one and single productive process; 2) therefore, the international arena becomes the “internal” condition for the revolution in each country, so the revolutionary transformation in a nation is determined principally by the international situation and not by the degree of development of its internal contradictions; 3) the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process is the “internal” contradiction of the revolution in the international arena; 4) the principal form of movement of this contradiction is the anarchy of social production, the inter-bourgeois and inter-imperialist contradictions; 5) this principal form of movement of fundamental contradiction determines the principally dynamic character of imperialism which thus “sweeps away semi-feudal relations of production” in semi-colonial countries; 6) is the development of inter-imperialist contradictions, a developed form of the anarchy of production, which creates the conditions for the advancement of the class struggle and the world proletarian revolution.

Let's quickly see the political consequences of the entire Avakianist philosophical falsification, summarized in points 5 and 6.

“World capitalism confronts and must subsume pre-existing social and economic structures. On a world-historic scale, **imperialism works in the direction of undermining and transforming precapitalist modes**. This occurs through the force of competition or through the direct capitalization of the factors of production, including labor power—the result of which is to accelerate the expulsion 143 of self-sustaining peasant and handicrafts labor from the countryside.” ¹⁴⁴

Thus, according to Avakian and Lotta, imperialism preserves the progressive character of capitalism of *free competition* that expanded through the dissolution of pre-capitalist production relations. For Avakianism, imperialism develops, reaches the maximization of profits, through the destruction of pre-capitalist modes of production and not by relying on semi-feudal relations that constitute a decisive internal foundation for national oppression. For Avakianism, not only imperialism in general acts this way, but also even the inter-imperialist wars:

¹⁴⁴ Raymond Lotta, On the dynamism of imperialism and the fettering of social development, AWTW, 1985/2, our emphasis.

“Further, since inter-imperialist world wars are, after all, military contests fought through to lesser or greater victory, their immediate outcome may not, in some important aspects, correspond to the economic requirements of durable expansion (even though such wars objectively recompose the conditions for renewed accumulation). But whatever the specific terms of redivision and reorganization, leaps are made in organization at the level of individual and national capital - and **in the dissolution of precapitalist relations throughout the world.**” ¹⁴⁵

This is the typical Trotskyist conception of imperialism, diametrically opposed to Leninist formulations. Lenin rejects the entire thesis of a supposed progressive character of imperialism, on the contrary, he formulates that:

“Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the **striving for domination, not for freedom**. Whatever the political system the result of these tendencies is **everywhere reaction** and an extreme intensification of antagonisms in this field. Particularly intensified become the yoke of **national oppression** and the striving for annexations, i.e., the **violation of national independence** (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of 145 nations to self-determination).”
¹⁴⁶

The revisionist falsification in the definition of the anarchy of production, as the principal form of movement of the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process, aims solely and exclusively to create a theoretical basis that justifies the rotten Avakianist thesis that the imperialist war is what decides the future of the World Proletarian Revolution. Avakian's hope was always placed in the conflagration of a new imperialist world war, as a condition for the advancement of the revolution. As Lotta explicitly formulates, in 2014, it is the anarchy of production and the inter-imperialist contradiction derived from it:

“(...) that **sets the primary stage and foundation** for the transformation of society and the world.” ¹⁴⁷

For these revisionists, the *class struggle* is not the motive force of history but rather the development of the *inter-imperialist* contradiction, after all it would be the development of this contradiction that would create the conditions for revolutions to occur:

“(...) as long as the capitalist mode of production is dominant on a world scale, **it is the anarchy of capitalist production that brings about the fundamental changes in the material sphere** that set the context for the class struggle.” ¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Raymond Lotta, *America in Decline*, Banner Press, our emphasis. ¹⁴⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

¹⁴⁶ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

¹⁴⁷ Raymond Lotta in the “Driving Force of Anarchy” as the Decisive Dynamic of Capitalism, *Demarcations* n 3, 2014, our emphasis.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

The Colombian Maoist organization, Proletarian Power – M-L-M Party Organization, in one of its interventions in the two-line struggle, in 2022, around the *Bases for Discussion* for the UMIC, correctly unmasked this Avakianist philosophical falsification and its ideological-political consequences. In its document *Demarcating ourselves from Avakianist Opportunism we are Forging Unity Among Communists*, it is stated that:

“In the discourse of the supposed principal form of movement of the fundamental contradiction, Avakian has left out monopoly and its effects on free trade and, of course, its effects on anarchy.” ¹⁴⁹

And after citing an important passage in which Lenin describes the transformation of free competition into monopoly, they conclude:

“This is happening, and has come ‘before our eyes’ (i.e., covered by evidence), and cannot be ignored. It has implied that, for much of the world, when the impositions of imperialism (monopolies) displace free competition, **anarchy is not the driving force of the development of the productive forces, nor of the other contradictions.**” ¹⁵⁰

This is one of the main points falsified by Avakian, he treats the effect of the anarchy of production on the productive forces and the relations of production as if there were no difference between 19th century capitalism and its imperialist stage.

Faced with this bourgeois philosophical basis, after these great falsifications of Marxism, Avakian & Co. could only develop a capitulationist strategy – in accordance with their imperial theory. If the conditions for revolution are created by competition between capitalists and inter-imperialist contradictions, what remains for communists, the international proletariat and oppressed peoples and nations is to wait for these conditions to be ripe and then... make the revolution. While he propagandizes his anti-Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theses and makes his repeated attacks on the giants of the international proletariat, it remains for Avakian to launch his audacious slogan:

“**To hasten while awaiting** the emergence of a revolutionary situation”. ¹⁵¹

Avakianist capitulationism in the 20th century and its *tomes* called “*New Synthesis*” are already too evident in themselves. What is important here is to demonstrate how these positions are anchored in philosophical falsifications from the early 1980s. What is important is to demonstrate the falsifying philosophical content of Marxism behind the supposed defense of the *law of contradiction* and the principle that *one divides into two*, a source from which some organizations and their leaders have been drinking heavily. This is the most important question to uncover in this topic. By removing the falsifications, it becomes easier to locate the reactionary bourgeois content of the Avakianist philosophy; its relativist essence and its

¹⁴⁹ PP-OP-MLM, *Demarcating ourselves from Avakianist Opportunism we are Forging Unity Among Communists*, 2022, our emphasis.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Bob Avakian, *Breakthrough*, 2019, our emphasis.

application of the revisionist principle of *combining two into one*. Avakian applies the same Prachandist *combining of two into one*, but does it through a different route. While Prachanda openly preaches the reconciliation of contradictions, Avakian applies the absolute identity of opposites, covered by a “leftist” discourse (this in the early 1980s).

Thus, as the revisionist Bogdanov, smashed in his idealist positions by Lenin in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, established an absolute, metaphysical, non-dialectical identity between social being and social consciousness, Avakian establishes an *absolute identity* between external conditions and internal contradictions and, between theory and practice. It is evident that this *absolute identity* does not occur in equal proportion, but rather as an affirmation of external conditions and suppression of internal contradictions and *affirmation of theory and suppression of practice*. Just as Yang Sien-zhen's conception eliminated the struggle of opposites through the reconciliation of contradictions, Avakian's absolute identity eliminates the struggle of opposites by disregarding the aspect of contradiction that represents the new, that is, it eliminates revolutionary practice from its unity with theory, he artificially eliminates the internal contradictions of a country as the basis for the revolutionary transformation of that country to take the external conditions as the determinants for such process.

In his “scientific epistemology” Avakian completely suppresses practice. The result of his *absolute identity between theory and practice* appears when he states that:

“(...) this must be understood to mean practice in the broad sense,” ¹⁵²

In other words, the practice without the risk of concrete practice of the class struggle, of the theoretical practice of the office, of the chair, completely apart from the masses and the concreteness of the class struggle. Thus, Avakian claims that it is possible to develop revolutionary theory divorced from revolutionary struggle and denies the active role of the masses in promoting and forging their scientific ideology. Avakian's conception of science is the bourgeois conception of truth. The *Marxist theory of knowledge*, the movement of practice – theory – practice, from the masses to the masses, for him is nothing more than a “*populist epistemology*”:

“That whole notion of populism and populist **epistemology** has to a significant degree found its way into, and in some significant ways **vitiating, the communist movement and its need to be scientific**” ¹⁵³

Yang Sien-chen, Liu Shao-chi's philosopher, defended the reconciliation between the opposing aspects: redness and proficient, clearly aiming to promote the proficiency to the detriment of the partisan and militant revolutionary character of the workers. Avakian promotes the same bourgeois and reactionary conception:

¹⁵² Bob Avakian, Letter of the Revolutionary Communist Party, United States to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and all the parties and organizations of the RIM, November 4, 2008.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

“All this is closely related to the point in the ‘Outline’ on the new synthesis where it says: ‘Epistemology and partisanship. In the relation between being scientific and being partisan, **being consistently scientific is principal.**” ¹⁵⁴

Avakian is a long-time revisionist, an inveterate falsifier, a cowardly capitulationist. The UOC (MLM)'s characterization of Avakianism as centrism only aims to hide the traces of their former ideological affiliation, camouflaging the origin of a significant part of their theoretical principles. It was Avakian who inaugurated the revisionist modality that operated in the RIM, thus opening the path of philosophical falsifications followed later by Prachanda. Avakianism did not prosper in the 1980s, as the presence of the TKP/ML at the 1984 Conference and the subsequent entry of the PCP, sustained by the tremendous theoretical-practical and ideological-political advances of the People's War in Peru, pushed Avakian into a defensive position. For years he was forced to dance to the music that the left played there. After the fall of Chairman Gonzalo, Avakian raises his head in his most nefarious actions: 1st) he organized, in 1994, an international campaign to defame Chairman Gonzalo, which resulted in the demobilization of the International Campaign in defense of the life of the PCP great leadership; 2nd) shamefully articulated, in 1998, the expulsion of TKP/ML from RIM. After that, he suffered an important defeat at CoRIM with the declaration of the millennium, in 2000, but this victory for the left was only circumstantial. As soon as Prachandism became openly revisionism, notably at the II National Conference of the CPN(M), in February 2001, Avakian and Prachanda began to dance together the waltz of capitulation. In 2005 they divorced, but they continue to share the same revisionist ideology and the same bourgeois philosophy.

2.2- Prachandism as a practical realization of Avakianist speculations

When in November 2006, Prachanda signed the nefarious “*global peace agreement*” agreeing to the quartering and disarmament of the People's Liberation Army, his revisionist capitulation became clear. At that time, essence and appearance coincided in the Prachandist position and it did not require much science to identify Prachandist revisionism. Despite this, many organizations and parties within the RIM continued for some years to vigorously defend Prachanda's capitulationist line as if this were a non-dogmatic application of Maoism. In 2008, when Prachanda, already Prime Minister of Nepal, was promoting his newest invention, the mediocre and a-historical “*(...) joint dictatorship of both the proletariat and the bourgeois class*” ¹⁵⁵, the PCm of Italy, for example, declared:

“(...) the evaluation of the experience of the International Communist Movement and of socialism, the battle for revolution in the 21st century, had an important first appraisal, given that it is based on the real advance of the Nepalese revolution and in the

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ The Red Star (organ of the CPN(M)), issue 15, September 21-30, 2008.

theoretical, practical and political contributions to Marxist-Leninist-Maoist science improved by the Communist Party of Nepal and by Comrade Prachanda.”¹⁵⁶

Instead of self-criticizing for having upheld and given international support to traitorous positions of the Prachandist leadership, many of these organizations distort their responsibility and seek to present Prachanda's capitulation as something “surprising” and “unexpected”. They thus seek to separate the Prachandist positions from 2006 onwards from his previous formulations, from during the first years of the People's War. Positions like these hide the bourgeois philosophical foundations of Prachanda's position and thus fail to escape or break with the presumptuous influence of this revisionist modality. Just as Avakian begins his philosophical falsifications in the early 1980s, seeking to create a theoretical basis that would justify his capitulationist revisionism, Prachanda begins, in February 2001, at the II National Conference of the CPN(m), the same process already in an apparent way. It is at this Conference that the so-called “Prachanda Path” is formed, which is already born as a revisionist modality, although still covered with left-wing phraseology.

These Prachandist positions were not covered up by the CPN(m), on the contrary, since 2001 they have been widely publicized by their propaganda organs: the *Maoist International Bulletin*, *The Worker* magazine and interviews by the renegade Prachanda for press and communication international monopolies. The Maoist Parties and Organizations that at the time were not aware of this shift to the right of the CPN(m) leadership were either very inattentive, deluded by appearances, or converged with the Prachandist ideological positions. In one case or another, they should self-criticize and rectify their positions. Criticizing philosophical falsifications, of this ideological capitulation of Prachandism in the early 2000s, is decisive in going deeper into rectifying these positions. To dwell on the criticism of laying down weapons by the PLA held by the UN, to the formulations of “*Globalized Imperialist State*”, “*Multiparty Competition*”, in short, of “*Socialism of the 21st Century*” is to remain merely in the shell of the capitulationist position without being able to smash its essence.

Like every revisionist position, Prachandism was the expression of capitulationism in the leadership of the Nepalese revolutionary process. Not capitulation in the face of defeat, but capitulation in the face of the great challenges that the advancement of the revolution presented to its leadership. The advancement of the Nepalese revolution was taking large steps towards the beginning of a new phase of the New Democracy Revolution; Faced with the imminent fall of the reactionary monarchy, Yankee imperialism, Chinese social-imperialism and Indian expansionism, each in their own way, prepared a military intervention that would make it possible to stop the extraordinary advance of the People's War. It is under these circumstances that Prachanda shamefully capitulates, justifying this betrayal of the revolution and the Nepali nation in the following terms:

“It is a geographical fact that our country, inhabited only by 25 million people, is sandwiched between two giant nations, India and China, each of which has more than

¹⁵⁶ PCm (Itália), Message of the Communist Maoist Party of Italy to the CPN(M) apud Revista Negación de la Negación n 4, 2009, our translation and emphasis.

one billion inhabitants. Chinese military strength is being developed so as to counter US imperialism. The Indian army is known to be the fourth-strongest army in the world. From the resources we have in our country and the strength of our PLA, even if we recruit all of the youths within it, **we cannot think of defeating either of the armies neighboring us, let alone the US imperialist army**, to defend our geographical integrity from foreign military aggression.”¹⁵⁷

This is the testament of a revisionist in his attempt to justify his capitulation enshrouded by an opportunistic “realism”. It throws in the garbage the entire experience of the International Communist Movement, the National Liberation Movement, which throughout the 20th century gave countless proofs that the masses led by the Communist Party, through the People's War, can defeat any enemy: **imperialism is a paper tiger**. Today, the Palestinian people are giving the most current and heroic proof that, even surrounded by a genocidal imperialist gendarme state, like Israel, compressed into a narrow strip of, on average, just 9 km wide by 40 km long, composed by just over 2 million inhabitants, in the struggle for resistance and national liberation, it can defeat imperialist domination when it has a consequent leadership that drives a protracted war of masses, even if this leadership is not armed with the scientific ideology of the proletariat. Prachanda's shameful capitulation is so evident that only revisionist betrayal can justify it. The leadership of the UOC (MLM), echoing the Trotskyist praises of Avakianism, analyzed Prachanda's capitulation in the following terms:

“For a long time now, there has always been a **struggle between Marxism and Opportunism adapted to petty-bourgeois nationalism in the ICM**, and between the ICM and the nationalist inclination of the petty-bourgeois movement toward the national liberation divorced from class struggle, or in some cases painted as petty-bourgeois socialism and, in any case, aloof and opposed both to the alliance with class struggle for the socialist revolution and the leadership of the proletariat. In the end, **the same content of the current struggle between Marxism and Prachandaism**.”¹⁵⁸

Prachandism was not characterized by a nationalist deviation, on the contrary Prachanda capitulates precisely from the national liberation struggle; capitulate from advancing the people's war to its national revolutionary phase, capitulate from advancing the new democratic revolution to its national liberation phase. It capitulates and betrays the Nepalese nation and people, the proletariat with the most advanced part of it and the international proletariat, to fraternize with Yankee imperialism, Chinese social-imperialism and Indian expansionism, exchanging Nepalese national liberation for a plate of lentils. There is nothing nationalistic about this position.

The ideological expression of Prachandist capitulation appears explicitly in the document *Great leap forward*, resolution of the *II National Conference of the CPN(m)*, 2001, when

¹⁵⁷ Prachanda, Letter to the CC of the RCP (USA), July 1, 2006, our emphasis.

¹⁵⁸ UOC (MLM), Negación de la Negación, n 03, 2008, our translation and emphasis.

Prachanda shamelessly embraces the Avakianist assessment of the ICM. Although there are many concessions to the left in this document, Prachanda openly highlights that:

“(...) the document and articles written and prepared by Revolutionary Communist Party, USA and its Chairman Bob Avakian played an important role in lifting the debate to a new height” ¹⁵⁹

And Prachanda in this document clarifies what the new height raised by the renegade Avakian would consist of:

“At this moment, the revolutionaries all over the world are free, without any political pressure, to draw the essence of the experiences of history, and a great responsibility has been laid on their shoulder, (...) In this context, we must go into the depth of what has been mentioned in the very beginning of the letter entitled “*The Question of Stalin*” during the Great Debate launched by the Communist Party of China led by Mao against the Khrushchev revisionism.” ¹⁶⁰

The “deepening” of Prachanda’s criticism of Stalin is nothing more than a repetition of Avakian’s arguments at the beginning of the 1980s:

“(...) the emphasis on safeguarding the Soviet society from external threat virtually undermined internationalism and **exaggerated Russian nationalism**, which created a lot of confusions about understanding and advancing the world revolution and functioning of the Comintern” ¹⁶¹

The same Avakianist litany about a supposed nationalist tendency also in Stalin and the ICM. The same Avakianist strategy of starting the ideological attack on Marxism by attacking Stalin and then denying the entire essence of the ideology of the international proletariat. The “freedom” announced by Prachanda, in 2001, to “deepen” the criticism of Comrade Stalin resulted in 2005 in the public announcement of the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism:

“The attention of the proletarian revolutionaries of the 21st century must be focused seriously on the fact that **the analysis that Lenin and Mao had made on imperialism and a number of concepts** they had developed on its basis regarding proletarian strategy **have lagged behind.**” ¹⁶²

Completely converging with Avakian's ideological assessment on the ICM, since 2001 Prachandaism has been converted from the practical expression of Avakianist speculations. Thus, the “*lots of elasticity*” of Avakian’s “*solid core*” presents itself as Prachanda’s “*multi-party*

¹⁵⁹ Prachanda, *The Great Leap Forward: An Inevitable Need of History*, 2001.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Prachanda, apud Bhattarai in *Epochal ten years of application and development of revolutionary ideas*, *The Worker*, n 10, 2006, our emphasis.

competition". The Avakianist "*New Synthesis*" presents itself as Prachanda's "*Socialism in the 21st Century*". The thesis of anarchy of production as a dynamic element in Avakian imperialism, applied by Prachandism, presents itself as a theory of the *globalized imperialist State*. The Avakianist muddle that converts the international situation into internal causes for the development of the revolution in a given country presented itself as Prachanda's ideological justification for the capitulation of the People's War in the country.

And this manifestation of the Avakianist theory as a Prachandist practice did not only occur in 2006, but since 2001. The overestimation of the strength of Yankee imperialism, so pronounced in Prachanda's capitulationist testament, already appears in the *II NC of the CPN(m)*, in 2001:

"Mainly the U.S. imperialism grew more and more encouraged to amass unlimited profits by combining the **unprecedented progress in science and technology**, including electronics, with the cheap labor of the third world." ¹⁶³

In addition to the apology for imperialism and the supposed progressive role of the *anarchy of social production in imperialism*, Prachanda repeats the Avakianist mantra about the "globalization of the productive process":

"(...) with the process of globalization to grab profits, the unprecedented development in the field of information technology, mainly electronics, **has narrowed down the world just to a small rural unit.**" ¹⁶⁴

All this apology for imperialism was made to present the false assessment that the international situation in the first decade of the 21st century was very unfavorable for the world revolution. This is the assessment Avakian trumpeted, mainly after the events of September 11th. Contrary to this assessment, the machination of September 11th was the Yankee reaction to the decline of the general counter-revolutionary offensive of imperialism and the entire reaction, unleashed in the second half of the 1980s, whose peak was reached in the period from 1992 to 1996. This general counter-revolutionary offensive aimed against Marxism, counting on the harmful action of Russian revisionism and social-imperialism (which then collapsed once and for all), decreed the death of communism and even the end of History, liquidating the *Potsdam System* with the partition of Eastern Europe and spheres of influence in the rest of the world, all wrapped up in the false slogans of "*Neoliberalism*" and "*Globalization*" and established the condition of the sole hegemonic superpower of Yankee imperialism. But, contrary to what the entire reaction estimated, the disorder in the world only increased. Extreme nationalisms were awakened, as well as fascism, ethnic and rapacious wars driven by imperialism for the spoils of the partition and the intensification of the class struggle and national liberation, without achieving the expected growth and stability of the world economy. September 11 was the Yankee machination to create public opinion without which the counter-revolutionary offensive could not be resumed, as it followed, with the occupation of Afghanistan by the Yankee-led

¹⁶³ Prachanda, *The Great Leap Forward: An Inevitable Need of History*, 2001, our emphasis.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

coalition and then of Iraq. And this offensive resumption was not based on a period of expansion or resetting of the rate of profit of imperialism as a whole, but rather based on a deep economic crisis, the same one that continues to worsen without ceasing to this day, at unprecedented levels of decomposition of monopoly capital. The most apparent manifestation of what was already occurring on an objective basis at the time occurred with the real estate and *derivatives* crises in the USA, at the end of 2007 and beginning of 2008, the biggest crisis in the US financial system in the post-war period and which spread throughout the world, thus unmasking the entire apologetic analysis of imperialism by misters Avakian and Prachanda.

The situation of the Nepalese renegade, in turn, required a little more juggling. Because, alongside the supposed unfavorable international situation, there was a formidable national situation that placed the CPN(m) on the eve, not of the conquest of Power throughout the country, but of the advance towards the stage of the national revolutionary war that would lead the proletariat, the peasants and the Nepali people as a whole towards their national liberation, raising internationalist support across the world and increasing the tension in the class struggle in both India and social-imperialist China. To maneuver in this situation, the Prachandist make use of the Avakianist-Trotskyist precept that the international situation constitutes the principal cause of the advance or setback of the revolution in a given country. Thus, if the international situation was not favorable, the capitulation and delay of the Nepalese revolution were justified, in order to wait for a favorable “conjuncture” *on a global scale*. Prachanda thus applied the Avakianist “slogan”: *to hasten while awaiting*. He hastened the capitulation of the people's war while “awaiting” for the promised favorable global situation, which for these masters, only a new world war can achieve. This position appears as formulated by the rightist Bhattarai when analyzing the resolution of the Meeting of the CC of the CPN(m) in September/October 2005:

“(...) the resolution made an objective assessment of the present-day **globalized imperialism** and advanced the conception that **only by taking a worldwide initiative of revolution in the new context that the revolution in a particular country can be accomplished and defended.**” ¹⁶⁵

The practical application of Avakianism to a concrete revolutionary process could only be the most shameful capitulation of a revolution. The divergences, expressed between RCP-USA and CPN(m) in the letters exchanged between 2005 and 2008, represent only the contradiction between revisionist speculation and its practical application. While it is in the world of ideas, revisionism may appear somewhat contesting, when taken into ‘practice in a given country’ it fully reveals its dark, conservative and reactionary essence.

Prachandist capitulation and revisionism is the same as Avakianism, both in content and form. The philosophical falsifications have different nuances but keep the same essence: metaphysical and idealistic bourgeois philosophy. These philosophical falsifications by Prachanda are prior to 2001 and reveal his ideological trajectory, which reiterates once again the

¹⁶⁵ Bhattarai, Epochal ten years of application and development of revolutionary ideas, The Worker, n 10, May 2006, our emphasis.

importance of the philosophical struggle for the development of the two-line struggle, for the strengthening of the left and crushing the right.

Contrary to what the UOC (MLM) claims for its militants, Prachanda has been defending and applying the “*law of negation of the negation*” for a long time. Still, in 1991, before the start of the people's war, Prachanda defined Marxist philosophy as follows:

“Dialectical materialism, the world outlook of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, considers the absolute character of struggle prevalent even in the relative unity of opposites of the matter concerned as the causing factor of growth and destruction of every incident of nature, society and human thinking. The dialectics of evolution of every matter and event which are interrelated and in the dynamic flow of continuous change is, as Lenin says, not in a simple and straight line but seems in a zigzag curve; it does not happen spontaneously and unknowingly gradually but does happen in the forms of a sequence break of continuity, a leap, a calamity and revolution, **transformation of quantity into quality, and negation of the negation. This is scientific essence of the Marxist dialectics regarding development.**”¹⁶⁶

When we study in detail the Great Philosophical Polemic in the CPC, the Prachandist falsification becomes more evident, because the highest synthesis of the law of contradiction established under the leadership of Chairman Mao, on the eve of the GPCR, affirmed the unity of opposites as the heart of materialist dialectics, that every contradiction is resolved through the principle that *one divides into two*, that the resolution of every contradiction advances from quantitative changes to qualitative changes, and from the affirmation of a certain unity of opposites by its dominant aspect to the negation of this unity by its dominated aspect. This philosophical synthesis, as mentioned, resolves the question posed by Engels regarding the interconnection between the then three basic laws of dialectics.

Prachanda falsifies this question, replaces *affirmation and negation*, reaffirm the *negation of the negation* as an essential and absolute element of Marxist dialectics. Furthermore, in this same initial document there is a subtle, but pernicious, falsification of the principle that *one divides into two*:

“Profound analysis and application of the question of one dividing into two **as the principal aspect of dialectics** during the anti-revisionist struggle, has made available in the hands of the revolutionaries a sharp weapon to fight against revisionism.”¹⁶⁷

In this formulation, Prachanda presents the principle that *one divides into two* as an aspect of dialectics. What would be the other aspect? In the texts from the 1990s, he does not say which one this was, but this inaccuracy left the door open for subsequent falsifications. In

¹⁶⁶ Prachanda, On Maoism (1991), in Problems & Prospects of Revolution in Nepal, 2003, our emphasis

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

the 2000s, Prachanda presented in a still covert way what, in his conception, would be the other aspect of dialectics:

“The process of application of the science of ‘one divides into two’ & the unity-struggle-transformation of the opposites from the heights of the lessons of GPCR, has led to the development of a unique wealth in the form of continuous development & establishment of the revolutionary current within the Party on the basis of broad democracy by defeating all sorts of non-proletarian tendencies” ¹⁶⁸

We saw in detail that the wisest philosophical lesson on the eve of the GPCR was precisely that:

“‘One divides into two’ is a complete, scientific and popular way of expressing the law of the unity of opposites. It means to say that everything in the world (including nature, human society and human 168 thinking) is ‘one divides into two’.” ¹⁶⁹

Prachanda's reasons for replacing *affirmation and negation* with *negation of the negation*, within the law of contradiction, and for placing alongside the principle that *one divides into two* the slogan of unity-struggle-transformation were not in vain. All of these are philosophical formulations that intentionally distort dialectical materialism in order to give it an opposite content in an imperceptible and surreptitious way. The intention behind the “subtle” Prachandist falsification was the same as that of Liu Shao-chi and Yang Sien-chen: to add, alongside the revolutionary principle that *one divides into two*, the bourgeois and conciliatory principle that *two combine into one*. Like Yang Sien-chen, Prachanda advances in this direction by initially taking non-antagonistic contradictions, or contradictory aspects in which there is struggle to achieve a relative balance between the two for a while. Let's see:

“Along with the advance of the PW this distinctive understanding of ours also got developed & refined. By the time of successful implementation of the Fifth Plan of the PW this understanding of the Party has manifested in the particular forms of. **balance** between political & military attack, **balance** between local & central intervention, **balance** between PW & mass movement. **balance** between main force & secondary force. **balance** between main zones & secondary zones. **balance** between centralization & decentralization. **balance** between independent initiative & tactical alliance. dialogue & adjustment. **balance** between local UF & central UF. **balance** between activities within & without the country. **balance** between class struggle & two-line struggle. etc., and developed to the level of tactical principles & thus given rise to the Guiding Thought of the Party.” ¹⁷⁰

The emergence of the Prachanda path is announced as the result of balancing contradictory aspects. At no point is it highlighted that any relative balance can only be achieved

¹⁶⁸ Prachanda, The Nepalese people's war & the question of ideological synthesis, The Worker, n° 06, 2000, our emphasis.

¹⁶⁹ Jao Ching-huang, Persist in “one divides into two”, oppose “combine two into one” - A talk to basic-level on the Great Polemic on the Philosophical Front edited and compiled, Nafang Ribao, January 11, 1965, our translation.

¹⁷⁰ Prachanda, The Nepalese people's war & the question of ideological synthesis, The Worker, n° 06, 2000, our emphasis.

through struggle and that in every contradiction, even in relative balance, the most advanced aspect must predominate, as only in this way can the contradiction be resolved in a revolutionary way.

The following step of Prachandism was to present its rotten “*theory of fusion*”, at the II NC, in 2001. Like the revisionist Yang Sien-chen, Prachanda initially presents the “fusion” of contradictions not directly related to class antagonism:

“(…) there has been a significant change in the prevailing concept of model of revolution after the 1980s. Today **a new fusion of the strategies of armed insurrection into the protracted People s " War** and that of protracted People s War into the armed insurrection has been imperative. Without such a fusion, a genuine revolution is impossible in any country of the world today.”¹⁷¹

Presented in this way, neither the philosophical falsification nor its content is evident. For the need to combine Protracted People’s War with insurrection seems relatively logical; in fact, this is something already implicit in the military theory of the proletariat established by Chairman Mao itself, after all the strategic offensive corresponds with the completion of the encirclement of the city from the countryside and the capture of large cities through their insurrectionary uprising from within. This Maoist principle was also brilliantly developed and applied by Chairman Gonzalo, with his contribution regarding the “*unitary people’s war*” countryside as principal and city as necessary complement. Prachanda presents the theory of fusion initially with leftist colors precisely to hide its capitulationist political content.

The supposed armed insurrection contained in the Prachandist *theory of fusion* was nothing more than the capitulationist rush to close an agreement with sectors of the ruling classes and imperialism, thus denying the essential phase in the People’s War in colonial countries, which is the national revolutionary war. Behind the loud slogan of armed insurrection was the right-wing proposition of forming a constituent Assembly with reactionary parliamentary parties, the negation of the new democratic revolution and the revolutionary dictatorship of workers and peasants. The theory of fusion between People’s War and insurrection aimed to hide its political content: “*joint dictatorship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie*”. And this was already evident in the content of the resolutions of the II NC of the CPN(m):

“From tactical point of view, the policies like centralizing attacks on the main enemy, continuing the Party policy for negotiation, stressing on the development of tactical united front etc. will be retained. But this alone will not be enough to achieve the above-mentioned strategic objectives today. For this the Party needs to advance in a planned way the issues like organizing a conference of all political forces to be participated by representatives of all political parties and people’s organizations of the country, **conducting the election for an interim government by the conference and guaranteeing the formation of constitution by the people under the leadership of this elected interim government**. The Central Committee will develop a concrete program and plan for its

¹⁷¹ Prachanda, *The Great Leap Forward: An Inevitable Need of History*, 2001, our emphasis.

initiation. This outline plan will incorporate the tactics of general insurrection in the protracted People's War, (...)" ¹⁷²

To say that the Prachandist capitulation, in 2005 and 2006, was something surprising is an outright lie. The capitulation plan was already outlined in the II NC of the CPN(m). The political content of the *theory of fusion* of People's War with insurrection was already given in the proposal to create an interim government based on a conference with all the country's reactionary parties. In other words, the Prachandist theory of fusion, from the outset, was nothing more than the most blatant bourgeois philosophy of *combining two into one*.

The conciliatory content of the *theory of fusion*, of the balance between the aspects of a contradiction and the Prachandist *negation of the negation* was also evident in the resolutions of the II NC of the CPN(m). The content of *combining two into one* appears clearly when Prachanda analyzes the process of the communist movement in Nepal:

"At last, while synthesizing the Nepalese communist movement, it can be said that it is marching forward by forging new unity on a new basis in accordance with the **dialectical principle of unity-struggle-transformation, or thesis-antithesis-synthesis**. The founding of the Party, its preliminary manifesto, policy and program was **unity or thesis**. In the process of development, various trends, internal conflicts, ups and downs, splits and factions were **struggle or anti-thesis** in the Nepalese communist movement. The great People's War led by CPN (Maoist) going on for 5 years is a manifestation of the **transformation and synthesis** or a new unity on a new basis. The whole process of the Nepalese communist movement can also be seen as a **negation of negation**. The initial correct policy of the Party was negated by the revisionism and later the revisionism by the correct revolutionary policy, and, eventually, the great process of People's War emerged." ¹⁷³

By presenting unity-struggle-transformation as thesis-antithesis-synthesis, Prachanda makes the typical revisionist move: he separates struggle from unity, separates struggle from transformation, and then makes struggle relative and unity absolute in contradiction. The struggle appears only at the most negative moment of the Nepalese communist movement, of its dispersion, of the predominance of petty-bourgeois and conspiratorial conceptions. The struggle opposes transformation, so much so that this is achieved in the Unity Congress, which establishes the basis of transformation, of synthesis. In relation to the *negation of the negation*, the meaning given by Prachanda is the same as that given by Proudhon: an advancement that is at the same time a setback, that is, a combination between right and wrong. The degeneration of the Party into revisionist is presented by Prachanda as the first negation, thus, revisionism appears as the new and necessary aspect for party development. For Prachanda, the revolutionary line can only advance in alliance with revisionist positions.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

This becomes even more explicit when Prachanda systematizes the “*method of developing the Party*”:

“This ideological struggle is linked with the struggle against metaphysical thinking that practices factionalism on the pretext of monolithic unity instead of **dialectical method of developing the Party through unity of opposites and two-line struggle.**” ¹⁷⁴

There is only one method and conception for party development: the two-line struggle. The unity of opposites does not constitute a method that stands alongside the two-line struggle; After all, the two-line struggle departs from the recognition of the party as a contradiction and constitutes the only way to resolve this contradiction with the objective for the left to prevail. Therefore, there is no method of uniting opposites in the Party, seeking coexistence with revisionism in the Party, this is nothing more than the rotten theory of *combining two into one*.

Prachanda reissues Yang Sien-zhen's philosophical falsification only using new words. In 2006, he defined the law of contradiction as follows:

“Historical and dialectical materialism is the philosophy of revolution; it not only applies to society but also in human thinking. The unity and struggle of opposites is its fundamental law. It means every entity divides into two, and each of the two aspects transforms into its opposite. **We think the latter is the principal aspect for us communists.**” ¹⁷⁵

Here Prachanda detaches the *division of unity into two* from the mutual transformation of aspects. He therefore presents the principle that *one divides into two* only as the beginning of the contradiction and not as its resolution. As we could see in detail in the study of the Great Philosophical Polemic, this was precisely the argument of the revisionists, that the movement of contradiction began with *one dividing into two*, but that its resolution occurred through *two combining into one*. Analysis as *one divides into two* and synthesis as *combining two into one*. The Prachandist fusion theory is, therefore, nothing more than the re-edition of the rotten revisionist philosophy of Liu Shao-chi and Yan Sien-chen. Already in the 1960s, the Maoist line had unmasked another, essentially identical, variant of the *theory of fusion*:

“If we act in accordance with Yang Hsien-zhen [Prachanda] and other comrades’ [Bhattarai] viewpoint of ‘*combining two into one*,’ it only leads to the **fusion of contradiction and the reconciliation of struggle**, and we will be fundamentally unable to attain the revolutionary goal. this is precisely the viewpoint to which modern revisionism gives wide publicity.” ¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ Prachanda, Letter from the CPN(m) to the CC of the RCP-USA, July, 2006, our emphasis.

¹⁷⁶ Sai Fu-ting, Chia Ku-lin, Hsia-erh-hsi-pieh-ko and Tien Hsi-pao, Persist in the class origin of marxist philosophy, opposing the theory of class reconciliation – Refuting the theory of “combining two into one”, Remin Ribao, September 20, 1964, our emphasis.

Prachanda's philosophical falsification is identical to that of Yang Sien-chen, Prachanda is nothing more than the Nepalese Liu Shao-chi. Sooner than later, it will be swept away by the Nepalese masses who, led by their vanguard, will retake the path of Protracted People's War and New Democratic Revolution.

It is necessary to differentiate the revisionist theory of fusion, which considers it as the reconciliation of contradictions or as its absolute identity, from the objective, natural and social process of fusion. Not every fusion implies “*combining two into one*” or the reconciliation of contradictions. For example, when Lenin emphasizes the need for the fusion of national revolutionary wars with the war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, it is clear that he is not denying the differentiation between the struggle of the international proletariat and the democratic struggle for national liberation, but exactly how one develops in the other. The leadership of PCC-FR formulates this question very precisely in its response to the UOC (MLM), in 2022, let's see:

“To this statement, the Comrades of the UOC vehemently point out that it is ‘a big mistake to impute the hateful theory of fusion of the class struggle of the proletariat with the national struggle to Lenin’.

Without referring to what the Comrades call ‘theory of fusion of class struggle with the national struggle’, let us depart from whether is it correct or not that Lenin defined the fusion of the two great currents or forces of the world revolution and, for that, what is better is to quote textually the words of Lenin:

*‘Hence, the socialist revolution will not be solely, or chiefly, a struggle of the revolutionary proletarians in each country against their bourgeoisie—no, it will be a struggle of all the imperialist-oppressed colonies and countries, of all dependent countries, against international imperialism. Characterizing the approach of the world social revolution in the Party Program we adopted last March, we said that **the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism.** That is confirmed by the course of the revolution, and will be more and more confirmed as time goes on. It will be the same in the East.’*¹⁷⁷

From this we can state that it is not a ‘big mistake’ of the Coordinator Committee to impute to Lenin this ‘hateful’ theory. Which is not correct that Lenin has always denounced this ‘fusion’ as a ‘fatal mistake’ for the world proletarian revolution, which, far from being ‘hateful’, on the contrary, it was an integral part of the Program of the great CPSU and today it is an invaluable and valid guidance on the strategy of the world proletarian revolution afterwards developed by Chairman Mao.

¹⁷⁷ Report at the II All-Russian Congress of the Communist Organizations of the Peoples of the East, 1919.

Some years later, in 1919, in the context of the 2nd Congress of the Comintern, Lenin again defends this idea in another way:

*'World imperialism shall fall when the **revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers in each country**, overcoming resistance from petty-bourgeois elements and the influence of the small upper crust of labor aristocrats, **merges with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions of people who have hitherto stood beyond the pale of history**, and have been regarded merely as the object of history.'*¹⁷⁸

Also, if we see in *The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution*, written in 1916, this definition of the strategy of the world proletarian revolution to sweep away imperialism and the reaction from the face of earth is even more clear and precise, as it shows that the path of the two forces cannot be other than the revolutionary wars and their fusion.

*'Theoretically, it would be absolutely wrong to forget that every war is but the continuation of policy by other means. The present imperialist war is the continuation of the imperialist policies of two groups of Great Powers, and those policies were engendered and fostered by the sum total of the relationships of the imperialist era. But this very era must also necessarily engender and foster policies of struggle against national oppression and of proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie and, consequently, also the possibility and inevitability, first, **of revolutionary national rebellions and wars; second, of proletarian wars and rebellions against the bourgeoisie; and, third, of a combination of both kinds of revolutionary war, etc.**'*¹⁷⁹

The fusion advocated by Lenin corresponds to the international proletariat movement, present throughout the world, leading the national liberation movement of colonial and semi-colonial countries. In this unity of opposites, the principal aspect that must therefore prevail is the proletarian leadership, which in addition to leading the socialist revolution in the imperialist countries is the only one capable of leading the national revolutionary wars and their uninterrupted transition to the socialist revolution to the complete victory. The leadership of the UOC (MLM) is not opposing the principle of "*combining two into one*", but rather denies the need put forward by Lenin for the decisive role of national revolutionary wars, under the leadership of the proletariat, for the triumph of the World Proletarian Revolution.

2.3- The convergence of the UOC (MLM) with the revisionist principle of *combining two into one*

Avakian and Prachanda make a shamefully capitulationist assessment of the ICM, in general, and of the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the 20th century, in particular. The UOC (MLM) essentially agrees with this assessment, starting with the attacks on

¹⁷⁸ Report on the International Situation and the Fundamental tasks of the Communist International, 1919

¹⁷⁹ PCC-FR, Response to the Statement of the Communist Workers' Union (UOC) on the Proposal of the Coordinating Committee for the Unified Maoist International Conference (UMIC), 2022, our translation, italics original, emphasis added.

Comrade Stalin called by Prachanda in 2001. The UOC (MLM) analyzes the glorious experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR in this way:

“The errors of the Russian communists and particularly Stalin (...) fundamentally [result] from the change of course in the construction of the new type of state: the soviets, of ‘permanent and single base of all state power’, they became mere transmission chains and **ended up converted into an apparatus identical to that of the bourgeois parliament. In 1936, the Soviet Constitution** (the ‘state of law’ that Prachanda and Avakian and all the petty-bourgeois claim) **formalized depriving the soviets of all power and converted them in a mere parliamentary instrument**; that is to say, **in essence, the same form of bourgeois parliamentary state was adopted**, where the masses do not participate nor decide on the public matters, where the state bureaucracy and the military forces were apart from the masses, **above and against society**,”¹⁸⁰

And after launching this typically Trotskyist nonsense against the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, they make the following ideological assessment of the set of experiences of socialist states in the 20th century:

“The critical analysis of the experience of the proletariat in power makes it clear that (...) there was no effort in making the old class domination machinery was extinguished and, in this sense, the communist movement fell to the superstitious faith in the state that was criticized by Marx and Engels, and they imposed a Kautskyist idea on this regard. **In practice, Kautsky won the battle both in Russia and in China.**”¹⁸¹

They thus conclude that in the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR under the leadership of Stalin and in China under the leadership of Chairman Mao, the Kautskyist conception of the State prevailed. They claim that the soviets, in the 1930s, became a bourgeois parliamentary instrument and the Red Army placed itself apart from the masses, above them and against them. The defeat of the Nazi-fascist invasion by the USSR, under the command of Marshal Stalin, is clear proof of the falsity of these revisionist attacks. The UOC (MLM) just repeats the old Avakian cant that:

“(...) World War 2 on the part of the Soviet Union, was fought on a **patriotic—that is bourgeois-179 democratic** —basis.”¹⁸²

There is no difference between this assessment by Avakian and the aforementioned conclusion of the UOC that:

“For a while there was always a **struggle between Marxism and opportunism adapted to bourgeois nationalism in the ICM.**”¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ UOC (MLM), *Negación de la Negación*, n 03, 2008, our translation and emphasis.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Bob Avakian, *Conquer the World?* Revolution Magazine 50, our emphasis.

¹⁸³ UOC (MLM), *Negación de la Negación*, n 03, 2008, our translation and emphasis.

In relation to the experiences of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the UOC (MLM) goes so far as to highlight the Paris Commune as the most advanced experience, a typically petty-bourgeois assessment convergent with the positions of Prachanda and Bhattarai:

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is a demand that emerges from the content of the new social relations of production. Therefore, the socialist content of these social relations demands a new form of state: **a Paris Commune-kind state.**” ¹⁸⁴

The glorious Paris Commune, which did not have time to develop new social relations of production, heroically outlined in general lines the content of the proletarian state, but in no way can it be considered the typical model of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a false defense of the Paris Commune, which aims exclusively to disguise the capitulationist assessment they make of the socialist experience in the 20th century. The proletariat was in Power in the USSR from 1917 to 1956, during this period it performed incredible feats, defeated the Nazi-fascist beast and gave the world enormous hope; in China, the dictatorship of the proletariat developed from 1949 to 1976, one of the most backward countries in the world, divided between several imperialist powers, advanced with its own forces in a spectacular way, carrying out the GPCR, the most transcendental mass movement in the history of humanity, built the People’s Communes, and the typical model of dictatorship of the proletariat is the Paris Commune? Like Avakian, the UOC (MLM) does not say that the principal aspect of the ICM in the 20th century was negative, formally they say that the experience was principally positive. But when the UOC (MLM) assesses that the two-month experience of proletarian power in the 20th century in the city of Paris advanced more towards the extinction of the State than the 39 years of dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR and the 37 years in China, it is clearly shown that, in essence, his assessment completely converges with that of Avakian and Prachanda, who would easily repeat these same words:

“This was the case of the **concept on the new state** expressed by Stalin in the end of his life, and that actually became like a **heel of Achilles for the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and China.**” ¹⁸⁵

And the convergence of the UOC (MLM), especially with Avakianism, is not restricted to the capitulationist assessment of the ICM. The UOC (MLM) almost entirely assumes Avakian's revisionist conception of imperialism, that is, of the supposed progressive tendency of imperialism that liquidates pre-capitalist relations in the semi-colonies, furthermore, of the supposed dynamic role of the anarchy of social production in the imperialist stage:

“Imperialism, as an internationalized mode of production has chained all countries with their specific modes of production into one single world economy. The exported capital acts on the capitalist germs or developments of the oppressed countries and, as an

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

overall tendency, accelerates their development, sweeps away the traces of precapitalist modes of production.”¹⁸⁶

In its criticism of Prachandism, the UOC (MLM) highlights what it considers positive about Avakianism and criticizes it for its lack of consequence:

“We support the correct criticism of the RCP, USA to the revisionist party of Nepal; what we do criticize is their lack of consistency to the end, their centrist position.”¹⁸⁷

Avakianism is right-wing revisionism from head to toe, there is nothing of centrism. Avakian is the precursor of this revisionist modality, he was Prachanda's master and must be criticized and held responsible as such. The UOC (MLM)'s criticisms of Avakian's philosophy are only nominalist criticisms, as they defend the same bourgeois conception just with different labels.

How can an organization call itself Maoist and not take the systematization of Marxist philosophy contained in *On Contradiction* as the most developed from Marx's punctual use of the manifestation of a particular movement of the *law of contradiction*, which is the *negation of the negation*? What would be the reason for an organization that calls itself Maoist, at a certain point in its history, to change the name of its theoretical organ from *Contradicción* to *Negación de la Negación* if not because it considers this law to be the most essential of materialist dialectics? Or was it because they considered the *negation of the negation* to be the law “*that best explains the direction of movement, of the solution of contradiction*”? However, as in philosophy not defending the law of contradiction as the fundamental law of materialist dialectics would be to deny Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao, they had to explicitly declare that “*we do not deny that the law of unity and struggle of opposites is the fundamental law of dialectics*”, however goes on to state that the *negation of the negation* is “*only the third law of dialectics*”, but states, at the same time, that this is “*the general law that indicates the direction of movement in different spheres of social and natural life*”. Therefore, this is not a question of ignorance, it is a question of philosophical falsification. Smuggling bourgeois conceptions wrapped in the abstract concept of *negation of the negation* is impossible with the *law of contradiction* so fully formulated and applied by Chairman Mao in all his work.

The UOC (MLM) do not take the *negation of the negation* with the content defended by Marx and Engels, in *Capital* and in *Anti-Dühring*. This content, as demonstrated in the previous session, is none other than *one divides into two*, that is, the unity between social production and private property, dissolves, interdependence is broken, private ownership of the means of production – all of it – goes to the garbage of history; social production as the new aspect transforms into a superior form: it is based on social productive forces, but advances towards the end of social classes, the social division of labor, the separation between countryside and city. The negation of the negation of the UOC (MLM) is an advance and at the same time a setback, a synthesis between progress and backwardness, as defined by Proudhon, Dühring and

¹⁸⁶ UOC (MLM), Program for the revolution in Colombia, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

¹⁸⁷ UOC (MLM), Negación de la Negación, n 04, 2009, our translation and emphasis.

Prachanda. And this falsification of the concept of the negation of the negation serves the leadership of the UOC (MLM) to theoretically justify its revisionist positions, such as the Avakianist conception of imperialism:

“Thus, in certain moments and in certain oppressed countries, imperialism finds it more beneficial for its interests to sustain the precapitalist modes of production, as a **counter-tendency to the capitalist development of these countries** (...), in the process as a whole, **the most general tendency** and resulting from numerous and contradictory particular tendencies, **there is a progressive direction to introduce and develop the capitalist relations in the oppressed countries, according to the law of the negation of the negation**, one of the general laws of movement, the movement of society in this case”.

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We have already seen that the thesis of the progressive character of imperialism, which sometimes hinders and sometimes impulses the relations of production in colonial and semi-colonial countries, is authored by the renegade Avakian. What should be highlighted in the passage above, in addition to the UOC (MLM)'s total agreement with this revisionist thesis, is its attempt to justify it based on *their* law of *negation of the negation*. In other words, for UOC (MLM), the supposed progressive tendency of imperialism coexists with its conservative “counter-tendency”, in accordance with *their* negation of the negation, that is, a progress that is at the same time a setback. This philosophical falsification is nothing more than the old revisionist principle that *two combine into one*, that is, for the UOC, imperialism is the result of the combination of *progress* and *backwardness*. And, furthermore, progress is the “*most general tendency*”.

The UOC (MLM) uses the *negation of the negation* thrown away by Avakian to support the Avakianist thesis on imperialism. There is no incoherence in this argument from UOC (MLM), after all, both UOC and Avakian, in different ways, attack the law of contradiction in the same way. Through different means they apply the revisionist principle of *combining two into one*.

And this is not an isolated example. In their military line, the UOC (mlm) repeats the same content and form of the Prachandist theory of fusion, espoused by them until March 2006. Let's see:

“The People’s War assumes different forms depending on the country in question, be it in the form of an insurrection in the imperialist countries, be it in the form of protracted people’s war in the semi-**feudal and semi-colonial countries**, be it a combination of urban insurrections with peasant uprisings and the armed struggle in the countryside in the predominantly capitalist oppressed countries.” 189

Prachanda had announced that his theory of fusion was valid for all countries in the world. The UOC (MLM), following its precept, formulates its military line according to the

188 *Ibid.*

189 UOC (MLM), *Negación de la Negación*, n 04, 2009, our translation and emphasis.

revisionist mantra of Prachandism, to announce the insurrection in the cities with the aim of abandoning the armed struggle in the countryside. They exalt the future insurrection as a way of evading their capitulation in the face of the present task of organizing the peasant war as a People's War.

In their analysis of the agrarian and peasant problem in Colombia, which we will analyze in detail later, the UOC (MLM) once again applies the philosophical falsification of *combining two into one*. They merge big landowners and peasants into a single category, combining two antagonistic aspects into one: land owners. They thus conclude that in the Colombian countryside the contradiction between big landowners and small landowners no longer exists, or is no longer important, they assert that this antagonistic contradiction no longer exists and defend the struggle of “agricultural proletarians” against “capitalist landowners” and by smuggling a Trotskyist agrarian program:

“It is indispensable that the agriculture proletariat, who does not have the degree of concentration as the industrial proletariat, gets independent of the peasantry, both due to their program as for their organization; only then he is able to get rid of the rural petty-bourgeois atmosphere of the proprietor and of the illusion in the small property. Only then he could **teach the peasants** that for them to save themselves they must ally with the proletariat to **struggle against private property and to convert the property of their land into collective property and collective exploitation**, because the individual exploitation conditioned by the individual property is what pushes the peasants into ruin.”¹⁹⁰

Thus, the UOC (MLM) does not correctly differentiate friends from enemies, transforms all landowners into enemies and abandons the just and necessary struggle of the peasants, that are poor, landless or with little land, for the revolutionary seizure and sharing of landowners' lands. This is what their philosophical falsification is for, their false negation of the negation, their rotten revisionist philosophy that defends *combining two into one*.

Finally, the UOC (MLM) argues that the anti-imperialist struggle is immediately an anti-capitalist struggle, combining the tasks of the new democratic revolution and the tasks of the socialist revolution into the same program. With “radical anti-capitalist” phraseology, they argue that the revolution in such oppressed capitalist countries is immediately socialist, and thus completely abandons the essential stage of national liberation:

“The problem lies on how to scientifically understand the relation between the struggle against foreign imperialism, and the struggle for socialism in an oppressed country (...) And, in this case, when the proletariat aims directly toward socialism, **the struggle against imperialism** fully coincides with internationalist general character of the proletarian

¹⁹⁰ UOC (MLM), Imperialism is the superior and final phase of imperialism, it is the anteroom of the proletarian revolution and not the anteroom of ‘ultra-imperialism’, 1995, our translation and emphasis.

struggle, thus **ceasing to be a democratic struggle to defend the bourgeois nation**, and becoming an anti-capitalist struggle to rid the world of imperialism.”¹⁹¹

They combine two into one in the Avakian style, suppressing the most important task of the moment. They deny the New Democratic Revolution and assume the Trotskyist slogan of “permanent revolution”.

3- Unity in the ICM cannot advance under the principle of *combining two into one*

The leadership of the UOC (MLM), when stating that the *negation of the negation* “(...) is the general law which indicates the direction of movement and which manifests itself in various spheres of social and natural life”, at no point demarcates the differences between the conception of Proudhon, Dühring, Avakian or Prachanda on the *negation of the negation* from Marx's understanding and use of it. Revisionism falsifies the use of the *negation of the negation* as being *thesis*, *antithesis* and *synthesis*, and takes synthesis as *combining two into one*. In the two-line struggle around the UMIC, the UOC (MLM) explained its idealistic way of applying the *negation of the negation* and synthesis as *combining two into one*. In their position, last year, on the *Bases for Discussion*, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) states that the proposal presented by the CUMIC:

“(...) do not represent a **common general Unity Base** to proceed the struggle around the divergences that are legitimate, for now, in the midst of the revolutionary communists, because such a proposition **only expresses the position of a particular shade of the communist movement.**”¹⁹²

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) protests against the fact that the *Bases for Discussion*, presented by the CUMIC for the public debate in the ICM, expresses only what they call “a particular shade” and proposed that the CUMIC should have presented a *Common General Unity Base*. In other words, we should present a synthesis before the development of the struggle. This method does not correspond to the communist method, because a common base can only be achieved through two-line struggle. After all, this common base, as an expression of a revolutionary synthesis, and not of balanced and eclectic composition; could only be achieved through a two-line struggle that would result in an adequate solution for divergences, making possible for certain compromises to be reached. This is what the CUMIC did: it launched a *Bases for Discussion*, which evidently should express the ideological shade of its proponents, which, made public, as had not happened in the ICM for decades, led to the very important two-line struggle on this proposition that reflected, as expected, in the debates at the UMIC, expressing itself in the *Political Declaration and the Principles* and other resolutions such as the formation of the International Communist League. A two-line struggle that continues and will continue to develop on another, new level.

¹⁹¹ UOC (MLM), Program for the Revolution in Colombia, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

¹⁹² UOC (MLM), About the Proposal about the balance of the International Communist Movement and its current Line General Politics, 2022, our translation and emphasis.

It is too idealistic to believe that an organization, or even a set of organizations, could find at the outset, through their mere intellectual effort, a common unity base. What would be the criteria for preparing this document? Searching among the different positions for a common result, a synthesis, that would mean unity? Should we act like Proudhon, criticized by Marx for idealistically trying to “(...) *snatch from God, from absolute reason, a synthetic formula*”¹⁹³ that represented a general basis of unity? This would be nothing other than “*combining two into one*”, this would represent the degradation of the two-line struggle, it would be transforming communist unity into bourgeois diplomacy. To face the concrete problem of dispersion in the communist movement, we could not put our positions, our shades under the carpet, as some do, pretend that divergences are secondary problems and unimportant for the proletarian revolution. These are problems that must be on the table, avoiding the struggle over them is deceiving ourselves with a false unity colluded with good intentions outside the field of struggle.

The strength of the UMIC and the strength of its *Political Declaration and the Principles* is that they were the result of the two-line struggle that preceded them and the two-line struggle that took place within the Conference itself. During the course of the UMIC, a two-line struggle between the positions that were present took place, and not criticism behind the backs of organizations that were absent. It was this correct method that allowed the *Bases for Discussion* to be modified, in the form of a new understanding of certain divergences and the solution of some other problems, allowing compromises between organizations to be reached. And did this unity reached there represent the end of the two-line struggle? No, it allows the two-line struggle to continue developing at another level now, a new unity on a higher base. At the UMIC, what was taught to us by Chairman Mao about the *dialectical approach to the inner Party unity* was strictly followed:

“The unity of opposites is the fundamental concept of dialectics. In accordance with this concept, what should we do with a comrade who has made mistakes? **We should first wage a struggle to rid him of his wrong ideas. Second, we should also help him.** Point one, struggle, and point two, help. We should proceed from good intentions to help him correct his mistakes so that he will have a way out. (...) provided that no damage is done to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, we accept from others certain views that are acceptable and give up certain of our own views that can be given up. Thus, we have two hands to deal with a comrade who has made mistakes, one hand to struggle with him and the other to unite with him. (...) The integration of principle with flexibility is a Marxist-Leninist principle, and it is a unity of opposites. (...) **One divides into two -- this is a universal phenomenon, and this is dialectics.**”¹⁹⁴

This is the communist method in facing differences: firstly, struggle; secondly, deciding by unanimity or by a majority, or reaching compromises, according to the nature of the differences, whether antagonistic or non-antagonistic, depending on the conditions of a given process and for a certain period, even with the enemy it is possible and necessary to reach compromises. To seek compromises before the struggle is to apply the philosophical falsifications of Proudhon or

¹⁹³ Karl Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, our emphasis.

¹⁹⁴ Chairman Mao, *Dialectical Approach to the Inner Party Unity*, our emphasis.

Prachanda, it is to seek to accommodate, balance and merge different positions. This means the end of the two-line struggle, its replacement by collusion and, consequently, the impossibility of the development of communist organizations. In the Great Philosophical Polemic, in 1964/65, in People's China, the revisionists from Liu Shao-chi's band advocated that Chairman Mao's international line was an example of “*combining two into one*”. The aforementioned article by Remin Ribao, dated May 20, 1965, refutes this falsification as follows:

“They try to create the impression that this [international] line too can be made to conform to their ‘combining two into one.’ (...) **The so-called ‘synthesis’ of ‘combining two into one’** advocated by Yang Xian-zhen and other **abolishes struggle**. (...) Criticism and struggle based on a desire for unity is exactly a process of one dividing into two. The new unity on a higher basis is achieved through criticism and struggle and after overcoming of error, and is therefore also a result of one dividing into two. This higher basis is absolutely not a basis of ‘combining two into one’ between correctness and error, but a basis of one dividing into two between correctness and error.” ¹⁹⁵

In the present two-line struggle in the ICM regarding the UMIC and the founding of the ICL, the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Revolutionary Maoist), CPN(RM) spoke publicly on two occasions, one on the *Bases for Discussion*, in September 2022, and another one some months after the announcement of holding UMIC. In the first one, they welcome the public stance taken by Parties and Organizations on political and ideological questions, stating that “*A new debate has begun. Many questions of unity and divergence came to the surface in these debates. This is not wrong*”. They then take a position, arguing several times that the struggle is absolute and unity is relative; This is correct and we salute them for their clear stance on this. However, they criticize the fact that a joint declaration between the different initiatives that advocated a Unified Conference has not emerged. However, this common declaration could only be the result of the development of the two-line struggle at a new level, that is, at the UMIC itself, to which those who publicly expressed disagreements were invited to take part with rights and duties like all others. ¹⁹⁶ Therefore, to defend the need for a joint declaration before the

¹⁹⁵ Ai Si-chi, Surreptitious Substitution of Theory of Reconciliation of Contradictions and Classes for Revolutionary Dialectics Must Not Be Permitted, Remin Ribao, May 20, 1965, our emphasis.

¹⁹⁶ Only the to the CPI(Maoist) it was not possible to receive an invitation to the UMIC, which was held clandestinely. And it had been, since 2014, with the loss of contact between our Party and the CPI(Maoist), until today the difficulty in reestablishing this contact. Likewise, none of the Parties and Organizations committed to carrying out the UMIC had contact. Parties that claimed to have contact with the CC of the CPI(Maoist) and that participated in the January 2020 meeting were never willing to help us reestablish it. There have been several attempts since 2014 to reestablish contact and when, in 2017, through a messenger, the document *Our Stand on the Formation of an International Organization of the Proletariat* from the CPI(Maoist) reached us with the request to transmit it on to the Maoist Parties and Organizations that we were in contact with and for them to make their comments on the matter. As soon as this document reached our party, we immediately transmitted it to all M-L-M Parties and Organizations that we had secure contact with, including, through Pcm-Galícia, it was transmitted to PCm (Italy), one of the first to receive it, so that they could also hand it over to the Parties and Organizations they had contact with. And we did it exactly as we were requested by the messenger who transmitted it to us. On the part if the P.C.B., persistent efforts were made for several years to get our correspondence to reach the CC of the CPI(Maoist) to re-establish the communication channel, our comments on your document and a detailed report on the entire preparation process for the UMIC. But, unfortunately, we were not successful. And due to the fact that the CPI(Maoist) did not make this document public, our party did not do so because it understood that it was not authorized to do so. However, we do not understand why the leadership of the CPI(Maoist) did not contact us in all this time, as we had had fluid contact until the occurrence of security problems that interrupted it again and

struggle is minimally developed is as much idealism, an illusion, as the possibility of “*combining two into one*”. The leadership of the CPN(RM) also proposed: “*forming a new organizing committee to hold a Unified International Conference through the dissolution of both Coordinating Committees*”. In this regard, it is necessary to clarify that, in 2022, there was only one Coordinating Committee, which was the CUMIC, which promoted the two-line struggle, publicly, starting from the publication of the *Bases for Discussion* and had already held dozens of meetings and attempts of understandings, as is clear in the reference note above. The advocates of another Conference held a meeting called via the internet by the PCm-Italy, with their liberal and legalist criteria, calculating that their defamatory report on the P.C.B. and the attacks against what they called the “Gonzaloist bloc” and “bloc of the principally Maoism” by others, would in itself unite those Parties and Organizations to hold a “unity conference” at the end of that same year that was beginning, as the meeting had decided, with the objective of holding it before the UMIC, based on the document *Our Stand on the Formation of an International Organization of the Proletariat*, from the CPI(Maoist), they also decided that they would invite the “Gonzaloist bloc” to participate and if they did not participate, they would be denounced to the ICM as splitters, etc. These are the terms of the minutes of this meeting, in which not even any assessment – to be minimally serious as a Marxist – was made of what was proposed in the meeting of 2013, in which some of those participants there, made official the end of the already bankrupt RIM, of promoting a series of tasks and activities in support of an international conference for reviving the RIM. This is not to say about the lack of any proposition regarding the assessment of the ICM and the historical experience of the World Proletarian Revolution. Regarding the international situation at the time, which was already characterized by great disorder and the sharpening of the world's fundamental contradictions, especially the principal one that opposes the oppressed nations/peoples to imperialism, there was also nothing about that. Much less was there any self-criticism of their immobility and even negligence regarding the ICM, due to narrow and petty hegemonist interests. Of the participants in this January 2020 meeting, not all of them signed the same declaration on May Day, 2022. Therefore, proposing, as the CPN(RM) declaration does, the dissolution of the CUMIC to merge into a single “coordination” with parties that, after all this, unilaterally accepted the falsified reports about the UMIC process presented at that meeting, by the leadership of the CPm-Italy, regarding everything accomplished in more than ten years of hard and selfless internationalist work by

again, after the channel had been reestablished, without which we remain to this day. It is also a matter of no less importance, by the way, the fact that, after the meeting of parties held in January 2020, our party took the initiative to seek out the PCm (Italy) proposing a meeting of our party with all the Parties and Organizations participating in that January 2020 meeting, and it was agreed to hold it as soon as possible. Our purpose was to listen to them and present the CUMIC report on the UMIC preparation process, as most of these parties only had the PCm-Italy and PCm (Galicia) version of the UMIC process, and so it was possible to reach an understanding about UMIC preparation. However, under the pretext of the problems of the Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting never took place. It is a fact that the health restrictions imposed by imperialist States and their lackeys created certain difficulties, but not to the point of preventing communist Parties and Organizations from meeting at some point. After all, the proletariat and other popular masses did not stop working or fighting, neither in Italy nor in any other country. The CUMIC continued to carry out activities taking the necessary precautions, as well as mass campaigns against reactionary measures to cut workers' rights under the pretext of the economic crisis and measures to combat the pandemic. After our insistent demands for this meeting, it was proposed by the same PCm-Italy that our Party, the PCm-Italy and the PCm-Galicia should meet together. Although our proposal was to meet with as many of the parties participating in that January meeting as possible, we agreed to meet in the hope that the broader meeting would be held, but, in fact, it was clear there that such a meeting was not in the interest of PCm-Italy, which did everything to fail our attempts at an understanding. This was a serious problem that affected the process. The leadership of PCm-Galicia is an eyewitness to this.

almost 20 M-L-M Parties and Organizations, would mean leaving UMIC and everything that had cost more than a decade of painful, but successful efforts, to be dragged into cowardly liquidationism, therefore, we could not consent.

As for their second public note on the UMIC and the founding of the ICL, in November 2023, the leadership of the CPN(RM) declares that they were late in speaking out, when they had already done so, due to the fact that they were committed to the process of unifying the CPN(RM) with the CPN(Majority) for entire previous year and that it was not appropriate to deal with this issue separately and they had waited for the conclusion of this process to have one single statement. They also said that it is admirable that so many parties and organizations were able to hold a conference to create an international center for the proletariat, particularly at the moment the world is passing through. They then announced that they had disagreements on some topics in the ICL *Political Declaration and the Principles* and list them as 9 questions. Throughout these questions, they claim that certain statements in the *Declaration* are correct, however they consider that the declaration does not have a full understanding of the concepts of Marxism. Even though this statement by the CPN(RM) is not the direct object of this document, even because the positions expressed in it are also put forward in the aforementioned UOC (MLM) document from January 2023, which deals with the founding of the ICL as well, we cannot avoid reaffirming our criticisms to the positions of the CPN(RM), which in this second statement on the ICL expressed their rightist nature in a more complete way. Let us just take the first point in which they say they are in agreement with 4 of the 5 principles of demarcation between Marxism and revisionism defined in the ICL *Declaration*, and that, the principle of “*acknowledging or not acknowledging the omnipotence of revolutionary violence in order to make revolution in each one’s own country*” is to reduce Maoism to “*revolutionary violence*”. They state that violence is just “*an integral part of Marxism but not more powerful than Marxism*”; and, citing Chairman Mao, in *Problems of War and Strategy*, all his assertions that are summarized in “*Power grows out of the barrel of a gun*”, and then argue that Chairman Mao would have stated these concepts in a certain context. Now, what was the context if not the treatment of the problems of war and strategy as a means of making the revolution? Pure wordplay. Then they say that the *Declaration* conceives the statement that “*yes, we are advocates of the omnipotence of revolutionary war*” as if in a narrow way and, in a pun, presents Lenin's quote that “*Marxism is omnipotent*” to say that Marxism “*is more omnipotent than violence*.” Here, who is trying to separate violence from Marxism if not the leadership of the CPN(RM)? It is Avakianist revisionism to attempt to dissociate revolutionary violence, People's War, from Maoism, because the fundamental thing of Maoism is power to the proletariat, power conquered and defended by an armed force led by the Communist Party. Then, the argument turns to another position on the same and states that the *Declaration* is right, as currently all revisionism is against the people’s struggle using violence. But their inconsistencies do not end there, as, suddenly, they conclude that the *Declaration* has “*militarist*” concepts. Could it be that so many years of people’s war and the break with Prachanda's national and class betrayal have not been enough to clarify such a patent issue? Or could it be that the break with Prachandism was not to the point of getting rid of its revisionist inventions such as the “*theory of fusion*”, a new way of presenting the rotten Khrushchevite “*peaceful transition*” under the misleading form of the “*combination of all the forms of struggle*”. Militaristic is the conclusion drawn by the

leadership of the CPN(RM) when lamenting about the “frailty” of the revolutionary forces in the world, citing the mass uprisings that are exploding around the world with the example of those that occurred in Sri Lanka, complaining that the massive uprisings in this country, those from so many countries, just as they appear, soon disappear, and that not even, in the case of Sri Lanka, there was a “*small army*” there to carry on the struggle. It is not the military organization that defines the character of the revolutionary war of the proletariat in the New Democratic Revolution or Socialist Revolution, but rather the ideology and military conception that the revolutionary Party of the proletariat nurtures.

As a general conclusion, the leadership of the CPN(RM) concludes its criticism by throwing the epithet “divisionist” at the UMIC and the ICL. On the contrary, the UMIC and the ICL have placed the two-line struggle at a higher level, divisionism is not joining what advances based on the principles of Marxism to struggle for unity on a new and higher basis. So, was Marx divisionist for having sent the General Council of the I.W.A. to the United States so that it could have its end and not allowing it to be murdered by the unprincipled unity? Was Lenin divisionist for having founded the Third International, ignoring the “heroes of the Second International”? Who divided the ICM in 1963/64, was it Chairman Mao's CPC or was it the Khrushchevite revisionism of the “Three Peacefuls and Two Wholes”? How was the exhaustion of the I and II Internationals overcome, if not by leaping forward organizationally as an expression of ideological-political advancement with a total break with opportunism? When the vast majority of social-democratic parties in Europe and the United States were drowned into the betrayal of defending the bourgeoisie of their respective countries in the First Imperialist World War, had Lenin founded the Third International on a “common basis” that drew back from the most advanced organizational experiences of the international proletariat or was it based on the unyielding defense of the principles of Marxism, the most prominent among these being the organizational principle of Democratic Centralism formulated by him? To defend a generic unity of the ICM by rejecting the organizational principle of the international proletariat, democratic centralism, what good does it serve? Posing as very responsible, prudent and cautious and in correspondence with objective reality and speaking in principles of Marxism: which principles should be left out in such a “common basis”? What “broader unity” is this, said to be necessary to reunify the ICM? There is only one unity, the one achieved in class struggle and in two-lines struggle, based on the unyielding defense of all the principles of Marxism. To argue that the communist movement is not in a position to unite on the basis of democratic centralism is to defend an unprincipled unity among communists. Treating the application of democratic centralism as something sectarian because many “communist parties” would not agree, that insisting on this causes the weakening of the international communist movement is absurd, as well as narrow. It is not understanding this principle as a unity of opposites. The principles are applied with mediation, applying democratic centralism does not mean having to make all decisions by majority. The just and correct application of democratic centralism addresses divergences on issues that are crucial for the unity, in which acute contradictions are manifested, through a patient process of two-line struggle and after exhausting it to the maximum without obtaining a solid majority that does not threaten to precipitate undesirable splits, through reaching transitional temporary commitments. This clearly demonstrates the practice of true communist parties in historical experience. It is false and misleading, as well as a peregrine

argument, to say that the adoption of the principle of democratic centralism does not unite the ICM today, this is a revisionist point of view. This is how it is; this is how it takes place, in actual communist parties. It is very strange for Marxism to not organize itself based on the principle of democratic centralism, in its defense as the organizing principle of the revolutionary proletariat. What party can claim to be communist and not take democratic centralism as a principle or take it as if it were a measuring scale, without mediation in its application? A party that claims to be communist and does not accept to unite on the basis of democratic centralism either has nothing to do with Marxism or must take part in other broader forms of united front, such as the necessary and decisive anti-imperialist movement to be built. The end of the *Comintern* took place in a much more complex situation than the simple alleged reason that its organizational form no longer served to strengthen the ICM. No. There were also at least two other extremely important reasons, one was to keep the world anti-fascist united front united, in the midst of the war, in which the *Allies* were making pressure and blackmailing against its existence (see the secret correspondences between Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt) and the other one was about the danger of right-wing positions being adopted in it (signs of the new revisionism were already emerging in important parties in the West, the short existence of the later *Cominform* proves this substantially). For various reasons, the *Comintern* had reached exhaustion and had to leap to a new level corresponding to the international situation of strategic stalemate between the proletariat and imperialism, of the reaction of the imperialists then already under Yankee hegemony, which drew its claws with its *Cold War* strategy and atomic blackmail. The still very little-known history of the *Cominform* illustrates and clarifies the issue very well. It is opportunistic to claim Chairman Mao's statement that the end of the *Comintern* "was the right decision" to justify rightism, just as he said that Stalin "gave some bad advice" without taking in full what he expressed, as we can see here: "When Stalin did something wrong, he was capable of criticizing himself. For instance, he had given some bad counsel with regard to the Chinese revolution. After the victory of the Chinese revolution, he admitted his mistake."¹⁹⁷

For the new to be born, it is necessary for the old to die, the old which prevents the flourishing of this new and it is the struggle, the rupture and leap, the *division of one into two* that takes place with the new establishing itself as a new unity of opposites, also *one divided into two*. It is necessary that in something old, the new, as a dominated aspect, defeats the dominant old aspect in the struggle, subdues it, becoming dominant, dividing and destroying the old thing, thus emerging something new. *One must divide into two*. The birth of the International Communist League therefore marks the death of Prachandism, Avakianism, revisionist and capitulationist ROL within the ICM; the UMIC also marks the death of sectarianism, intrigue and hegemonism in place of the two-line struggle, which the RIM turned to be in its last years of existence. And the *Political Declaration and the Principles* is superior to the previous declarations of the RIM, because, in addition to positive advances in the assessment of the ICM, the anti-Stalin revisionist positions and unacceptable opportunist criticisms of Chairman Mao present in the 1980 and 1984 documents are not present in it. The UMIC is a victory for the international proletariat, the dispersion in the ICM has been largely overcome and we are marching firmly and decisively towards the Reconstitution of the Communist International amid the development of

¹⁹⁷ Communist Party of China, Commentary On the Question of Stalin

the World Proletarian Revolution, in this New Period of Revolutions in which world history is entering.

Finally, one last question on the philosophical topic. In their recent position, the UOC (MLM) statement that the *law of contradiction* is the fundamental law of dialectics but that it is **not** its *sole fundamental law*, is a peregrine attempt to cloud the discussion. They can no longer deny that the law of contradiction is the fundamental law, however they continue to affirm that the *negation of the negation* is the one that best explains the direction of movement. Their rectification must be complete: recognizing that the *law of contradiction* is the *sole fundamental law of dialectics* and extending this recognition to that the other laws *are ensued or forms of the particular manifestation of the law of contradiction*. What does ensued laws mean? It means that they are particular laws, specific expressions, of the sole fundamental law that is contradiction. It means that, as expressed in the great philosophical polemics, the law of quantity and quality, the law of affirmation and negation, are ensued laws or internal elements of the law of contradiction. In the great work *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, written in December 1936, that is, just a few months before the formulation of *On Contradiction*, Chairman Mao states that:

“These are the two aspects of China's revolutionary war. They exist simultaneously, that is, there are favorable factors and there are difficulties. **This is the fundamental law of China's revolutionary war, from which many other laws ensue.**”¹⁹⁸

Other laws can be ensued from a given fundamental law; these ensued laws are particular manifestations of the fundamental law. Just as the *law of freedom and necessity* is an expression in social life, a particular manifestation in this form of movement of the matter of the *law of contradiction*. In relation to the *negation of the negation* it is the same, we understand that it is a form of manifestation of the *sole fundamental law of dialectics*, the *law of contradiction*. However, what we consider to be the most important in the current debate in the ICM about Marxist philosophy is: 1st) that the *law of contradiction* is the *sole fundamental law of eternal matter in its incessant transformation*, therefore, of materialist dialectics; 2nd) that, consequently, the law of contradiction is the one that omnipotently governs, describes and explains, in its complexity, the movement of matter and its direction in the infinite ascending spiral form; 3rd) that the application of the *negation of the negation* by Marx is distinct from the *negation of the negation* by Proudhon, Dühring, Avakian and Prachanda; 4th) that Marxist dialectics is based on the single principle that *one divides into two*, and that revisionist philosophy, on the contrary, advocates balance between opposing principles: that *one divides into two* and that *two combine into one*.

III- Imperialism and Democratic Revolution

In their criticism of the founding Parties and Organizations of the ICL, particularly the P.C.B., the UOC (MLM) point out the defense of the validity of the New Democratic Revolution in

¹⁹⁸ Chairman Mao, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, our emphasis.

semi-colonial countries as dogmatism on our part. They criticize us for a supposed lack of “objectivity” in our analyzes of imperialism and the development of capitalism in oppressed countries. Both in their criticism and in other documents, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) formulates a “new” theory of imperialism, which attempts to pass off as a concrete and objective application of Maoism to the current world situation and oppressed countries. According to the UOC (MLM), imperialism would be a “**world mode of production**” in which “**two tendencies** [would coexist]: *one towards stagnation (...) and the other towards progress*”. This supposed progressive tendency would mean that imperialism “**sweeps away the traces of pre-capitalist modes of production**” in countries oppressed by imperialist powers. The sweeping away of semi-feudality by imperialism would imply, in turn, a full development of capitalism in these countries, particularly in the countryside and that the bourgeoisie of this country would obtain “**a rate of profit equal to that of the bourgeoisie of other countries**”, that is, imperialists. According to the UOC (MLM), oppressed countries are of two kinds: 1) oppressed capitalist countries and 2) semi-feudal countries, that is, two types of semi-colonies, the capitalist semi-colony and the semi-feudal semi-colony. In their formulation, *oppressed capitalist countries* and *semi-feudal countries* are both semi-colonies, but the character of the revolution in the former would be immediately socialist and the New Democratic Revolution would be in force only for semi-feudal countries.

When analyzing Avakian's revisionist positions, it is not difficult to see that the source of the UOC (MLM)'s formulations on imperialism is precisely Avakianism. Just like this revisionist variant, the UOC (MLM) defends imperialism as a world mode of production whose dynamism sweeps away semi-feudal production relations, resulting in the emergence of *predominantly capitalist oppressed countries* whose revolution must be immediately socialist. Furthermore, the UOC (MLM) applies this Avakianist formulation in the “concrete analysis” of the Colombian situation, as we will demonstrate below.

According to the analysis of UOC (MLM), Colombia would be an *oppressed capitalist country* and, therefore, the character of the Colombian revolution would be immediately socialist. For Colombian peasants, the slogan “land for the tiller” would no longer be on the agenda. Taking just one piece of information: Colombia is the Latin American country that champions the concentration of land ownership, according to investigations by Oxfam (2016), 1% of the largest landowners own 81% of the land. Hence the nonsense contained in the UOC (MLM) program, according to which the task of communists in Colombia must be to “**teach the peasants (...) to struggle against private property and to convert the property of their land into collective property and collective exploitation.**”¹⁹⁹

For the UOC (MLM), if Colombia is an *oppressed capitalist country*, this condition would be even more explicit in countries such as Brazil, India and the Philippines:

“(...) The behavior of the **Brazilian, Indian or Philippine bourgeoisie** over the last decades is by no means that of a merely comprador bourgeoisie. For example, the Indian state is a peculiar type of post-colonial capitalist state characterized by a bourgeoisie which is

¹⁹⁹ UOC (MLM), *Programa para a Revolução na Colômbia*, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

neither national (...), nor comprador (because it is not only a servant and intermediary of the imperialists and ... it has taken independent political decisions **in contradiction with the metropolitan imperialist bourgeoisie**) and even less an imperialist bourgeoisie (because the import of capital by the Indian bourgeoisie is much more than its export of capital, which has certainly been increasing over the last two decades). The character and role of the **Brazilian bourgeoisie** with regard to the BRICS shows that its international role is far from being that of a comprador bourgeoisie or one entirely subjugated to imperialism and that, within its limits, it aspires to be a regional actor already manifesting **positions of predominance** vis-à-vis other oppressed countries.”²⁰⁰

That is to say, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) concludes that the Brazilian, Indian and Philippine bourgeoisies no longer have a comprador character. They state that the Brazilian and Indian bourgeoisies, in particular, although they are not imperialists, already export capital, rival the “metropolitan” bourgeoisie and subjugate other oppressed countries. Contrary to what the PCP, TKP/ML, CPI(Maoist), CPP and P.C.B. and the vast majority of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties claim, the UOC (MLM) suggests that revolutions in these countries would be immediately socialist.

The international line for the ICM, proposed by the UOC (MLM) points to a decrease in the importance of New Democratic Revolutions, as an integral part of the World Proletarian Revolution. After all, if imperialism continues to “*sweep away*” semi-feudality in oppressed countries, there are more and more “*oppressed capitalist*” countries and the immediately socialist revolution would be in force for an ever-increasing number of countries in the world. This analysis and conclusion by UOC (MLM) are a complete review of Leninism, mainly its theory of imperialism.

Contrary to this conclusion of the UOC (MLM), the scientific ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, points out that in the imperialist phase of capitalism, national oppression increases and does not decrease, that the tendency everywhere towards political reaction and violence is a law of imperialism that buried and abolished every progressive character that capitalism had, with the passage of capital from its phase of *free competition* to the phase of monopolies, the highest and last stage of capital. This is what the great leaders of the international proletariat say, it is the *ABC* of Leninism and Maoism and it is what we are seeing in a striking way in the world today: the growth of colonial oppression by superpowers and imperialist powers and, principally, the explosive growth of national liberation wars and struggles of which the heroic Palestinian National Resistance is the most inspiring example to the international proletariat. Imperialism is the parasitism and decomposition of capital, it is a moribund condition, whose crisis is the material basis of the accelerated putrefaction of bourgeois democracy, expressed in the reactionization of the state and the vertiginous growth of its fascistization in all countries of the globe. Therefore, very contrary to the conclusions of the UOC (MLM), the significance of the New Democratic Revolutions for the World Revolution has

²⁰⁰ UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation*, n 06, 2023, our emphasis.

only increased in importance in recent decades. Understanding the relationship between the democratic revolution and the Proletarian Revolution is today, more than ever, a decisive question for communists around the world.

1- The fallacious “progressive tendency of imperialism”

For the leadership of the UOC (mlm), the imperialist phase constitutes a particular mode of production of capitalism, repeating the Avakianist mantra, they state that in the stage of free competition

*“The world economy was not cohesive and the economies of each country were structured as independent processes, external to each other, linked little by little by the market”. In other words, they were linked only by the market, in the sphere of circulation. As for under imperialism, the world economy would have “unified itself into one single process (...) converting, in addition to the market, production itself into a global one, breaking the autonomy of the countries’ economies and chaining them into a **single productive process**.”*²⁰¹

This globalized mode of production, opposing the capitalism of the *free competition* phase, would consist of the “*progressive*” aspect of imperialism:

*“In the imperialist phase, **two tendencies** coexist: one towards stagnation and economic and political crises; and another toward progress, to the **socialization of world production**.”*²⁰²

For the UOC (MLM), this growth in the socialization of world production would be a “progressive” tendency as it would lead to the sweeping away of semi-feudality:

*“Imperialism, as an internationalized mode of production, has chained all the countries, with their specific modes of production, into one single world economy. The exported capital acts on the capitalist germs or developments of the oppressed countries and, as an overall tendency, accelerates their development, **sweeps away the traces of precapitalist modes of production**.”*²⁰³

Furthermore, by itself “*capitalism, when turning into a global mode of production*” expresses more clearly that “*the proletariat of all countries sells its labor power to the global bourgeoisie*”. The bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries, in turn, becomes “*partners and participants in the world system of imperialism*”. And by “*benefiting from imperialist relations (...) it obtains an interest rate equal to that of the bourgeoisie in other countries*”. In this way, the UOC (MLM) defines that:

²⁰¹ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

“(...) Imperialism is an **internationalized mode of production** that include others, induce them, transform them, outwear them, exhaust them, **in a world process of production, accumulation and generation of surplus value**” ²⁰⁴

According to UOC (MLM) documents, its conception of imperialism can be summarized as follows: in the stage of *free competition*, the world economy was cohesive through the market; In the imperialist stage, capitalism became an internationalized mode of production, linking all countries, regardless of their specific modes of production, into a single world economy. This chain led to the sweeping away of pre-capitalist modes of production and the conversion of the semi-colonial bourgeoisies into partners of the imperialist world system, which guarantees them an “*interest rate equal to that of the imperialist bourgeoisies*”. Thus, a global bourgeoisie emerges that exploits the proletariat of all countries in a single productive process. Imperialism boils down to a *world process of production, accumulation and generation of surplus value*.

This conception of the UOC (mlm) attacks the Leninist theory of imperialism in its entirety, against the Marxist foundations of the study of the capitalist mode of production and converges with the Kautskyist “theory” of *ultra-imperialism*.

Firstly, the conclusion of the UOC (MLM) that in the *free competition* phase of the capitalist mode of production “*the world economy was not cohesive*” is completely opposite to Marxism. As the great Marx already demonstrated in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, big industry and the world market form a dialectical unit, in which big industry constitutes the principal aspect. However, both determine each other mutually, that is, big industry determines the formation of the single world market which, in turn, accelerates the development of this same big industry. For Marx, big industry develops only to the extent that it coheres the world economy:

“**Modern industry has established the world market**, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. **This development has**, in its turn, **reacted on the extension of industry**; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages. We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of **revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange**.” ²⁰⁵

This is the period of capitalism's flourishing, in which the bourgeoisie, as the new revolutionary social force, relegated all medieval junk to the past. *Free competition* capitalism could not develop, much less reach the imperialist phase, if the *economies of each country were structured as independent processes*. The intertwining of the world economy into a single

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, our emphasis.

process, the international division of labor, are not particularities of imperialism, they are previous historical achievements of the stage of *free competition*. This is what Marx and Engels establish as follows:

“The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. (...) In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world-literature.” ²⁰⁶

Is there any doubt that for Marx, as established in the founding work of scientific socialism, world production constitutes a single process precisely in *free competition* capitalism? The universal market presupposes big industry, both constitute contradictory aspects of universal material production, which represents the basis for universal intellectual production. These are historical products of the World Bourgeois Revolution, which ended with the advent of imperialism and which, with the October Socialist Revolution of 1917 in Russia, the bourgeoisie as a class, historically, lost its revolutionary and progressive aspect, turning completely to counterrevolution. Therefore, in no way does imperialism promote any progress, but, on the contrary, as a reaction on all line, it also turns against all these achievements reached by humanity.

But the UOC (MLM) is not only wrong when they characterize elements already present and constituted in the *free competition* phase as if they were particularities of the imperialist stage, they distort the very characterization of what this *internationalized production* would be. When dealing with the two tendencies of imperialism, they highlight the *socialization of world production* as if it could exist in the capitalist mode of production without its opposite aspect: **capitalist private property**. When they reaffirm that imperialism emerges as a mode of production that links the economies of countries *as a single productive process*, they hide the fact that alongside the socialization of growing production, capitalists continue to confront each other in the capitalist market as private owners. In other words, the imperialist world has not transformed into a single factory of a single global capital that jointly exploits the proletarians of all countries in the world. Such conclusions also seem a lot of the “post-modern” thesis of

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

“global capital” defended by revisionists and opportunists who embellish the bourgeois ideology of “Globalization”, see Prachanda and company.

Imperialism, in addition to being “(...) *a world process of production, accumulation and generation of surplus value*”, is, at the same time, a global process of unbridled, violent and reactionary dispute for the **repartition of this surplus value**, for the **private appropriation of this surplus value**. If the prehistory of capitalism spilled blood from every pore, the present history of imperialism is the bloodiest war of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the repartition of this *surplus value* produced worldwide and for the plunder, looting and prey of semi-colonial countries. The imperialist bourgeoisie, in turn, disputes with the bourgeoisie of the semi-colonial countries, with the big bourgeoisie of these countries (bureaucratic and comprador) for who will get the largest portion of the social *surplus value* produced in them. Therefore, it becomes completely unreasonable to say that in imperialism the bourgeoisies of semi-colonies earn the same rate of profit as their imperialist “partners”.

Capitalist private property constitutes the right of the bourgeoisie to appropriate of the unpaid work from others, to appropriate *surplus value*. The golden dream of a progressive tendency of imperialism, spread by the UOC (MLM), hides “only” the fact that the increasing socialization of production with private ownership of the means of production is the fundamental condition for the existence of capitalism, it is its fundamental contradiction, in which these two aspects form a unity of opposites – capitalism –, whose dominant aspect is the private ownership of the means of production. This condition and fundamental contradiction of capitalism is the same in its stage of *free competition* and in its monopolistic stage, but on the condition that, in the second, simultaneously with the acceleration of the socialization of production, greater leaps are produced in the concentration and centralization of capital, due to the monopolistic nature of the predominant aspect. Let us see how Lenin deals with this issue in a comprehensive manner, when analyzing the phenomenon of socialization of production in imperialism:

“(...) then it becomes evident that we have socialization of production”, however
“appropriation remains private.”²⁰⁷

Therefore, monopolistic property, typical of the imperialist phase, cannot promote this socialization of production without increasing, at all times, the conflict with it. The socialization of production, in the era of imperialism, therefore, advances in a manner opposite to the progressive character highlighted by Marx in the *Manifesto*. The advancement of capitalist production, in its monopolistic phase, does not sweep away pre-capitalist modes of production, quite the contrary, financial capital, mainly through the export of capital, relies on these rotten bases, keeping them subjacent and does so through the evolution of its forms, often in an apparent “waged form”. Monopolistic competition (brutal competition) is based on the search for *maximum profit* and leads, inevitably and principally, to imperialist wars of aggression and prey, to the fight for the repartition of the world, to world imperialist war, to colonial

²⁰⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

enslavement and to fascism and to confront the world proletarian revolution. Imperialism thus prepared the objective conditions for the advancement of the world proletarian revolution in each country in the forms of socialist revolutions and new democratic revolutions uninterrupted to socialism, respectively corresponding to the nature of each country, in a process of uneven development, but of exclusive proletarian leadership.

The advent of imperialism and its opposite, the world proletarian revolution, brought about the disintegration of the single capitalist market and in no way led to a mode of production that united countries in a single process. As Comrade Stalin highlights:

“The disintegration of the single, all-embracing world market must be regarded as the most important economic sequel of the Second World War and of its economic consequences. It has had the effect of further deepening the general crisis of the world capitalist system.” ²⁰⁸

If with the development of imperialism and the advent of the world proletarian revolution not even the existence of a single world market is assured, how much less can be told about the formation of a *mode of production that links the countries of the world into a single process*. Much less in a *progressive trend of imperialism* that sweeps away semi-feudality. Chairman Mao summarizes these important theses of the 4th Congress of the CI, for semi-colonial countries, as follows:

“Imperialism ‘first allies itself with the ruling strata of the previous social structure, with the feudal lords and the trading and money lending bourgeoisie, against the majority of the people. Everywhere **imperialism attempts to preserve and to perpetuate all those precapitalist forms of exploitation (especially in the villages)** which serve as the basis for the existence of its reactionary allies’ (...) ‘Imperialism, with all its financial and military might, is the force in China that **supports, inspires, fosters and preserves the feudal survivals, together with their entire** bureaucratic-militarist superstructure.’” ²⁰⁹

How is it possible to try to reconcile the defense of Maoism with the fallacious thesis of the *progressive tendency of imperialism*? How is it possible to claim to be a Maoist and say that imperialism sweeps away semi-feudal relations in semi-colonial countries? The UOC (MLM) states that they do not underestimate the fact that **“in some countries the predominant tendency was, especially at the beginning of the phase, to reinforce pre-capitalist modes of production.”** ²¹⁰ They try to reconcile their explicit deviation from Maoism with a mend: in some countries, imperialism, in its beginnings, reinforced pre-capitalist modes of production. They thus convert the line of the CI and Chairman Mao into an exception and create a false dichotomy in the history of imperialism: at the beginning of the stage, it promoted pre-capitalist modes of production; then sweep them away. All that was left for the UOC (MLM) was to explain how this

²⁰⁸ J. V. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism*, our emphasis.

²⁰⁹ Chairman Mao, *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, our emphasis.

²¹⁰ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation.

imperialist metamorphosis occurred: from the reaction everywhere to the supposed progressive trend. In opposition to revisionist conceptions like this, Chairman Mao states that imperialism “(...) *will never become Buddhas.*”

Furthermore, he clearly establishes that the objective of imperialism, when penetrating oppressed countries, was never to develop a social formation, to make it progress, nor to sweep away old modes of production, on the contrary:

“It is certainly not the purpose the imperialist powers invading China to transform feudal China into capitalist China. On the contrary, their purpose is to transform China into their own semi-colony or colony.” ²¹¹

Imperialism does not have a progressive tendency, nor can it be considered a *mode of production that links the countries of the world into a single process*. As Comrade Stalin establishes, imperialism is:

“The increase in the export of capital to the colonies and dependent countries; the expansion of ‘spheres of influence’ and colonial possessions until they cover the whole globe; the transformation of capitalism into a **world system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression** of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of “advanced” countries—all this has, on the one hand, **converted the separate national economies and national territories into links in a single chain** called world economy, and, on the other hand, split the population of the globe into two camps: a handful of “advanced” capitalist countries which exploit and oppress vast colonies and dependencies, and the huge majority consisting of colonial and dependent countries which are compelled to wage a struggle for liberation from the imperialist yoke” ²¹²

There is a clear difference in the definition, as the UOC (MLM) classifies imperialism as *an internationalized mode of production that sweeps away pre-capitalist production relations*; Comrade Stalin defines it as a **world system of financial enslavement and national (colonial) oppression**. For Stalin, imperialism is not a mode of production that converts national economies into a *single process*, but rather that converts them into **“links in a single chain”**. In this chain of domination, a major part of the world, colonial and semi-colonial countries are shackled by imperialist domination. Assuming that imperialism promotes the progress of the countries it oppresses is a completely revisionist conception.

The UOC (MLM) states that *“The tendency towards democracy typical of the old bourgeois revolution has been replaced by the tendency towards political reaction everywhere and in all orders.”* They affirm this Leninist thesis, and then supports the revisionist thesis about two tendencies of imperialism. A conscientious reading of Lenin's formulations on imperialism

²¹¹ Chairman Mao, *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, our emphasis

²¹² J. V. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, our emphasis.

inevitably leads to rejecting this UOC (MLM) hypothesis. After all, as already seen, Lenin brilliantly establishes that imperialism has only one tendency:

“Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. Whatever the political system **the result of these tendencies is everywhere reaction** and an extreme intensification of antagonisms in this field. Particularly intensified become the yoke of **national oppression** and the striving for annexations, i.e., the **violation of national independence** (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of nations to self-determination)” ²¹³

2- Imperialism prevents national development

As seen, the UOC (MLM) distorts the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the transformation of *free competition* capitalism into monopoly capitalism, at a global level, by attributing a supposed progressive tendency to imperialism. This “progress” would occur on a global scale to the extent that imperialism would correspond to a *single productive process*, and in oppressed countries, to the extent that it *sweeps away pre-capitalist modes of production*. It is impossible to ideologically reconcile these postulates with the Leninist analysis that imperialism intensifies particularly national oppression. In other words, the result of the capital exported by financial capital is not any progress for the oppressed countries. What Lenin highlights as a result of this export is the “**extreme intensification of contradictions**”, “*the striving for domination, and not for freedom*”. This particular condition of imperialism results in the increase of the national liberation struggle and makes it an inseparable part of the world proletarian revolution; the class struggle of the proletariat acquires an international character and the proletariat rises to the only consistent leadership of democratic and national liberation struggles as a whole. The International Proletarian Movement and the National Liberation Movement, the first as a lead and the second as a base, inseparable aspects of the WPR, constitute the only progressive trend in the era of imperialism.

The UOC (MLM), in a way opposite to Leninism, concludes that the main result of the export of capital to oppressed countries would constitute the *sweeping away of pre-capitalist production relations* by imperialism and not the intensification of national oppression and its twin sister – the reproduction of semi-feudal relations through the evolution of their forms. They take the predominance of capitalist relations of production in colonial and semi-colonial countries, which occurs in the imperialist era, as if they had the same progressive content that they once had in the stage of *free competition* capitalism. They falsely interpret that the export of capital would result in the subordination of feudalism to capitalism, and that this subordination would occur in oppressed countries only in the imperialist phase. The export of goods, the creation of the world market, typical of the free competition stage, had already imposed the subordination of slave and feudal production relations to the capitalist mode of production. They thus mix predominance with subordination, to reach the following conclusion: poor countries in which capitalist relations predominate over semi-feudal relations are

²¹³ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

“oppressed capitalist countries” and in these countries the revolution must immediately be socialist. Predominance, which for the UOC (MLM) is equal to subordination, and therefore for them the New Democratic Revolution would be in force, today, only in countries in which the capitalist mode of production was subordinated to the feudal mode of production. We question in which country in the world today is capitalism subordinated to feudalism?

The UOC (MLM) considers that the subordination of pre-capitalist production relations to the capitalist mode of production only occurred in the 20th century. The subordination of the slave and feudal modes of production to the capitalist mode of production is in no way a product of imperialism, or the result of the export of capital. This subordination occurred in *free competition* capitalism, and was part of the development of big industry, the creation of the capitalist single world market, and the international division of labor. Marx analyzes this question as follows in *Capital*:

“But as soon as people, whose production still moves within the lower forms of slave-labor, corvée-labor, &c., **are drawn into the whirlpool of an international market dominated by the capitalistic mode of production**, the sale of their products for export becoming their principal interest, the civilized horrors of over-work are grafted on the barbaric horrors of slavery, serfdom, &c. Hence the negro labor in the Southern States of the American Union preserved something of a patriarchal character, so long as production was chiefly directed to immediate local consumption. **But in proportion, as the export of cotton became of vital interest to these states**, the over-working of the negro and sometimes the using up of his life in 7 years of labor became a factor in a calculated and calculating system. It was no longer a question of obtaining from him a certain quantity of useful products. **It was now a** question of production of surplus-labor itself.” ²¹⁴

Marx clearly highlights that the world market emerges as a product of big industry and is therefore **dominated by the capitalist mode of production**. Worldwide, capitalism is already the dominant mode of production since its development in the *free competition* phase. However, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) distorts the Maoist's analyzes of Chinese society and states that:

“From these three texts and from Mao's above-mentioned talks it is clear that (i) a semi-feudal and semi-colonial social formation is characterized by a limited development of capitalism and by the continued domination of feudal relations of production; **the capitalist mode of production is subordinated to the feudal mode of production** and to the imperialist domination implemented through the usurious commercial big bourgeoisie;” ²¹⁵

The UOC (MLM) concludes that there is the possibility of the capitalist mode of production being subordinated to the feudal mode of production in the imperialist stage, and

²¹⁴ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Book 1, our emphasis.

²¹⁵ UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation*, n 6, 2022, our emphasis.

makes the absurdity of saying that this can be deduced from the works of Chairman Mao. In *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, the great helmsman states that:

“The foundations of the self-sufficient natural economy of feudal times have been destroyed, but the **exploitation**, not only remains intact but, linked as it is with exploitation by comprador and usurer capital, exploitation of the peasantry by the landlord class, **which is the basis of the system of feudal clearly dominates China's social and economic life.**” ²¹⁶

The UOC (MLM) interprets this predominance of landlord exploitation as the subordination of the capitalist mode of production to the feudal mode of production in Chinese society. However, to reach such a conclusion they need to hide that the predominant aspect in the process of development of the Chinese nation in the 20th century became imperialism, specifically, the imperialist powers that partitioned the Chinese coast among themselves in the first two decades, and mainly the Japanese imperialism that expanded its colonization from northeast China towards the center-south of the country in the late 1930s. In other words, what destroyed “*the foundations of the self-sufficient natural economy of feudal times*” was not the nascent Chinese national capitalism, but the capital exported by imperialism. Thus, feudalism predominates against national capitalism and not against imperialist capitalism, which oppresses, subordinates and subjugates the Chinese nation. Chairman Mao analyzes China's social development as follows in *On New Democracy*:

“(…) in their aggression against China **the imperialist powers** have on the one hand hastened the disintegration of feudal society and the growth of elements of capitalism, **thereby transforming a feudal into a semi-feudal society**, and on the other imposed their ruthless rule on China, **reducing an independent country to a semi-colonial and colonial country.**” ²¹⁷

The aggression of imperialist powers against China accelerates the growth of bureaucratic capitalism; The exported capital determined the accelerated conversion of feudal China into semi-feudal China. However, unlike the process of capitalist development typical of the *free competition* stage, this evolution of feudalism and this growth of mercantile and capitalist relations did not lead to greater national unification, on the contrary, they converted China from an independent feudal country into a semi-colonial country. and, therefore, colonial.

How, then, can the UOC (MLM) speak of the subordination of the capitalist mode of production to the feudal mode of production in China? What happened was precisely the opposite, imperialism subordinated the feudal forces in China; financed, armed and led the warlords against the bourgeois-democratic forces, thus preventing the development possibilities of Chinese national capitalism. This type of subordination was not a particular fact of Chinese

²¹⁶ Chairman Mao, *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, our emphasis.

²¹⁷ Chairman Mao, *On New Democracy*, our emphasis

society, but became the general rule in the imperialist phase of capitalism. Chairman Mao summarizes the “*military, political, economic and cultural means of oppression*” used by the imperialist powers to gradually convert China into a semi-colony and then into a colony:

“(1) The imperialist powers have waged many **wars of aggression against China** (...). (2) The imperialist powers have forced China to sign numerous **unequal treaties** (...). (3) (...) Thus, they have been able to dump their goods in China, turn her into a market for their industrial products, and at the same time **subordinate her agriculture to their imperialist needs**. (4) The imperialist powers operate many enterprises in both light and heavy industry in China in order to utilize her **raw materials and cheap labor** on the spot, and they thereby **directly exert economic pressure on China's national industry and obstruct the development of her productive forces**. (5) (...) monopolize China's banking and finance (...) (6) (...) have established a network of comprador and merchant-usurer exploitation right across China, (...) and have created a comprador and merchant-usurer class in their service, so as to facilitate their exploitation of the masses of the Chinese peasantry and other sections of the people. (7) (...) **have made the feudal landlord class** as well as the comprador class **the main props of their rule in China**. (...) (8) (...) to keep the warlords fighting among themselves and to suppress the Chinese people. (9) Furthermore, the imperialist powers have never slackened their efforts to poison the minds of the Chinese people. (...) (10) Since September 18, 1931, the large-scale invasion of Japanese imperialism has turned a big chunk of semi-colonial China into a Japanese colony.” ²¹⁸

In the colonial and semi-colonial relation of domination and exploitation, imperialism is the dominant aspect in face of the Chinese people and nation. The imperialist powers turned the feudal landlord class and the Comprador bourgeoisie into the *props of their rule in China*. It is, therefore, a falsification to attribute to Chairman Mao the conclusion that in China the feudal mode of production subordinated the capitalist mode of production. Both in Marx's example, taken from the 19th century, and in Chairman Mao's analysis of China in the 20th century, the capitalist mode of production is already the dominant aspect in the world economy. Marx shows, in *Capital*, how slave labor relations of production in cotton production in the southern USA were already at the service of the production of surplus value in England. Because to the extent that they ensured a cheaper raw material for the textile industry than English cotton, or Indian or Egyptian cotton, the cotton produced by the blood of black people enslaved by the Yankees served a greater production of surplus value by the English bourgeoisie. In the 20th century, what happens is that imperialism will not only link these different relations of production to its service, but will also use all backward forces to ensure its national dominance. This is an indispensable condition to make it possible to obtain profits from exported capital. In this way, through *unequal treaties, the subordination of agricultural production to imperialist powers' needs*, the direct installation of imperialist companies that exploit the *raw materials and cheap labor force* of oppressed countries, through these means, the imperialist powers obtain a much

²¹⁸ Chairman Mao, *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party*, our emphasis.

greater profit than was possible in the *free competition* stage. That is why Lenin highlights that the increase in national oppression is one of the results of the imperialist stage.

The UOC (MLM) distorts Chairman Mao's analyzes of Chinese society, mix up the prevalence of semi-feudal relations of production with the subordination of the capitalist mode of production to the feudal mode of production, because they intend to present their proposition of socialist revolution to part of the oppressed countries as being based on Maoism. Thus, they present China as a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, as if semi-feudality were the predominant aspect of this social formation and as if the complete justification for the New Democratic Revolution was laid in this predominance. Therefore, they deduce that a country in which semi-feudality no longer subordinates capitalist relations would require an immediately socialist revolution. They thus link the New Democratic Revolution solely and exclusively to the sweeping away of pre-capitalist relations of production, and places the national question within the scope of the socialist revolution.

The falsehood of this reasoning consists of two points: 1) imperialism did not sweep away semi-feudal relations, it only made their forms evolve while keeping them subjacent; 2) the new democratic revolution is not limited to the sweeping away of semi-feudality, its most important international significance is that it completely resolves the problem of the transition from the national liberation revolution to the socialist revolution, because its most important targets are feudalism and imperialism, and this is the principal thing. Let's see how Chairman Mao states the issue for the Chinese Revolution:

“Such are the characteristics of China's **colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal** society. **This situation has in the main been determined by the Japanese and other imperialist forces**; it is the result of the collusion of foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism. The contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation and the contradiction between feudalism and the great masses of the people are the basic contradictions in modern Chinese society. (...) [there are others] But the contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation is the principal one.” ²¹⁹

One detail is to be noted, Chairman Mao in his definition of the character of China always highlights the semi-colonial aspect before the semi-feudal aspect, the UOC (MLM) when referring to China always invert the concepts placing the semi-feudal aspect in front to falsify the conclusion that this was the only determining characteristic of Chinese society. The decisive importance of the struggle for the destruction of latifundium in semi-colonial countries is precisely because this class constitutes the main pillar of support for imperialism, and is the most backward class. Against it, it is possible to unify the majority of the country's social classes and a large number of political forces, a broad revolutionary united front of the proletariat with the entire peasantry (poor, middle and rich), the urban petty bourgeoisie and even the middle one (national bourgeoisie) under certain conditions. Only when an imperialist invasion occurs does it become possible to establish an even broader united front of revolutionary classes under the

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

leadership of the Party of the proletariat. Therefore, in general, the contradiction against semi-feudality is the principal contradiction in the first phases of the New Democratic Revolution, but it by no means constitutes the only contradiction to be resolved by this revolution.

Until the early 1940s, Chairman Mao highlights that the targets of the New Democratic Revolution in China were imperialism and feudalism. From the mid-1940s onward, particularly during the Third Revolutionary Civil War (1947-1949), he always pointed to three targets: imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism:

“At present our chief enemies are imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, while the main forces in our struggle against these enemies are the people engaged in manual and mental labor, who make up 90 per cent of the country's population. And this determines that our revolution at the present stage is a new-democratic, a people's democratic revolution in character and is different from a socialist revolution such as the October Revolution.”²²⁰

This specification of Chairman Mao's position is the result of the ideological development of Maoism itself, as a reflection of the transformations in China and the world during and after World War II. The development of industrial production in countries dominated by imperialism is a tendency present throughout the 20th century, which alternated between periods of growth and regression. Resulting from the export of capital itself, as we saw in the above analysis of Chairman Mao, imperialism managed to establish companies in its colonies and semi-colonies with the aim of more easily exploiting the raw materials present there and super-exploiting the available labor force. However, due to the inter-imperialist contradictions (particularly during the World War I and II), due to the contradiction of socialism versus capitalism, due to the contradiction of oppressed nations and peoples versus imperialism and the contradiction of the proletariat versus the bourgeoisie at the world level, imperialism also was forced to intertwine with local big capitals from oppressed countries to develop capitalist companies in semi-colonies. Due to its economic weakness in the face of imperialist financial capital, semi-colonial big capital, in order to intertwine with it, had to do so, mainly, through the State. Bureaucratic capitalism in semi-colonial countries appears as non-state monopoly capitalism, but when it develops it uses the control of the old State machinery and becomes state monopoly capitalism, state in form but private in content, engendered and linked to imperialism, resulting in the differentiation of two fractions of this big bourgeoisie, the comprador, the first form of the big bourgeoisie in oppressed countries, and the bureaucratic fraction itself, resulting from this differentiation within the State. In China, this process intensified from 1945 onward, with the defeat and expulsion of Japanese imperialism, a period in which Chiang Kai-shek, at the head of the old state machinery and leveraged by Yankee financial capital, propelled this state monopoly capitalism. This process did not only occur in China, it occurred as an immediate result of the advent of imperialism, in all countries that were more backward and became colonies or semi-colonies of different imperialist powers, a phenomenon that became the rule in the monopoly phase of capital. The class struggle in this process and the two-line struggle in Marxism led, in sequence,

²²⁰ Chairman Mao, *On the Question of the National Bourgeoisie and the Enlightened Gentry*, our emphasis.

by Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao resulted in the development of the theory of New Democratic Revolution in China, whose targets to be destroyed and removed are feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism, the three mountains of exploitation and oppression of the popular masses and subjugation of the nation.

Reducing the New Democratic Revolution to the sweeping away of feudalism would correspond to reducing it to the agrarian revolution, this would be a falsification of Maoism. Stating that imperialism in alliance with the bourgeois landlord dictatorships of the semi-colonies would have solved the agrarian and peasant problem is the expression of the most puerile revisionist illusion with imperialism and the big bourgeoisie. After all, as Chairman Mao highlights that:

“(...) the road [of the bourgeois dictatorship in the epoch of imperialism for the oppressed countries] is blocked. In its fundamentals, the present international situation is one of a struggle between capitalism and socialism, in which capitalism is on the downgrade and socialism on the upgrade. In the first-place international capitalism, or **imperialism, will not permit the establishment in China of a capitalist society under bourgeois dictatorship**. Indeed, the history of modern China is a history of imperialist aggression, of **imperialist opposition to China's independence and to her development of capitalism**. (...) True enough, this is the period of the final struggle of dying imperialism — imperialism is ‘moribund capitalism’. But just because it is dying, **it is all the more dependent on colonies and semi-colonies for survival and will certainly not allow any colony or semi-colony to establish anything like a capitalist society under the dictatorship of its own bourgeoisie**. Just because Japanese imperialism is bogged down in serious economic and political crises, just because it is dying, it must invade China and reduce her to a colony, thereby blocking the road to bourgeois dictatorship and national capitalism in China.” (Chairman Mao) ²²¹

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) is against these conclusions of Chairman Mao, but does not say it so openly. They prefer to hide their divergence to sell their theory that a part of the countries oppressed by imperialism, during the course of the 20th century, developed into a capitalist society under bourgeois dictatorship, as a result of the “progressive” tendency of imperialism, as a Maoist theory. Maoism affirms the opposite: imperialism has closed the path to the national development of oppressed countries; After all, as Lenin establishes: **“the specific political features of imperialism are reaction everywhere and increased national oppression.”** ²²² The UOC (MLM) position on *imperialism sweeping away pre-capitalist modes of production* and on *so-called oppressed capitalist countries* has nothing of Leninism, nor of Maoism.

²²¹ Chairman Mao, On New Democracy, our emphasis

²²² V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

3- Trotskyist analysis of the bourgeoisie in countries oppressed by imperialism

There is nothing easier than criticizing, in general, the bourgeoisie of oppressed countries. An economically weak bourgeoisie, politically dubious, incapable of leading its own bourgeois revolution, conciliatory with imperialism and latifundium, fearful of the proletarian revolution, hesitant in its support for the peasant struggle for land. All of these qualifiers are true. However, as a rule, the louder and more general are the criticisms of the bourgeoisie of oppressed countries, the more superficial are the classes analysis in said societies. The history of the Proletarian Revolution in the 20th century, especially in oppressed countries, serves as proof of the brutal error of considering the bourgeoisie throughout the world and, even in a given country, as a single bloc, without internal differences.

The UOC (MLM), for example, states that *"it is incorrect to always assume, and without analyzing the class structure, the existence of a national bourgeoisie in oppressed countries"*. They state this, because they conclude that in such *oppressed capitalist countries* there is no national bourgeoisie, there is only the local section of the world bourgeoisie; There is no lackey bourgeoisie, but rather an international society of bourgeoisie who jointly oppress the proletariat of all countries. For UOC (MLM), this way:

*"The economic independence of the country contradicts its class interests (...) **it is not mere employee in the capitalist imperialist business**: it is an associate and participant of the imperialist world system."* inclusively, the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries *"receives a rate of profit equivalent to the bourgeoisie of other countries."* ²²³

They wrap everything up and simply disregard the existence, in countries oppressed by imperialism, of a vast layer of small and middle bourgeoisie who exploit the proletariat, but who at the same time have a contradiction with imperialism and the big bourgeoisie of these countries. In their program, they do not even make a distinction between the big bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie in Colombia. For the UOC (mlm) there is only *the bourgeoisie*, which is a partner and participant in the unitary society of the world bourgeoisie. This whole "anti-bourgeois" speech may sound revolutionary, like "left-wing", but it has nothing scientific, as it in no way corresponds to a concrete analysis of the concrete situation of the oppressed countries of the world, particularly in Latin America.

The existence of this intermediate layer, these small landowners who exploit waged work but who at the same time need to work in their own "businesses", is an extremely present reality in LA. The enormous services sector present in all these economies, of which a large part is owed to small and middle-sized owners, is a clear expression of this reality. Disregarding it, classifying it only as proletarian owners or as big bourgeoisie, only serves to circumvent the problem instead of solving it. This is a very important mass, which has become the basis of fascist ideas, as has occurred other times in history and needs to be disputed by communists who must present a

²²³ UOC (MLM), Revista Contradiccion, n 12, 1993, our translation and emphasis.

program corresponding to the character of the revolution necessary to transform these societies. Lenin, on this issue, stated that:

“What is Martynov's muddle-headedness due to? To the fact that he confounds democratic revolution with socialist revolution; that he **overlooks the role of the intermediate stratum** of the people lying between ‘the bourgeoisie’ and the ‘proletariat’ (the petty-bourgeoisie masses of the urban and rural poor, the ‘semi-proletarians’, the semi-proprietors); and that **he fails to understand the true meaning of our minimum program.**” ²²⁴

The UOC (MLM) even mentions the semi-proletarians and small proprietors, but completely forgets about the rest of the intermediate layer and completely disregards the need for a *minimum program* for the revolution, that is, *a program for a new democracy*. In Russia, the liberal bourgeoisie was all reactionary, which is why the Leninist tactic established since 1905 was to carry out a bourgeois revolution against the bourgeoisie. However, this was not the same condition as in countries oppressed by imperialism, which precisely due to this oppression, contained particularities in the local bourgeoisie that differentiated it from the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries. Stalin addresses this issue in the decisive debates in the 1920s against Trotskyism over the CI's line for the Chinese Revolution:

“The principal error of the opposition is that it identifies the 1905 Revolution in Russia, an imperialist country which oppressed other nations, with the revolution in China, an oppressed, semi-colonial country, which is compelled to fight imperialist oppression on the part of other states. Here in Russia, in 1905, **the revolution was directed against the bourgeoisie, against the liberal bourgeoisie, in spite of the fact that it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution.** Why? Because the liberal bourgeoisie of an imperialist country is **bound to be counter-revolutionary.** For that very reason among the Bolsheviks at that time there was not, and could not be, any question of temporary blocs and agreements with the liberal bourgeoisie.” ²²⁵

And laying down the guidelines for the general line of revolution in the oppressed countries, Comrade Stalin substantiates the matter in this way:

“Revolution in imperialist countries is one thing: there the bourgeoisie is the oppressor of other nations; there it is counter-revolutionary at all stages of the revolution; there the national factor, as a factor in the struggle for emancipation, is absent. Revolution in colonial and dependent countries is another thing: **there the imperialist oppression by other states is one of the factors of the revolution;** there this oppression cannot but affect the national bourgeoisie also; there **the national bourgeoisie, at a certain stage and for a certain period, may support the revolutionary movement of its country against imperialism;** there the national factor, as a factor in the struggle for emancipation, is a

²²⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Social Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government*, our emphasis.

²²⁵ J. V. Stalin, *Joint Plenum of the C.C. and the C.C.C. of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*, August 1927, our emphasis.

revolutionary factor. To fail to draw this distinction, to fail to understand this difference and to identify revolution in imperialist countries with revolution in colonial countries, is to depart from the path of Marxism, from the path of Leninism, to take the path of the supporters of the Second International.”²²⁶

The founding Parties and Organizations of the ICL place ourselves on the path of the Communist International with the great developments brought by Maoism and that is why we defend the standard of the universality of the New Democratic Revolution for the countries oppressed by imperialism. For the principal international task of these revolutions is to defeat the imperialist domination imposed on colonial and semi-colonial countries. It was Chairman Mao who, applying the line of the Communist International to the revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries, who, by leading the first victorious revolution in an oppressed country, fully developed this theory, establishing the formulation of the New Democratic Revolution. Maoism develops an understanding of the particularities of the bourgeoisie of oppressed countries, drawing the distinction between the big bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie within these countries. Part of the big bourgeoisie, which is the lackey of imperialism, may turn against a certain imperialist power, like Chiang Kai-shek in the Anti-Japanese War, but never against all imperialism. The middle bourgeoisie or genuine national bourgeoisie, in turn, has contradictions with both the big bourgeoisie and imperialism, as both restrict their profits, as they are monopolistic bourgeoisies. The imperialist bourgeoisie imposes itself due to the gigantic magnitude of their capitals and the condition that their states politically and militarily dominate the oppressed peoples and nations; The big bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries, in addition to the power of their capitals, dominate and control the state machinery of their countries. As monopolistic bourgeoisies, they earn super profits at the expense of the super-exploitation of the proletariat, but also by restricting and limiting the profit rate of the middle bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. This is the economic basis of the contradiction between the national bourgeoisie and imperialism. However, this same national bourgeoisie, in addition to suffering unequal competition in the national market with imported goods, also depends on the sale of part of its goods and services to the big bourgeoisie and to imperialism itself. In countless ways, it depends on both the big bourgeoisie and imperialism and due to its contradiction with the proletariat that it exploits, it fears the proletarian revolution, and is unstable in the new democratic revolution. Therefore, the national bourgeoisie is invariably vacillating, the proletariat must not count on it as a safe ally, but it is essential to establish a minimum program that takes into account its interests, particularly the guarantee of its property and market for its goods, aiming to unite the maximum strength to defeat semi-feudality and imperialism. Applying Comrade Stalin's line, Chairman Mao analyzes that:

“Being a bourgeoisie in a colonial and semi-colonial country and oppressed by imperialism, the Chinese national bourgeoisie retains a certain revolutionary quality at certain periods and to a certain degree — **even in the era of imperialism** — in its opposition to the foreign imperialists and the domestic governments of bureaucrats and warlords (instances of opposition to the latter can be found in the periods of the

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

Revolution of 1911 and the Northern Expedition), and it may ally itself with the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie against such enemies as it is ready to oppose. In this respect the Chinese bourgeoisie differs from the bourgeoisie of old tsarist Russia. Since tsarist Russia was a military-feudal imperialism which carried on aggression against other countries, the Russian bourgeoisie was entirely lacking in revolutionary quality. There, the task of the proletariat was to oppose the bourgeoisie, not to unite with it. But China's national bourgeoisie has a revolutionary quality at certain periods and to a certain degree, because China is a colonial and semi-colonial country which is a victim of aggression. Here, **the task of the proletariat is to form a united front** with the national bourgeoisie against imperialism **and the bureaucrat and warlord governments** without overlooking its revolutionary quality.” ²²⁷

And he develops the position of the International, clearly delimiting the distinction between the national bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie in countries oppressed by imperialism:

“At the same time, however, being a bourgeois class in a colonial and semi-colonial country and so being extremely flabby economically and politically, the Chinese national bourgeoisie also has another quality, namely, **a proneness to conciliation with the enemies of the revolution**. Even when it takes part in the revolution, it is unwilling to break with imperialism completely and, moreover, it is closely associated with the exploitation of the rural areas through land rent; thus, it is neither willing nor able to overthrow imperialism, and much less the feudal forces, in a thorough way. So, neither of the two basic problems or tasks of China's bourgeois-democratic revolution can be solved or accomplished by the national bourgeoisie. **As for China's big bourgeoisie, which is represented by the Kuomintang, all through the long period from 1927 to 1937 it nestled in the arms of the imperialists and formed an alliance with the feudal forces against the revolutionary people**” ²²⁸

Chairman Mao therefore concludes that the national bourgeoisie, to a certain extent, has a revolutionary character and, at the same time, tends to reconcile with the enemies of the revolution. In contrast, the big bourgeoisie surrenders itself with open arms to imperialism and allies itself with the feudal forces to fight the people. The New Democratic Revolution also targets the big bourgeoisie, bureaucratic capitalism, but preserves the private property of the middle and petty bourgeoisie, in addition to other rights of them. This was well established by Chairman Mao with the Six Laws of the United Front. This is the development made by Maoism, in the analysis of social classes in oppressed countries, particularly on how to understand their bourgeoisie and its fractions.

For the UOC (mlm), in such *oppressed capitalist countries* there is only the bourgeoisie in general and this is such an ally of the imperialist bourgeoisie that it becomes a member of the world bourgeoisie club and shares the same rate of profit with it. Furthermore, they claim that there is only monopoly bourgeoisie, those of local origin and those of foreign origin, and in the

²²⁷ Chairman Mao, *On New Democracy*, our emphasis.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

case of some of these countries, they claim to be both imperialist. Regarding Colombia, they state that:

“The so-called national bourgeoisie not only does not exist today in Colombian society, only those who act as their spokesperson, they are actually firefighters of class struggle, unrepentant conciliators with the hated enemies of the people.” ²²⁹

They claim that the national bourgeoisie does not exist in Colombia and they say that the supposed representatives of this non-existent class would be conciliators with the enemies of the people. Conciliating with the enemies of the people is the typical characteristic of the national bourgeoisie. However, this does not take away the revolutionary role it can play, particularly in periods in which direct imperialist aggression against national territory occur, either due to the development of the revolution in a given country, or due to the worsening of inter-imperialist contradictions.

The proletarian revolution in countries dominated by imperialism requires the stage of new democracy. In the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the bourgeois democratic tasks pending in these countries can only be solved by democratic revolution of a new type, that is, one led by the proletariat and that advances uninterruptedly towards socialism. Rising up against the importance of the peasant struggle for land in the revolution in these countries, rising up against the importance of neutralizing the intermediate layers, including the national bourgeoisie, for the democratic revolution, particularly in its national liberation phase, is to oppose Maoism and to assume the rotten Trotskyist program for colonial and semi-colonial countries:

“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.” ²³⁰

This is the false leftist position trafficked by Trotsky, of wanting to resolve democratic, national and peasant questions immediately through the dictatorship of the proletariat. The UOC (MLM)'s characterization of the national bourgeoisie has the same essence.

4- The New Democratic Revolution and the national question

The UOC (MLM)'s defense of the immediately socialist revolution in semi-colonial countries follows the following logic: **“major premise: resulting from the progressive tendency of imperialism that ‘sweeps away the traces of precapitalist modes of production’”,** oppressed capitalist countries emerge in the world; **minor premise:** as the new democratic revolution aims to eliminate semi-feudality, **therefore:** the revolution in **“oppressed capitalist countries”** must

²²⁹ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edição, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

²³⁰ Leon Trotsky, *A revolução Permanente*, Kairós Livraria, 1985, p. 137, our translation and emphasis.

immediately be socialist. Both the premises and the conclusion of this theory are completely false. Firstly, there is no progressive tendency of imperialism. As Chairman Mao highlights, the objective of exporting capital from imperialist powers is not to develop capitalism, but to colonially subjugate oppressed countries. Secondly, the theory of New Democratic Revolution aims at the destruction of imperialist domination, feudality and bureaucratic capitalism; Therefore, even if semi-feudality hypothetically did not exist in a given semi-colonial country, due to the fact that it is oppressed by imperialism, its revolution must necessarily be a Democratic Revolution uninterrupted towards socialism. For, this revolution invariably implies a civil war against the big bourgeoisie and latifundium and a national war against imperialist domination.

However, the UOC (MLM) has a completely distorted understanding of the content of the New Democratic Revolution, in addition to reducing its objectives exclusively to the agrarian revolution, they point out that one of its objectives would be to “*develop capitalism*”, on the contrary to the “*Socialist Revolution*” that would be destined to “*abolish*” “*capitalism*”. Furthermore, they eliminate the character of national liberation of such “*oppressed capitalist countries*”, opposing “*socialist anti-imperialism*” to the democratic struggle for national sovereignty in colonial and semi-colonial countries. In their *Program*, the question is as follows:

“The content of the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement, in this Epoch and in the oppressed capitalist countries, **ceases to be bourgeois-democratic for liberation and turns into socialist** (...). To keep considering that the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement has a democratic content also in those countries, **which would not clash with the national base of the power of capital, but favor its development** and, as such, **demand a stage previous to the socialist revolution**, would be to **solve the problem** in the manner of a semifeudal country.”²³¹

In other words, for the UOC (MLM) in a *semi-feudal country*, the democratic stage prior to the socialist stage is justified, in this case, the anti-imperialist content of the revolution is *democratic-bourgeois liberation* and, therefore, the revolution does not clash with the *national basis of capital's power*, but on the contrary *favors its development*. How can an organization that claims to be Maoist present the content of the New Democratic Revolution developed by Chairman Mao in this way? How can you summarize in this way the meaning of the democratic stage of the socialist revolution formulated by the great Lenin? This is nothing more than a cheap falsification to justify the old Trotskyist “theory” of “permanent revolution” in countries oppressed by imperialism.

For Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, national liberation is a bourgeois democratic flag abandoned by the bourgeoisie of advanced countries still at the end of the 19th century and which, in the 20th century onward, cannot be consistently sustained by the national bourgeoisie of oppressed countries. This was the advent of imperialism, the passage of capital to its monopolistic and final stage, which marks the end of the era of the World Bourgeois Democratic

²³¹ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

Revolution and opens the era of the World Proletarian Revolution, already with the Great Socialist October Revolution and the passage of bourgeoisie as a historical social class toward counterrevolution. But even though the democratic revolution is a bourgeois revolution, under the leadership and hegemony of the proletariat, supported by the worker-peasant alliance, it becomes a bourgeois democratic revolution of a new type or New Democratic Revolution uninterrupted toward socialist revolution. Consequently, the struggle for national liberation goes beyond its bourgeois content, it ceases belonging to a narrow nationalism and takes on an internationalist content, as it fights against the national oppression of all peoples and not just its own people. It thus assumes a proletarian rather than bourgeois nationalist content, and is part of the World Proletarian Revolution.

Likewise, although the New Democratic Revolution, by destroying feudality, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism, clears the path for the development of capitalism in a given country, insofar as it destroys monopolist property of the means of production and allows the growth of small and medium property, *favoring the development of capitalism* does not constitute an objective of the democratic revolution of a new type, as it is under the joint dictatorship of revolutionary classes under the leadership and hegemony of the proletariat. After all, the objective of the New Democratic Revolution is to move **uninterruptedly toward the Socialist Revolution**; to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and promote the construction of socialism; This is the principal task and objective of the New Democratic revolution. Let's see how Chairman Mao states the issue:

“Although such **a revolution in a colonial and semi-colonial country** is still fundamentally bourgeois-democratic in its social character during its first stage or first step, and although **it tends to clear the path for the development of capitalism**, it is no longer a revolution of the old type led by the bourgeoisie with the aim of establishing a capitalist society and a state under bourgeois dictatorship. It belongs to the new type of revolution led by the proletariat with the aim, in the first stage, of establishing a new-democratic society and a state under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes. **Thus, this revolution actually serves the purpose of clearing a still wider path for the development of socialism.** In the course of its progress, there may be a number of further sub-stages, because of changes on the enemy's side and within the ranks of our allies, but **the fundamental character of the revolution remains unchanged.** Such a revolution attacks imperialism at its very roots, and is therefore not tolerated but opposed by imperialism.”

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Chairman Mao is unmistakably clear: the demands of the first phase of the revolution in semi-colonial countries *tends to clear the path to the development of capitalism*. This is an inevitable tendency, but it in no way constitutes the content of this phase, as this is no longer a bourgeois revolution of the old type. Therefore, the objective of the democratic stage of the revolution is: *to clear the path for the development of socialism*. The New Democratic revolution

²³² Chairman Mao, *On New Democracy*, our translation and emphasis.

has phases, but its *fundamental character remains unchanged*; what character is this? The proletarian character, which is why imperialism does not tolerate it and fights against it. To say that the objective of the New Democratic Revolution is to *favor the development of capitalism* means to converge with Liu Shao-chi's rotten falsification on the democratic revolution in China and with the rightism in which, in the past, the various communist parties in oppressed countries got caught with the tale that the objective of the democratic revolution was to develop capitalism, in general, and of the agrarian revolution was to develop capitalism in the countryside, in particular. These parties, in their decay, since the collapse of the revisionist and social-imperialist USSR, many of which concluded exactly that the character of the revolution in their countries was already socialist, as these had become countries of dependent capitalism.

Chairman Mao, in his *Speech delivered at a Conference of Cadres* (1948), establishes that the New Democratic Revolution is a “*revolution against imperialism, feudalism and **bureaucrat-capitalism** waged by the broad masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat.*”²³³ . In other words, in the democratic stage, in addition to the confiscation of landlords, handing over plots of land to poor peasants without or with little land, all imperialist and bureaucratic capital is expropriated, and all imperialist and local big bourgeois industries are converted into property of the New Democratic State. In other words, it socializes the most important part of the country's industry, transport, big commerce and services companies, and banks, in addition to foreign business. Given this, how can the UOC (MLM) say that the New Democratic Revolution does “*not clash with the national base of the power of capital*”? This is an unacceptable falsification, it is a stupid rejection of one of the fundamental theories of Maoism that provided a solution to the problems of the revolution for the vast majority of countries in the world, for the immense majority of the popular masses on Earth! What is there of Maoism in this?

And after completely twisting the Maoist content of the New Democratic Revolution, the UOC (MLM) concludes that this is the way to resolve the national question “*in the manner of a semi-feudal country*”. Here they reinforce their understanding that the New Democratic Revolution is only valid due to semi-feudality, completely disregarding national oppression and the national liberation struggle as a bourgeois democratic task. The falsity of this point of view is proven in the quote above, when Chairman Mao specifies the need for a “*first stage or first step*” in the “*revolution in a colonial or semi-colonial country*”. Chairman Mao emphasizes the aspect of imperialist oppression and not feudal oppression as the distinguishing issue between the New Democratic Revolution and the Socialist Revolution.

In this way, the UOC (MLM) completely confuses what the bourgeois revolution is and what the agrarian-peasant revolution is, takes one for the other and completely disregards the fact that the struggle against national oppression and against bureaucratic capitalism are democratic tasks to be fulfilled in the first stage of the socialist revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries. This same falsification was faced by Lenin in the two-line struggle against the Mensheviks after the Russian Revolution of 1905:

²³³ Chairman Mao, *Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area*, 1948, our emphasis.

“Every peasant revolution directed against medievalism, when the whole of the social economy is of a capitalist nature, is a bourgeois revolution. But not every bourgeois revolution is a peasant revolution. (...) In other words, there can be a bourgeois country without a peasantry, and there can be a bourgeois revolution in such a country without a peasantry. A bourgeois revolution may take place in a country with a considerable peasant population and yet not be a peasant revolution; that is to say, it is a revolution which does not revolutionize the agrarian relations that especially affect the peasantry, and does not bring the peasantry to the fore as a social force that is at all active in creating the revolution. (...) The principal source of the error in the tactical line pursued by Plekhanov and his Menshevik followers during the first period of the Russian revolution (i.e., during 1905-07) is their complete failure to understand this correlation between bourgeois revolution in general, and a peasant bourgeois revolution.” ²³⁴

The New Democratic Revolution, due to its social characteristics, is a bourgeois-democratic revolution of a new type, that is, it carries out necessary democratic tasks under the leadership of the proletariat, which achieves hegemony by allying itself with the peasantry through its proletarian agrarian program and passes uninterruptedly toward socialist revolution and construction. The peasant revolution is one of its most important tasks, but it is not the only one. Presenting the democratic revolution as a peasant revolution is nothing more than UOC (MLM) sophistry aiming to smuggle into Maoism and thus intending to support in its name the old thesis of an immediately socialist revolution in countries oppressed by imperialism. Lenin is very clear in his historical analysis: the current peasant revolutions are, necessarily, bourgeois revolutions, since what is at the center of the peasants' struggle is the right to individual private property of land. In turn, not every bourgeois revolution is necessarily a peasant revolution; that is, a given revolution will not lose its bourgeois character just because it does not count on peasant participation. In the same way, the national liberation revolution would not cease to have a bourgeois-democratic character due to the hypothetical fact that the peasant question no longer exists in an oppressed country. This is because the national liberation struggle in the imperialist stage of capitalism continues to be a bourgeois task, even though victory can only be achieved under the leadership of the proletariat and advancing uninterruptedly towards socialism.

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) seeks to equate, in an absolute manner, the anti-imperialist struggle with the national liberation struggle. The whole International Proletarian Movement is anti-imperialist, because in the stage of monopoly capital, fighting against capitalism is fighting against imperialism. The particularity of this struggle in countries oppressed by imperialism is that in these countries the anti-imperialist struggle takes on a democratic character of national liberation, but for UOC (MLM) to conceive the issue in this way is an “anti-scientific” attitude:

“The problem is on how to understand scientifically the relation between the struggle against foreign imperialism and the struggle for socialism in an oppressed country. (...)”

²³⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Agrarian Program of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution*, our emphasis.

And in this case, in which the proletariat aims directly toward socialism, **the struggle against imperialism** fully coincides with the internationalist general character of the proletarian struggle, **ceasing to be a democratic struggle to defend the bourgeois nation** and turning into an anti-capitalist struggle to banish imperialism from the world.”²³⁵

In other words, for the leadership of the UOC (MLM), in the struggle for socialism in an oppressed country, the struggle against imperialism ceases to be a national-democratic struggle, it becomes only a social struggle of *labor against capital*, of workers (allying with the poor peasants at most) against the world bourgeoisie. This has nothing of Leninism, nothing of Maoism. As the great Lenin states:

“Every war is the continuation of politics by other means. The continuation of national liberation politics in the colonies will inevitably take the form of **national wars** against imperialism.”²³⁶

And still:

“Whoever expects a **“pure” social revolution will never live to see it**. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.”²³⁷

For Leninism, no revolution will be socially “pure”, of one social class against another social class. The revolutions in the colonies against imperialism, due to their character, are for Lenin, inevitably, national revolutions and due to their political content, bourgeois revolutions, but bourgeois revolutions of a new type, of new democracy, as developed by Chairman Mao. The anti-imperialist struggle in countries oppressed by imperialism, therefore, **has a social character** (the revolutionary classes being: the proletariat – leading force –, the peasantry – mainly, the urban petty bourgeoisie and, in certain circumstances, the national bourgeoisie or middle bourgeoisie), **has a national character** (as it is the struggle of an oppressed nation against an oppressing power) and **has a bourgeois political character**, as the defense of the nation is a pending bourgeois task, which does not suppress the ownership of the means of production as a whole but, actually, only that of the local and foreign monopolistic big bourgeoisie, which concentrates private ownership of the fundamental means of production, as the proletarian revolution is invariably internationalist. Regarding the democratic content of the national liberation struggle, in the era of imperialism, Lenin establishes that:

“The undeveloped countries are a different matter. They embrace the whole of Eastern Europe and **all the colonies and semi-colonies** (...). In those areas, as a rule, there still exist oppressed and capitalistically undeveloped nations. Objectively, these nations still

²³⁵ UOC (MLM), *Contradicción*, nº 7, our translation and emphasis.

²³⁶ V. I. Lenin, *The Junius Pamphlet*, our emphasis.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

have general national tasks to accomplish, namely, democratic tasks, the tasks of overthrowing foreign oppression.”²³⁸

In oppressed nations, therefore, the anti-imperialist struggle is not limited to a social struggle, it converges democratic and national elements that are essential for the victory of the revolution. To despise these elements is to lead the proletariat to defeat. The differences and convergences between the civil revolutionary war and the national revolutionary war were brilliantly dealt with by Chairman Mao in the formulation of the highest military theory of the proletariat, that of the Protracted People's War in the new democratic revolution uninterrupted toward socialist revolution in China. Let's see:

“The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries.

But while the principle remains the same, its application by the party of the proletariat finds expression in varying ways according to the varying conditions. Internally, **capitalist countries** practice bourgeois democracy (not feudalism) when they are not fascist or not at war; in their external relations, **they are not oppressed by, but themselves oppress, other nations.**

China is different however. **The characteristics of China are that she is not independent and democratic but semi-colonial and semi-feudal**, that internally she has no democracy but is under feudal oppression (...) Basically, the task of the Communist Party here is not to go through a long period of legal struggle before launching insurrection and war, and not to seize the big cities first and then occupy the countryside, but the reverse.

When imperialism is not making armed attacks on our country, the Chinese Communist Party **either wages civil war jointly with the bourgeoisie** against the warlords (lackeys of imperialism), as in 1924-27 in the wars in Kwangtung Province and the Northern Expedition, **or unites with the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie to wage civil war against the landlord class and the comprador bourgeoisie** (also lackeys of imperialism), as in the War of Agrarian Revolution of 1927-36. When imperialism launches armed attacks on China, the Party unites all classes and strata in the country opposing the foreign aggressors **to wage a national war** against the foreign enemy, as it is doing in the present War of Resistance Against Japan.”²³⁹

One of Chairman Mao's many great contributions to the military theory of the proletariat is the particularity he discovered that the proletarian revolution in oppressed countries develops sometimes as a revolutionary civil war, sometimes as a national revolutionary war. In other words, in the different phases that this type of revolution goes through, the conditions of the war change depending on the principal contradiction whether it is a civil war or a national war. In the case of the Chinese Revolution, in the First Revolutionary Civil War (1924-1927), the

²³⁸ V. I. Lenin, *A Caricature of Marxism*, our emphasis

²³⁹ Chairman Mao, *Problems of War and Strategy*, our emphasis.

proletariat and poor peasants allied themselves with the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie in the struggle against the northern military warlords and imperialist domination; in the Second Revolutionary Civil War (1927-1936), the proletariat allied itself only with the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie in the struggle against the big landlords; As for in the War of National Resistance against Japan (1937-1945), the proletariat allied itself with all classes and social layers that opposed the occupation of Japanese imperialism.

Chairman Mao highlights that understanding these changes in the characteristics of revolutionary war is fundamental to its correct leadership. He shows how the laws of war change depending on the characteristics of the revolutionary war, that is, whether it is a civil war or a national war:

“Thus, the **different laws for directing different wars are determined by the different circumstances of those wars** — differences in their time, place and nature. As regards the time factor, both war and its laws develop; **each historical stage has its special characteristics**, and hence **the laws of war in each historical stage have their special characteristics and cannot be mechanically applied in another stage.**” ²⁴⁰

And so, Chairman Mao underlines the changes to the laws of revolutionary war depending on whether it is a civil war or a national war:

*“In China the armed revolution is fighting the armed counter-revolution. That is one of the specific features and one of the advantages of the Chinese revolution. This thesis of Comrade Stalin's is perfectly correct and is equally valid for the Northern Expedition, the War of Agrarian Revolution, and the present War of Resistance Against Japan. They are all revolutionary wars, all directed against counter-revolutionaries and all waged mainly by the revolutionary people, differing only in the sense that **a civil war differs from a national war**, and that a war conducted by the Communist Party differs from a war it conducts jointly with the Kuomintang. Of course, these differences are important. **They indicate the breadth of the main forces in the war** (an alliance of the workers and peasants, or of the workers, peasants and bourgeoisie) **and whether our antagonist in the war is internal or external** (whether the war is against domestic or foreign foes, and, if domestic, whether against the Northern warlords or against the Kuomintang); they also indicate that **the content of China's revolutionary war differs at different stages of its history.** (...) they are all revolutionary wars, and all exhibit the specific features and advantages of the Chinese revolution. (...) The main task of the party of the Chinese proletariat, a task confronting it almost from its very inception, has been to unite with as many allies as possible and, according to the circumstances, to organize armed struggles*

²⁴⁰ Chairman Mao, *Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, our emphasis.

for **national and social liberation** against armed counter-revolution, whether internal or external.” ²⁴¹

Chairman Mao correctly highlights the decisive importance of considering the difference in the content of the revolutionary war in its different phases; he highlights how both civil war and national war led by the Communist Party identify themselves as revolutionary wars, but present great differences in terms of the scope of revolutionary forces and the targets against which each of these types of revolutionary war is lead to. After all, as Chairman Mao synthesizes, shortly before the beginning of the War of National Resistance against Japan:

“It was largely owing to the organized, armed masses of the people that the weak and small force of the Chinese Red Army was able to win many battles in the period of the Agrarian Revolutionary War. **Logically**, a national war should win broader mass support than an agrarian revolutionary war;” ²⁴²

Considering the different phases of development of the revolutionary war in semi-colonial countries, understanding that one of the particularities of the People's War in these countries consist in that it develops either as a revolutionary civil war or as a national revolutionary war. Understanding that the laws of revolutionary war change from one phase to another, as the targets and forces in struggle change. Understanding that a national revolutionary war allows us to unite more forces and greater popular support than an internal civil war are great contributions of Maoism to the international proletariat. However, the UOC (MLM) despises this entire ideological development, as they claim that:

“Whatever the particularities, the capitalist character of a society in a country oppressed by imperialism **demands an antiimperialist movement, not in a stage apart (...)**” And further: “Neither nationalism, nor patriotism, **nor national sovereignty are** banners of the worker’s movement; on the contrary, they **are old and frayed flags of the bourgeoisie** and the petty-bourgeoisie.” ²⁴³

By negating the phases in the process of development of the revolutionary war in oppressed countries, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) only reveals their distortion of the law of contradiction, because as Chairman Mao establishes: every process of development of a thing has stages and phases. By merging qualitatively distinct phases of the protracted people’s war, they apply the rotten philosophy of “*combining two into one*”, typical of Prachanda. By denying the need for national revolutionary war for semi-colonial countries, they repeat the rotten “*national nihilism*” defended by the revisionist Avakian. When they speak out against the flag of national sovereignty, accusing it of “*frayed flags of the bourgeoisie*”, they are only expressing the sterile, petty bourgeois, childish and Trotskyist-influenced “left” opportunism; because it is evident that the flag of national sovereignty is bourgeois, but it is a flag that was abandoned by

²⁴¹ Chairman Mao, *Problems of War and Strategy*, our emphasis.

²⁴² Chairman Mao, *On Protracted War*, our emphasis.

²⁴³ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edição, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

the bourgeoisie with the emergence of imperialism and that it is up to the proletariat to take it into their hands to consistently lead the National Liberation Movement. Therefore, these are not frayed flags, as they are in the order of the day and are essential for the advancement of the World Proletarian Revolution. Because as the great Lenin defines:

“Characterizing the approach of the world social revolution in the Party Program we adopted last March, we said that **the civil war of the working people against the imperialists and exploiters in all the advanced countries is beginning to be combined with national wars against international imperialism.** That is confirmed by the course of the revolution, and will be more and more confirmed as time goes on.” ²⁴⁴

And we conclude this point with the following words from Lenin, which completely disprove the petty-bourgeois outburst of the UOC (MLM) that aims to negate the validity and importance of the national liberation struggle, an inseparable part of the New Democratic Revolution, and its importance for the World Proletarian Revolution. Thus they demonstrate that they do not understand the problems of the proletarian revolution in the oppressed countries, which are the immense majority in the world, and therefore have a greater weight in the World Proletarian Revolution, just as they do not understand that the contradiction between oppressed nation/people and imperialism is, in general, the principal contradiction of era of imperialism, even though the inter-imperialist contradiction could precipitate a world war, which will inevitably turn into wars of national liberation, as well as a revolutionary civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries.

Lenin says:

“It is perfectly clear that **in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement** of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed **towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism** and will, perhaps, play a **much more revolutionary part than we expect.** It is important to emphasize the fact that, for the first time in our International, we have taken up the question of preparing for this struggle.” ²⁴⁵

The recent tactical counter-offensive of the heroic Palestinian National Resistance fully confirms these revolutionary words of Lenin. The ICL honors and continues this great Leninist precept.

5- The development of capitalism in the countryside and the peasant problem in semi-colonial countries

Previously, when dealing with the New Democratic Revolution, we abstracted, to a certain extent, the analysis of the agrarian and peasant problem in semi-colonial countries. We did this to highlight that the task of national liberation is a democratic task, only possible to be solved by this type of revolution because it is based on a front of revolutionary classes united

²⁴⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of the Peoples of the East*, our emphasis.

²⁴⁵ V. I. Lenin, *Theses for a Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P.*, our emphasis

with the proletariat and under its leadership, through the Communist Party. This way of approaching the problem is more convenient, as national oppression is much more visible than semi-feudality, as the latter continues to exist in an underlying manner, most of the time camouflaged by the evolution of its forms. In this topic and further on, we will seek to analyze the general characteristics of the penetration of capitalism in the countryside, its development and the current situation of the peasant problem in semi-colonial countries in the imperialist stage of capitalism departing from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The UOC (MLM), when interpreting the agrarian and peasant problem in Colombia and other countries, adopts the same procedure as certain Brazilian Hoxhaists: 1st) they take, solely and exclusively, the Leninist work *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* as the theoretical basis of their analysis, as if this were Lenin's last word on the issue; 2nd) they mechanically transplant the same categories of analysis as Lenin to Latin America without taking into account the particularities of the countryside in Russia; 3rd) they consider that the development of capitalism in Russian agriculture, in the period analyzed by Lenin, that is, from 1861 to 1897, the period in which the first phase of capital, of *free competition*, was still in force as if it continued without any change when already in its monopolist phase, imperialism. They conclude, therefore, that just as in Russia, in the 19th century, capitalism advanced in the Latin American countryside, in the 20th century, in an identical or very similar way. In the same way as the Brazilian Hoxhaists, the UOC (MLM) concludes about the non-existence of the peasant problem, since in the countryside of Latin American countries the *peasant differentiation* would be complete and, therefore, there would only be two classes: the agrarian bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat. The small property would survive as a museum piece, which must be respected, but which in practice plays no role in the revolutionary process. The agrarian program, therefore, must be a socialist program; and here they repeat the same confusion as the Brazilian revisionists: they take nationalization for collectivization of land, as they falsify that in the GSOR, Lenin, when proposing the nationalization of land, in October 1917, would have applied a socialist program for the Russian peasantry. Let us look in more detail at the harmful consequences of this falsification of theory and reality.

As seen in a previous topic, the UOC (MLM) believe that there is a supposed *progressive tendency of imperialism*, which, in turn, would imply that the capital exported to the semi-colonies would have the power to *sweep away pre-capitalist modes of production*, particularly in the countryside. In this way they state that:

“The exported capital acts on the capitalist germs or developments of the oppressed countries and, as an overall tendency, accelerates their development, **sweeps away the traces of precapitalist modes** of production, accelerates the decomposition of the peasantry” ²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

They conclude, therefore, that the process analyzed by Lenin in Russia in the 19th century was completed in the same way in Colombia in the 20th century:

“In Colombia, the decomposition and differentiation of the peasantry between rural proletarians and bosses is a fact. This is the most noticeable phenomena of the economic and social development of agriculture during the last one and a half century. The essence of the process is **the differentiation of the peasantry into classes, and not the ‘evolution of semi feudalism’**. This process was carried out in an accelerated way, mainly **through the violent expropriation of the independent producers** and the concentration of land and capital.” ²⁴⁷

In other words, according to the UOC (MLM), the export of capital by imperialism accelerated the process of differentiation of the peasantry, dividing it into the agrarian bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat; As a result of this division, the process of violent expropriation of poor peasants accelerated. They conclude, therefore, that the agrarian bourgeoisie formed by the decomposition of the peasantry expropriates small owners, thus culminating capitalist development in the Colombian countryside. Expropriation would serve, on the one hand, to strengthen this newly created agrarian bourgeoisie, concentrating the land in its hands, and on the other, it would create the agricultural proletariat without any instrument of production and forced to sell its labor force.

The UOC (MLM) theory about the possibility of the emergence of an agrarian bourgeoisie, arising from peasant differentiation in semi-colonial countries during the imperialist era, only serves to adorn peasant expropriation, to paint this evolution of the forms of semi-feudality with progressive colors. The UOC (MLM), in studying the Colombian process, arbitrarily links the differentiation of peasants, the emergence of new bosses and the violent expropriation of small landowners. They highlight that the particularity of the Colombian case would be the extreme violence of these expropriations and provide us with impressive data of 165,000 deaths in the period 1946-1957. The issue that the UOC (MLM) hides is the analysis of which class carried out these expropriations. Which class is responsible for this slaughter in the Colombian fields? Would the agrarian bourgeoisie, arising from peasant differentiation, be responsible for this process?

The UOC (MLM) cunningly omits this question, because when formulating it they would have to indicate that the class responsible for these expropriations was the old *criollo* latifundium. They would have to conclude that these expropriations do not represent the emergence of a new class in the countryside based on peasant differentiation, but the strengthening of the old rural oligarchies that are so well known and archaic in Latin America. What the UOC (MLM) does is to mix up two distinct analyzes made by Lenin in 1899 and place them as the cause of violent peasant expropriations in Latin America.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

In his masterful work, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, the great Lenin, when studying capitalist evolution in the Russian countryside, analyzes, one by one, two processes that are combined in objective reality: the peasant economy and the landlord economy. In the chapter on the capitalist development of the *peasant farm*, Lenin studies in detail the process of peasant differentiation, showing how the development of the mercantile economy invariably led to the process of dividing the peasantry into two opposing classes: the agrarian bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat. This study was particularly important in Russia, as populist currents argued that the Russian peasant community represented the most solid basis for the construction of socialism. The populists therefore considered the advance of the mercantile economy and peasant differentiation as reactionary. Lenin, in turn, will show the progressive character of this process, as the peasant community, as well as the landlords', were inseparable parts of the Russian feudal economy. In this chapter, therefore, Lenin analyzes the emergence of the rural bourgeoisie, from the peasantry, "*abstracting*" the landlords, that is, not taking them into account, initially, to demonstrate more clearly the evolutionary capitalist process of the Russian peasant economy. Lenin then shows that rich peasants, when renting land from poor peasants, ended up concentrating these properties in their hands. The process led to a slow expropriation, distinct from landlord expropriation. For this reason, Lenin highlights, at the end of the chapter, that this newly created agrarian bourgeoisie was not the true ruling class of the peasant village, but rather the old landowner class:

"When we said above that the peasant bourgeoisie are the masters of the contemporary countryside, we disregarded the factors retarding differentiation: bondage, usury, labor-service, etc. **Actually, the real masters of the contemporary countryside are often enough not the representatives of the peasant bourgeoisie, but the village usurers and the neighboring landowners.** it is, however, quite legitimate to disregard them, for otherwise it is impossible to study the internal system of economic relationships among the peasantry." ²⁴⁸

The UOC (MLM) absolutely abstracts who the true masters of the countryside in Colombia are, and presents the peasant differentiation and mass expropriation as chains of a continuous process of the full evolution of capitalism in the countryside of semi-colonial countries.

The process of development of capitalism in Russia, in relation to Latin America, has significant differences in time (19th century and 20th century) and space. The process studied by Lenin has as its starting point the year 1861, when the so-called "emancipation" of serfs took place in Russia, promulgated by Tsar Alexander II. The so-called end of serfdom was a direct result of the growth of the peasant struggle against latifundium, but the "solution" was a maneuver by the tsarist government against the peasants. Since ancient times, peasants in the Russian Empire were organized into the aforementioned *communities*, which had some important particularities: 1) the community's lands were distributed equally among its members, and from time to time there was a rotation of ownership between these; 2) feudal tributes and

²⁴⁸ V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, our emphasis.

charges were paid “collectively” by all peasants, if one stopped paying, the amount would have to be assumed by the others; 3) peasants were prohibited from selling their plots of land and leaving the community. Until 1861, each of these communities was dominated by a specific neighboring landowner, or directly by the imperial family. With the “emancipation” decree, the communities became formally separated from the neighboring landlord’s estates to which they were linked by a relationship of bondage.

However, the links between the peasant farm and the estates were maintained in two ways: land-redemption and cut-off lands. The redemption was the amount that the peasant had to pay for his “emancipation”, that is, the amount he had to pay for the plot of land he owned. The cut-off lands were large areas of peasant communities expropriated by landlords at the time of emancipation. These areas were, in general, the richest in natural resources and the most fertile ones. The cut-offs and redemption prevented the free development of peasant communities, as the peasants, in order to produce, needed to rent part of the *cut-off* lands, the forests as a source of wood, for example; in addition to having to spend an important part of their budget on paying redemption.

In *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Lenin centrally analyzes this process within the peasant community, the most significant result of which is the aforementioned peasant differentiation, in which wealthy peasants rented plots from poorer peasants in the same community. This differentiation led to a polarization within the community itself between rich peasants and poor peasants, a differentiation that tended to the decomposition of peasantry into the peasant bourgeoisie and the rural proletariat. In the analysis of capitalist development in the landlord economy, in turn, Lenin focuses on the study of the transformation of the system of payment in labor (typically feudal) to the wage system (typically capitalist).

As Lenin has this process of capitalist development in mind, he does not analyze, in this work, the previous, older, typically feudal or semi-feudal contradiction between landlords and peasants. For example, he does not analyze the impact of redemption and cut-off lands for the peasants, as he concludes that the process of proletarianization of the poor peasantry was already consolidated. The Agrarian Program, for example, proposed by Lenin in 1903 at the II RSDLP Congress defended the expropriation of only the cut-off lands and their return to the peasants, and not all the lands of the landlords. At that time, there was no understanding of the need for a *peasant agrarian revolution* as an essential part of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, as economic data already indicated a consolidation of capitalism in the Russian countryside.

However, the social process is always more impetuous than the statistics. When the revolutionary process sparked in January 1905, soon in March the peasants entered the arena of class struggle with a force that surprised everyone. The struggle of this mass was not the struggle of the rural proletariat against the peasant boss or for better wages against the contracting landlord. The demand of these masses was only one: land. Not just the *cut-off* lands, expropriated by the aristocracy in 1861, but all of Russia's land for the peasants. The demand for the ***nationalization of all lands*** and the right to their private usufruct for the tillers arose from the struggle of these masses.

Lenin is the first to grasp the significance of that peasant uprising for the Russian revolution, which would last until December 1907. At the Third-Party Congress, in April 1905, Lenin advances the Bolshevik position, which until then was the fight for hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, for the understanding that this hegemony could only be achieved if supported by the peasants. The fundamental tactic of the Bolsheviks then became that of the *“revolutionary democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants”*, as the only way to bring the bourgeois democratic revolution more radically to the end and ensure its uninterrupted transition to the socialist revolution.

In accordance with this tactic, the Bolsheviks would have to direct their attention not only to the contradiction between the agricultural proletariat and the peasant bourgeoisie or the capitalist landlords; Lenin highlights, from 1905 onward, that:

“At the present time, as well as in the future, pending the complete victory of the peasant uprising, a revolutionary slogan **must necessarily take into account the antagonism between peasant and landlord**” ²⁴⁹

The revolution of 1905, with all its teachings, implicated in changing important aspects of the Bolsheviks' tactics and Agrarian and Peasant Program. After all, a true revolutionary program is formulated from the concrete struggle of the masses and not from the simple comparison of statistical data. These modifications did not detract from the importance of Lenin's brilliant work, *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, as it was fundamentally correct and correctly analyzed all development tendencies in Russia, thus arming the Bolshevik Red Faction of Social Democracy with a powerful class analysis. But the revolutionary struggle of the masses demonstrated that the evolution of those tendencies would not be as rapid as Lenin supposed in 1899. After all, the class struggle is the main data for the interpretation of social reality:

“Here too, we must make allowance for the fact that the absence of an open mass movement at that time made it impossible to solve this question on the basis of precise data (...) No one could say in advance with certainty **to what extent disintegration among the peasantry had progressed** as a result of the partial transition of the landlords from the labor-service system to wage-labor. **No one could estimate how large was the stratum of agricultural laborers which had arisen after the Reform of 1861** and to what extent their interests had become separated from those of the ruined peasant masses.” ²⁵⁰

Life taught the Bolsheviks that this differentiation had not been so profound; that the principal contradiction in the Russian countryside was between peasants and landlords, and not between the agrarian bourgeoisie and the agricultural proletariat. Lenin was fully aware of this insufficiency and, applying the mass line to the process of development of revolutionary ideology, of the guiding thought of the Russian revolution, he showed that the basis of the errors of the agrarian program of 1903, which defended the agrarian revolution only on lands

²⁴⁹ V. I. Lenin, *On our Agrarian Program, our emphasis*

²⁵⁰ V. I. Lenin, *Agrarian Program of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution*, CW 4th Edition, Volume 13, our emphasis.

expropriated by the landlords, and not on all the lands of the landlords, was an **“overestimation of the degree of capitalist development in Russian agriculture”**. Thus, Lenin analyzes the:

“(…) mistake of our ‘cut-off lands’ program of 1903. That mistake was due to the fact that while we correctly defined the *trend* of development, we did not correctly define the *moment* of that development. We assumed that the elements of capitalist agriculture had already taken full shape in Russia, both in landlord farming (minus the cut-off lands and their conditions of bondage - hence the demand that the cut-off lands be returned to the peasants) and in peasant farming, which seemed to have given rise to a strong peasant bourgeoisie and therefore to be incapable of bringing about a ‘peasant agrarian revolution’. The erroneous program was not the result of ‘fear’ of the peasant agrarian revolution, but of an **overestimation of the degree of capitalist development in Russian agriculture. The survivals of serfdom appeared to us then to be a minor detail**, whereas capitalist agriculture on the peasant allotments and on the landlord’s, estates seemed to be quite mature and well-established.”²⁵¹

Lenin describes the process of realizing the insufficiency of the line and the need for its development as follows:

“The revolution has exposed that mistake; it has confirmed the trend of development as we had defined it. The Marxist analysis of the classes in Russian society has been so brilliantly confirmed by the whole course of events in general, and by the first two Dumas in particular, that non-Marxist socialism has been shattered completely. **But the survivals of serfdom in the countryside have proved to be much stronger than we thought: they have given rise to a nation-wide peasant movement and they have made that movement the touchstone of the bourgeois revolution as a whole.** Hegemony in the bourgeois revolution movement, which revolutionary Social-Democracy always assigned to the proletariat, had to be defined more precisely **as leadership which rallied the peasantry behind it.** But leading to what? To the bourgeois revolution in its most consistent and decisive form. **We rectified the mistake by substituting for the partial aim of combating the survivals of the old agrarian system, the aim of combating the old agrarian system as a whole.** Instead of purging landlord economy, we set the aim of abolishing it.”²⁵²

The UOC (MLM), firstly, synthesizes two distinct phenomena (peasant differentiation and violent expropriation) into one and considers making a *concrete analysis* of peasant expropriation in the 1950s as a process of capitalist development in the countryside and not of strengthening and capitalization of archaic latifundium. There is nothing dialectical in this analysis; their synthesis is once again the *combination of two into one*. Secondly, they completely disregard Lenin's analyses after the Revolution of 1905, the corrections made regarding the speed of this development, as well as the development of the tactic of struggling not only against the *survivals of the old agrarian system*, but for the destruction of the landlord system. They thus

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

²⁵² *Ibid.*

twist Leninist theory to supposedly anchor their erroneous analysis of the possibility of a capitalist development in agriculture in semi-colonial countries in the epoch of imperialism that “sweeps away” semi-feudal relations.

And this distortion becomes even more absurd, when they start to analyze the relations of production present in Colombia between the “rural proletariat” and the “capitalist latifundium”. The UOC (MLM) asserts that sharecropping relations in the Colombian countryside are not semi-feudal relations, but covert forms of salaried, purely capitalist relations. They once again misapply Lenin's teachings in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, once again they disregard the later development of Leninist analyzes on the issue and, in opposition to these, formulates the question as follows:

“The ascension process of the agrarian proletariat is actually the process of dissolution of the peasants, especially the small landowners, who subsist in the countryside, not on the quality of serfs, but of semi-proletarians, fulfilling a special role in the network of the capitalists relations of production in the countryside, **when they are retained on the land through a small plot**, in order to ensure cheap workforce in the modern agriculture or livestock production (...) The **sharecropping**, which has classically been the system of transition between the feudal and capitalist relations, that is, the typical representative of semi-feudalism, in Colombia has evolved its real content and **has converted into one of the modalities of retaining the workers on the land in order to supply wage labor power**, cheap and close to the capitalist farms, that is, **it has converted into a modality of capitalist exploitation of land**. This **wage relation of production has maintained itself disguised with the old veil of sharecropping**, semi-feudal appearance, but capitalist in essence.” ²⁵³

Lenin, in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, analyzes exactly this same type of relationship, the *sharecropping*, in which the landlord concedes a piece of land to the peasant with the aim of retaining labor force in the countryside, to have it available at times when agricultural labor requires a greater number of workers, such as sowing or harvesting. Lenin characterizes this form of exploitation as a mix between the labor-service system (feudal) and the capitalist system (wage); that is, precisely a semi-feudal form. The leadership of the UOC (MLM) says that in Colombia this form has turned into a complete form of “capitalist *exploitation of land*”. But how could this conversion have occurred if one of the conditions for the capitalist relation of production is that the worker is free (dispossessed) of the instruments of production? The economic explanation they give for this conversion, that is, from sharecropping as a typical semi-feudal relation to a typical capitalist relation, is the following:

“And nowadays, the content of the typically capitalist relation of production hides in appearance: the capitalist (...) invest his capital in the field: part as constant capital (tools, buildings, seeds, fertilizers, and other inputs) and another part as variable capital (corresponding to the minimal wage that he is forced to give “in advance” to the partner,

²⁵³ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

formally due to the participation of it in the “profits”). And it is both the variable capital, that is the capital invested in buying workforce for the production, which in the moment of the “partition”, the supposed “advance money” is discounted from the part of the partner, when there is any; if there is not, the partner is not obliged to any restitution of such “advance money”. **It matters little the fact that in some cases the partner has as a supposed concession of the right to cultivate on his own in a small plot.** We already know the role that plays this access of the proletarian to land, in the whole of the capitalist relations of production in the countryside: to retain the cheap workforce for the plantations of commercial crops and livestock.” ²⁵⁴

Firstly, retaining a worker on the land, whether by any means, forced or by the “free” concession of a plot constitutes a feudal element. This form of retaining, of “sharecropping” is also very common in Brazil, and in this form an exploitative relation is often hidden as if it were a free association between owners. In the example provided by UOC (MLM), it is a form of sharecropping in which the worker would not enter with any instrument of production, but would simply “earn” a piece of land for his own cultivation. They then say that the *sharecropper’s* share of the profit is not actually profit, but just wage; as proof, they present the fact that if there is a loss in business and there is no profit to share, the sharecropper keeps his share and does not have to return it. This fact only proves that profit sharing is a sham, however it does not prove the UOC (MLM) conclusion that this type of sharecropping would be a capitalist relation of production. However, this is an impossible proof, as the retaining of the labor force, whether compulsory or “free” (through the concession of a plot of land), cannot be interpreted as a free wage relation, typically capitalist.

When the UOC (MLM) states that “*it matters little that some sharecroppers*” can cultivate a small plot, they are simply bypassing the essential particularity of this relationship. Because it is precisely this “right” to cultivate a plot “conceded” to the worker that allows, for various reasons, the super-exploitation of the working masses. The leadership of the UOC (mlm) are aware of this super-exploitation, and even highlight the social importance for the entire Colombian exploitation regime, however, they do not explain what economic conditions ensure this super-exploitation:

“[the *sharecropper* workers] play a special role in the network of capitalist relations of production in the countryside, when they are retained in the land through a small plot, to guarantee cheap workforce in the modern plantation or livestock production. They are the main source of the latent relative overpopulation, which in Colombia is one of the most important causes for the defilement of salaries, not only in the countryside but also in the city, and in the end the super-exploitation of the proletariat.” ²⁵⁵

The UOC (MLM) points to an objective problem which is the relationship between the oppression of the peasantry by landlords and the super-exploitation of the labor force by the bourgeoisie in the process of extracting surplus value in semi-colonial countries. However, once

²⁵⁴ UOC (MLM), *Revista Contradição*, n 18, 1996, our translation and emphasis.

²⁵⁵ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

again they bypass the problem without reaching its essence. They highlight that the retaining of the workforce in the countryside, through the concession of plots of land, acts as a source of general super-exploitation in Colombian society, as it creates a latent relative overpopulation. In other words, they highlight only one aspect of the issue, which is the increase in competition among rural workers, a competition that allows the price of labor force to be lowered, up to a certain limit. But this competition exists both in the countryside and even more intensely in the city; Therefore, this cannot be the explanation of the particularity of the phenomenon. The precise explanation of the process of super-exploitation of the peasants in the sharecropping relation was made by Lenin, and that is why we say that the leadership of the UOC (MLM) misapplies the teachings set out in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*:

“Thus, under labor-service (...) **the prices paid for labor are usually less than half those under capitalist hire.** Since labor-service can only be undertaken by a local peasant, and one who must be ‘**provided with an allotment,**’ [nadiel] the fact of the tremendous drop in pay clearly indicates **the importance of the allotment as wages in kind.**” ²⁵⁶

Lenin is dealing with an example very similar to that presented by the UOC (MLM). A landlord hires a peasant with an allotment (*nadiel*) next to his property; he spends on this worker half of what he would spend if he used the capitalist system, that is, if he hired a seasonal worker from another region. Lenin then lists two reasons that make this lowering of the price of labor force possible. The first is competition between the peasants surrounding the estate, because as they own the plot of land, in general, they can only sell their labor power to that nearby big landlord and to the other surrounding peasants are in the same situation. This forces down the price of labor force because it represents, as the UOC (MLM) itself indicates, *the source of latent overpopulation*. The second reason points to the *importance of the allotment as wages in kind*. In other words, as the peasant has a plot, even if his economy is ruined, what it provides serves to some extent to cover part of the costs of the annual reproduction of his labor power. As part of his necessary labor is covered by his labor in “his” plot, what Lenin calls the “*wages in kind*”, it allows the landlord employer to pay half the wage he would pay to a seasonal worker coming from another region and who had no plot of land. Lenin explains the issue even more clearly in another work:

“How is a peasant able over a number of years to perform work that is worth 10 rubles 69 kopeks for 6 rubles? **He is able to do it because his allotment covers part of the expenditure of his family and makes it possible for his wage to be forced down below the “free-hire” level.**” ²⁵⁷

This is the secret that allows the salary of the peasant sharecropper to be lowered, which in turn, as highlighted by the leadership of the UOC (MLM), allows for downward pressure on the wages of workers throughout the economy, thus ensuring the super-exploitation of labor, which according to Marx is the purchase of labor force at a price below its value. The question, therefore, that fits into the analysis of this form of sharecropping is to identify what type of

²⁵⁶ V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, our emphasis.

²⁵⁷ V. I. Lenin, *O The Agrarian Question in Russia Towards the Close of the 19th Century*, our emphasis.

relation of production it configures, whether purely capitalist or semi-feudal. We can immediately discard, however, the downgraded assessment made by UOC (MLM) when considering that *it matters little if the sharecropper can cultivate a plot on their own*. No, in this case this is what matters most.

In the complete economic analysis of this type of sharecropping, we see, as in every capitalist waged relation, that the “sharecropper’s” part of the working day is to reproduce his labor force, or as Marx characterizes it, constitutes the *necessary labor*; and part of the working day constitutes *surplus-labor*. Let us suppose that the salary of the peasant with a plot is 6 rubles, while that of the “free” wage laborer is 10 rubles, for the same labor and the same working day, it is easy to deduce that the surplus-value extracted from the peasant is 4 rubles more than that of the “free” waged worker. If the value produced during the working day is 20 rubles, the surplus-value produced by the wage-peasant will be 14 rubles, and that of the “free” waged-worker will be 10 rubles. The rate of surplus -value, according to one of the formulas presented by Marx, will be:

$$\text{Surplus value rate} = \frac{\text{Surplus value}}{\text{wage}}$$

For the “free” waged worker = $10/10 = 1 = 100\%$; while the rate of surplus value obtained by exploiting the “sharecropper” will be = $14/6 = 2.3 = 230\%$. It is precisely the cultivation on the plot “conceded” by the landowner to the sharecropper that ensures this difference in the rate of surplus value. And the UOC (MLM) state that *“it matters little if sharecropper cultivate on a plot”*.

As Lenin indicates, the secret of this super-exploitation is that peasant labor in its plot constitutes his *natural salary*, covers part of the expenditure of his family, so he can reproduce his labor force by receiving a salary 4 rubles lower from the landlord. However, the landlord is the owner of the plot conceded “free of charge” to the waged-peasant worker. The peasant’s production on this plot is not independent, as there is an exploitative relation between the landlord who concede it and the peasant who cultivates it. The concession, as we have seen, is not free, since the peasant’s work in it provides the landlord with an extra surplus value of 4 rubles. The peasant’s work on the plot, therefore, is also divided into necessary labor and surplus-labor; whatever he produces there that serves to cover the 4 rubles that the landlord takes from his salary is surplus-labor that the landlord indirectly appropriates. The land is therefore not conceded free of charge to the peasant, the value of the hidden rent he pays to the landlord is exactly the amount he deducts from his salary.

It is this relation of production that is hidden in the *sharecropping*, which aims to retain the labor power in the countryside. It appears as a free concession of land, as a favor that the landlord grants to the peasant. The peasant feels obliged to repay this gift, with more extra labor, for example: repairing fences and other care on the property, or his wife’s labor on

domestic chores around the house, in addition, of course from his family's vote on the list of candidates appointed by the kind landlord. This is the bond of personal dependence, this alone explains why the peasant accepts being “retained” on the land, accepts earning a salary below the market price, even because he has no choice in the situation, he finds himself in. This is a waged and servile relation, that is, typically semi-feudal, in no way typically capitalist. This is an example that illustrates very well how underneath the forms of wage labor there are pre-capitalist relations that are reproduced and maintained by imperialism because they are the ones that are most useful in obtaining *maximum profit*. This is the historical and present reality of oppressed countries, in which the reactionary imperialist bourgeoisie, through the export of capital, engendered bureaucratic capitalism in them on the pre-capitalist, feudal/semi-feudal, basis and it maintains and reproduces its subjacent relations of property and exploitation of work through the evolution of its forms. In other words, contrary to the understanding of the UOC (MLM) leadership that such a sharecropping is “*in appearance semi-feudal, but in essence, capitalist*” it is in appearance capitalist and in essence semi-feudal.

However, once again the leadership of the UOC (MLM), in addition to misapplying Lenin's teachings in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, they do not take him as a whole of his work, in how he subsequently developed his analysis of the meaning of this type of sharecropping relationship. Thus, they cite the following passage from Lenin to characterize this relationship of exploitation as *typically capitalist*:

“The allotment of land to the rural worker is very often to the interests of the rural employers themselves. and that is why the **allotment-holding rural worker is a type to be found in all capitalist countries**. the type assumes different forms in different countries: the English *cottager* is not the same as the small-holding peasant of France or the Rhine provinces, and the latter again is not the same as the *Knecht* in Prussia. Each of these bears traces of a specific agrarian system, of a specific history of agrarian relations - **but this does not prevent the economist from classing them** all as one type of agricultural proletarian.” ²⁵⁸

The UOC (MLM) takes this passage as a basis to classify this form of sharecropping as typically capitalist. Firstly, the fact that it is a relation present in all capitalist countries does not mean that it is a typically capitalist relation. Secondly, as we saw in Lenin's texts after 1905, he recognizes that at times he *overestimated the degree of development of capitalism in Russian agriculture*, and that it was hard to: “*estimate how large was the stratum of agricultural laborers which had arisen after the Reform of 1861 and to what extent their interests had become separated from those of the ruined peasant masses.*”. Lenin himself would later classify this type of exploitative relation with greater precision:

“(...) in all capitalist countries, even the most advanced, **there still exist survivals of medieval, semi-feudal exploitation of the neighboring small peasants by the big landowners** as in the case of the *Instleute* in Germany, the *métayers* in France, and the

²⁵⁸ V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, our emphasis.

sharecroppers in the United States (not only Negroes, who, in the Southern States, are mostly exploited in this way, but sometimes whites too).” ²⁵⁹

Or how Lenin analyzes the typical sharecropper relation in the South of the USA, as a transition from slave labor to wage labor, a particularly important phenomenon for the study of the economic-social formation of Brazil and Colombia, due to the accentuated weight of the slave exploitation of black people also in these two countries:

“The typical white farmer in America is an owner, the typical Negro farmer is a tenant. (...) These are not even tenants in the European, civilized, modern-capitalist sense of the word. They are chiefly semi-feudal or—which is the same thing in economic terms—semi-slave share-croppers.” ²⁶⁰

And classifies this type of share-cropping as a basis:

“It is the typically Russian, “purely Russian” labor-service system, which is known as share-cropping.” ²⁶¹

This type of share-cropping, even if in its most evolved form, intended only to retain labor in the countryside, it cannot be considered as typically capitalist. Its particularity, the one that allows the price of labor power to be lowered below its value as a waged-peasant worker, is precisely the indirect exploitation of the landlord over peasant labor in his plot. The UOC (MLM) points out the importance of this type of relation in the economies of semi-colonies as one of the main sources of the super-exploitation of the proletariat and the masses of oppressed countries. However, they incorrectly interpret the economic and social content of this relation of production, classifying it as typically capitalist when it is typically semi-feudal. This is a theoretical question of utmost importance resolved by Lenin and previously pointed out by the great Engels:

“Only the actual semi-serfdom sanctioned by law and custom, and the resulting possibility of the unlimited exploitation of the rural workers” ²⁶²

If the leadership of the UOC (MLM) is consequent in their analyzes of Colombia, if they recognize the colossal error of classifying share-cropping as a typically capitalist relation, they will be forced to conclude that the super-exploitation of the Colombian proletariat when based on *share-cropping* relations, is based on semi-feudal relations of production and not capitalist ones. This conclusion has great significance for the Colombian revolutionary process, as understood by the CPC (Red Fraction)²⁶³ and Proletarian Power-PO-MLM, which will provide new

²⁵⁹ V. I. Lenin, Preliminary Draft *Theses on the Agrarian Question for the Second World Congress of the Communist International*, our emphasis.

²⁶⁰ V. I. Lenin, *New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture*, our emphasis.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² Friedrich Engels, *The Peasant Question in France and Germany*, our emphasis.

²⁶³ Communist Party of Colombian (Red Fraction) —ML

impulses for the march of the proletariat of this country towards the reconstitution of its vanguard Party and the Colombian Revolution.

We assess that from a practical point of view, from the class struggle in recent years in Colombia, there are many elements that justify this rectification. Colombia and Mexico are, par excellence, the homelands of peasant guerrillas in Latin America. The uninterrupted decades of peasant guerrillas in Colombia express the immense effort of the peasant masses that have not prospered precisely because they lack a suitable proletarian leadership.

From a theoretical point of view, we assess that the errors in the analysis of Latin American economic-social formations lead the UOC (MLM) to present an agrarian program incapable of mobilizing the peasant masses. Also, because it leads one to consider that this is not a strategic task for the Colombian revolution, as they conclude that the process of differentiation of the peasantry is completed, which means that the fundamental classes of the Colombian countryside would today be the agricultural proletariat and the rural bourgeoisie. That the old latifundium, based on typically capitalist relations, evolved to become big capital. Therefore, there would be no economic basis for speaking strictly about the antagonism between peasants and landlords, as they would have transformed themselves into proletarians and bourgeoisie; What would remain would be just a survival of small production, such as is also preserved in the cities.

The peasant differentiation identified by Lenin in 1899 cannot develop in the same way during the era of imperialism, in colonial/semi-colonial countries. In the differentiation that exists in rural communities today in Brazil, the peasantry is divided into a rich or middle peasantry that exploits the labor force of the poor peasantry, especially those without land or with little land. However, the conditions for transforming this rich peasantry into an agrarian bourgeoisie changed completely. We are in the epoch of imperialism, of monopoly capital, so the peasant economy, even the wealthy one, cannot progress much, as it competes with the big agricultural production, from the old latifundium allied with the big bourgeoisie and, in most cases, intertwined with finance capital. Even if a peasant differentiates himself and exploits the poor peasants in his village, at most he can be a privileged lackey of the local estate; he will very rarely become a bourgeois, in the same way that small industry can only subsist in urban centers as an auxiliary productive unit of large-scale production, generally in permanent ruin.

Another particularity of Latin America, in relation to Russia as studied by Lenin, is that its landlord economy did not evolve into a mercantile form only in the 19th century, it was born in this condition, focused on the foreign market, under the mark of the international division of labor. Therefore, the characteristic content of the economic-social formations of some Latin American countries is marked by the *plantation* system, large-scale monoculture productions for export, based on slave and servile labor. In Russia, at the end of the 1861 Reform, peasant communities were in possession of half of the arable land. Small peasants were semi-owners of plots of this land, the *nadiels*, and leased them out. The leasing of land by poor peasants in Latin America is a very rare phenomenon. In Brazil, it will appear more frequently in more recent history, in the "Settlement Projects" of the bureaucratic "agrarian reform" of the old State. In

them, the poorest peasants end up leasing their land to the neighboring landlord or to the local wealthy peasant. Or when several of these peasants on the same continuous strip of land jointly lease it to the big soybean and sugarcane producers, as they are surrounded by these estates, also when transforming their land into pastures and leasing them out to the landlord cattle rancher, or with others to raise cattle on a half-share [*meia*] basis. But this is a recent phenomenon, a result and not a cause of the development of capitalism in agriculture. What has always happened and continues to happen is that a poor peasant without any land or a small landowner rents a plot from a neighboring farmer, generally for a period of ten years, to cultivate it on a half-share, or third-share, basis, and at the end of the contract, he has to hand over the plot and also other hundreds of hectares of land owned by the landlord with usable pastures. Still as part of the contract, he also has to make maintenance of the fences of the whole estate and other services.

The Spanish and Portuguese crowns transposed to America an outdated system based on the feudal monopoly of land, where in many cases a feudal regime was established and a slave-feudal regime in others, which in both cases, as a rule, completely excluded peasant property from the land. In Brazil, in general, the peasant has always been a resident in the landlord's land. He only became free if he fled to the most remote regions beyond the agricultural frontier. There he established his farm, his natural economy and his precarious freedom compared to his previous servitude. He remained that way until the "owner" of the land arrived, with a "legal" or forged title of property provided by the notary bureaucracy of the old State, supported by the oligarchic power that used and expropriated the peasant lands. The saga of the squatter (*posseiro*) peasants in Brazil, in a permanent struggle against expropriation by landlords, is a core and essential part of our history, of a continuous peasant war interspersed with moments of rise and fall.

The capitalism that penetrated and developed in Latin American agriculture is particularly different from the form that took place in Russia analyzed by Lenin. Here the rich peasants had no way of transforming themselves into an agrarian bourgeoisie; As a rule, it is the old latifundium that becomes bourgeoisie. Brazil's role in the world economy has boosted the capitalist relations in the countryside, there is a marked capitalist development in agriculture. But this capitalism is not the same as the one analyzed by Lenin, in the 19th century, in the era of *free competition*. It is a capitalism that was formed in the epoch of imperialism and in an oppressed country; Russia was, in Lenin's words, a "*military-feudal imperialist*" country. Here in Brazil, what developed was a bureaucratic capitalism engendered by imperialism and completely at the service of the needs of the imperialist powers; Unlike the Russia analyzed by Lenin, there was no national agricultural machinery industry here that would impulse independent national agricultural development. Capitalist development has always been subjugated to the interests of the metropolis. And this is why imperialism never swept away semi-feudal relations in the countryside; therefore, these relations continue to exist in a covert way through the evolution of their forms.

In semi-colonial countries, peasants are the principal and not the agricultural proletariat, although the peasants are expelled from the countryside, it is the agricultural proletariat that

dwindles in quantity with the advance of mechanization – already at the stage of application of robotics and soon with the remote operation of machines. Semi-feudal exploitation is the basis of bureaucratic capitalism engendered by imperialism, as a necessity for the semi-colonial subjugation of the country and the super-exploitation of its proletariat and other working masses. That is why it continues to reproduce itself and the peasant economy, although ruined, does not disappear, because it is necessary for the type of capitalism that can be reproduced in countries dominated by imperialism. With this backward and anachronistic economic base, the superstructure corresponding to it still remains, fundamentally, underlying semi-feudality in new, apparently bourgeois forms and, secondarily, in the same old forms, such as in the legal field, the inequality of civil rights, in the countryside. All this garbage that can only be swept away if the latifundium property is destroyed. This is a task of utmost importance for the proletarian revolution and the more radically it advances, the closer we will be to socialism. Therefore, peasant expropriation in semi-colonial countries does not constitute any progress, here this is not a sign of social development, but of backwardness, of emptying the countryside, of its depopulation, which has become the main counter-revolutionary policy of imperialism in the oppressed countries and mainly Yankee imperialism for Latin America, particularly after the triumph of the Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Cuban Revolutions. Engels, in 1894, already highlighted this issue in his criticism of Kautsky, on account of the Agrarian Program of the Social Democratic Party of Germany:

“The greater the number of peasants whom we can save from being actually hurled down into the proletariat, whom we can win over to our side while they are still peasants, **the more quickly and easily the social transformation will be accomplished.** It will serve us naught to wait with this transformation until capitalist production has developed everywhere to its utmost consequences, until the last small handicraftsman and the last small peasant have fallen victim to capitalist large-scale production.” ²⁶⁴

The masses that will most radically sweep away the landlords and the monopoly of land ownership, in favor of its future nationalization will be the masses of peasants, mainly the poor peasants. The banner that can rally these masses is the confiscation and immediate delivery of land to these peasants. This struggle can only be carried out broadly linked to the struggle for the conquest of Power, because if the peasant problem is the problem of land, the problem of land is the problem of political Power, the problem of overthrowing the power of the latifundium and the semi-colonial imperialist domination that relies on it by impulsing bureaucratic capitalism.

Therefore, the UOC (MLM) agrarian program for semi-colonial countries is completely incorrect, as can be seen:

“It is indispensable that the agriculture proletariat, who does not have the degree of concentration as the industrial proletariat, gets independent of the peasantry, both due to their program as for their organization; only then he is able to get rid of the rural

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

petty-bourgeois atmosphere of the proprietor and of the illusion in the small property. Only then he could **teach the peasants** that for them to save **themselves they must ally with the proletariat** to struggle against private property and to convert the property of their land into collective property and collective exploitation, **because the** individual exploitation conditioned by the individual property is what pushes the peasants into ruin.”²⁶⁵

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) insistently accuses us of being “*leftists*”, however, there cannot be a more “left” opportunist agrarian-peasant program than theirs; it is “left” opportunist and idealist. Intending to mobilize the scarce agricultural proletariat to teach poor landless peasants and peasants with little land the importance of the struggle against private property, to convince them to convert their small properties into collective farms is something even more childish than the dreams of Russian populists, which intended to convert peasant communities into bastions of socialism. It is a demonstration of total ignorance about the nature of the peasantry and its greatest demand, land ownership, is to push them against the proletariat and tie them to the field of counter-revolution. It is a sterile and simply foolish doctrinal idealism. More than that, a policy carried out in this way among the peasantry is a crime against the proletariat's strategy of hegemony in the united front and its conquest of power.

What the peasant understands is that the absence of land, of little quantity and poor quality, is the immediate cause of his ruin. This sensitive knowledge is revolutionary, as it directs the peasant fury against the opposing class: the landlord who concentrates and monopolizes land and natural resources. It is actually necessary, in the course of the struggle, to convince the peasantry that there is no point in destroying only the neighboring estates, but the entire latifundium system and also confiscating the big private companies, in the liberated areas, for the new people's revolutionary state, until it is established across the whole country. In the course of this struggle, only then can he learn that private property is no redemption, that if he stops his struggle in the midway, he will again ruin himself; the land would again be concentrated. The same iron cycle that binds the workers' struggle will be repeated if it is restricted to the economic and trade union struggle. Under the conditions of imperialism, only with Power in the hands of the revolutionary united front under the hegemony of the proletariat, through its Communist Party, will the peasants fully understand the limits of small property. They will thus be able to forge this consciousness during the course of the revolutionary war, as there they learn the importance of new relations of production. And, above all, they learn that freedom is more important than land ownership. As Lenin stated, the peasant in the struggle for land picks up the rifle, with the rifle in his hand he discovers freedom, then this becomes more important to him than the land. Thus, transforming themselves into revolutionary peasants firmly united with the proletariat. And he stresses once again already with the dictatorship of the proletariat in force on the illusion of convincing the peasants only with well-intended proclamations and exhortations:

²⁶⁵ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

“The proletariat must now solve the second problem: it must prove to the peasant that the proletariat can provide him with the example and practice of economic relations of a higher level than those under which every peasant family farms on its own. The peasant still believes only in this old system; he still considers this the normal state of affairs. That is beyond doubt. **It would be absurd to think that the peasant will change his attitude to vital economic problems, as a result of our propaganda.** His is a wait-and-see attitude. From being neutrally hostile, he has become neutrally sympathetic. He prefers us to any other form of government because he sees that the workers’, the proletarian state, the proletarian dictatorship, does not mean brute force or usurpation, as it has been described, but is a better defender of the peasants than Kolchak, Denikin, and the rest are.” ²⁶⁶

In addition to the illusion of convincing through propaganda, the UOC (MLM) presents the proposition of collectivization as the banner on the order of the day. This task was not even posed by the Socialist October Revolution, which despite having established the dictatorship of the proletariat, by nationalizing land ownership did not immediately collectivize peasant production. Lenin addresses the problem of land collectivization in the Russian Revolution in this way:

“As to the mode of cultivation of the land that the victorious proletariat confiscates from the big landowners, **the distribution of that land among the peasantry for their use has been predominant in Russia,** owing to her economic backwardness; it is only in relatively rare and exceptional cases that state farms have been organized on the former estates which the proletarian state runs at its own expense, converting the former wage-laborers into workers for the state and members of the Soviets, which administer the state. (...) ‘state farms’” ²⁶⁷

The banner of nationalization, raised by the peasants in 1905, adopted by the Party from then on, does not yet equate to the collectivization of agriculture, much less its socialization, as revisionists and Trotskyists falsify. Lenin defines “*the nationalization of the land, which all the representatives of the peasantry were demanding, more or less consistently, in the period between 1905 and 1907*” as the most radical form of sweeping away serfdom, as a bourgeois-democratic task, therefore:

“The abolition of private property in land in no way changes the bourgeois basis of commercial and capitalist landowning. **There is nothing more erroneous than the opinion that the nationalization of the land has anything in common with socialism,** or even with equalized land tenure. Socialism, as we know, means the abolition of commodity economy. **Nationalization, on the other hand, means converting the land into the property of the state, and such a conversion does not in the least affect private farming on the land.** (...) Nationalization makes a clean sweep of all medieval relations in

²⁶⁶ V. I. Lenin, *Our Foreign and Domestic Position and the Tasks of the Party*, our emphasis.

²⁶⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question*, our emphasis.

landowning, does away with all artificial barriers on the land, and makes the land really free (...) **Nationalization would hasten the death of serfdom and the development of purely bourgeois farming on land free of all medieval lumber.** That is the real historical significance of **nationalization in Russia—what it has come to mean by the end of the nineteenth century.**" ²⁶⁸

Nationalization did not emerge as a banner for the peasantry in Latin America, which is why our slogan must be "land for those who till it and live on it". The experience of the Great Socialist October Revolution and the Great Chinese Revolution demonstrated that the agrarian-peasant revolution was, par excellence, the way to ensure the nationalization of land and, therefore, collectivization in agriculture, ensuring the hegemony of the proletariat in both cases: the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and the joint dictatorship of revolutionary classes and its uninterrupted transition toward socialism. Lenin highlights that, despite the economic inconveniences that may arise from excessive land sharing, the principal aspect in implementing the correct agrarian program is the issue of ensuring the triumph of the revolution and consolidating the New Power:

"It would, however, be grossly erroneous to exaggerate or to stereotype this rule [of collectivization] and never to permit the free grant of part of the land that belonged to the expropriated expropriators to the neighboring small and sometimes middle peasants. First, the objection usually raised to this, namely, that large-scale farming is technically superior (...) To achieve the success of this revolution, the proletariat should not shrink from a temporary decline in production (...) What is most important to the bourgeois is production for the sake of production; what is most important to the working and exploited population is the overthrow of the exploiters and the creation of conditions that will permit the working people to work for themselves, and not for the capitalists. **It is the primary and fundamental task of the proletariat to ensure the proletarian victory and its stability.** There can, however, be no stable proletarian government unless the middle peasantry is neutralized and the support is secured of a very considerable section of the small peasantry, if not all of them." ²⁶⁹

Imperialism and the development of capitalism in the countryside do not solve the agrarian-peasant problem in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Therefore, the semi-feudality at the basis of the fundamental social contradiction in the countryside of these countries is the antagonism between the poor peasantry and the landlords. The agrarian program to be established by the communists must depart from the concrete experience of leading the struggle of these masses in defense of their demands, especially land for those who till it and live on it. Advancing this struggle invariably leads to the problem of revolutionary violence and the struggle for Power. After all, as Chairman Gonzalo brilliantly established:

²⁶⁸ V. I. Lenin, *O The Agrarian Question in Russia Towards the Close of the 19th Century*, our emphasis.

²⁶⁹ V. I. Lenin, *Preliminary Draft Theses on the Agrarian Question*, our emphasis.

“(...) to speak of the peasant problem is to speak of the problem of land, to speak of the problem of land is to speak of the military problem, and to speak of the military problem is to speak of Power, the Power of the New State to which we achieve with the democratic revolution led by the proletariat through its Party, the Communist Party.”²⁷⁰

Avoiding the leadership of the peasant struggle for land is invariably avoiding the military problem, an issue that immediately arises in the initial and most elementary forms of the struggle for land.

IV- The law of maximum profit and the principal contradiction in the imperialist epoch

In the previous section we criticized the erroneous political and social conceptions of the leadership of UOC (MLM) regarding imperialism. We seek to demonstrate the complete opposition between the theses of a supposed “*progressive tendency of imperialism that sweeps away pre-capitalist modes of production in oppressed countries*” and the ideology of the international proletariat, particularly with the contributions and developments of Leninism and Maoism. After all, as the great Lenin established: “*Imperialism is (...) everywhere reaction and the extreme intensification (...) of national oppression.*”²⁷¹

We saw how false the consequences of this position of UOC (MLM) are, as it considers that the export of capital from imperialism to oppressed countries was responsible for sweeping away feudality. That, therefore, the agrarian problem was resolved in these countries in this way and that the fundamental social contradiction in the countryside is not between peasants and landlords, but rather between the rural proletariat and the agrarian bourgeoisie. This leads the leadership of the UOC (MLM) to advocate a semi-anarchist agrarian program that defends the need to convince poor peasants to collectivize their property and production. This question is ABC for the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists of oppressed countries.

In this section we will criticize the economic foundations of this erroneous conception of the leadership of the UOC (MLM). We wage this fight not with the sole objective and necessity to “demonstrate serious errors” in the UOC (MLM) formulations, but mainly because these are issues of utmost importance for the ICM. In this sense, the two-line struggle against the erroneous positions of the UOC (MLM) serves, mainly, to raise the communists' understanding of the particularities of imperialism and to develop the ideology of the international proletariat with a view to providing solutions to new problems posed by the course of the World Proletarian Revolution. Among these, we highlight theoretical problems such as understanding the issue of ground rent in semi-colonial countries in the imperialist stage and the current role of the peasantry in the World Proletarian Revolution. A theoretical question related to immediate, political-military, practical problems of how communists should face Yankee imperialism's policy

²⁷⁰ Chairman Gonzalo, *Documentos Fundamentales*, PCP, our translation and emphasis.

²⁷¹ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

of emptying the countryside, aiming to hinder the development of protracted people's war. These are issues in which burning ideological problems reside in, which go far beyond the current controversy, but which the current two-line struggle demands them to be highlighted and dwell on.

1- *Maximum profit* as a particularity of monopoly capitalism

From the point of view of political economy, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) maintains, as seen previously, that capitalism in the imperialist stage, in addition to being monopolistic, would have become “*an internationalized mode of production*”²⁷²; *that imperialism* “has chained all countries – with their specific *modes of production* – *into a single world economy*”²⁷³. We have previously demonstrated that this mentioned chain already took place in the stage of *free competition* of capital, with the development of the unity of opposites “large-scale industry and capitalist world market”. Conceiving imperialism as a “*internationalized mode of production*”²⁷⁴, in the sense of understanding that in this stage of world capitalism, “*imperialism has broken national borders and has faced class against class in the world arena*”²⁷⁵, constitutes a major deviation from Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Understanding, as the UOC (MLM) does, that the contradiction proletariat versus bourgeoisie, in the imperialist stage, becomes “*a single contradiction that the entire proletariat of the world faces against the bourgeoisie of the world*”²⁷⁶ may sound to some like a “leftist” phrase but which is nothing more than an old Trotskyist apologetic formulation of imperialism and pure rightism.

Lenin highlights that imperialism results from the concentration of production with which: “*Competition becomes transformed into monopoly. The result is immense progress in the socialization of production*”, but, “*appropriation remains private*”²⁷⁷. This progress in the socialization of production, therefore, does not occur as advocated by Mr. Avakian through “*The integration of colonies into a new global framework that allows imperialist capital to expand and restructure itself at international level with greater profits and transform the production relations of oppressed countries to adapt them to its demands.*”²⁷⁸ *Chairman Mao takes a position for the conclusion of the Communist International that “Imperialism, with all its financial and military might, is the force in China that supports, inspires, fosters and preserves the feudal survivals, together with their entire bureaucratic-militarist superstructure.”*²⁷⁹ Saying that imperialism is a “*internationalized mode of production, which by integrating colonies into a new global framework transforms production relations*”, or that it “*sweeps away pre-capitalist modes*

²⁷² UOC (MLM), Negation of Negation Magazine, n 6, 2023.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁵ UOC (MLM), Revista Contradicción, n 1, apud, nº 8, 1990, our translation and emphasis.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

²⁷⁸ PCR-USA, Another twist in the world, apud, Contradiction Magazine, n 8, our translation.

²⁷⁹ Chairman Mao, The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party, our emphasis.

of production”, is nothing more than an apology for imperialism, of mystification of a supposed “progressive tendency” of it.

One of the particular features of imperialism is that it advances the socialization of production through the elevation of national oppression and not by overcoming it, through the conservation of feudal survivals, and not by transforming or sweeping them away, as defended by the revisionist Avakian and the leadership of the UOC (MLM). For Lenin, the progress of socialization of production under imperialism implies that “(...) *monopolist capital has intensified all the contradictions of capitalism (...). It is sufficient to mention the high cost of living and the tyranny of the cartels. **This intensification of contradictions constitutes the most powerful driving force of the transitional period of history, which began from the time of the final victory of world finance capital.***”²⁸⁰ As imperialism is the reaction everywhere, it intensifies contradictions and does not resolve them; It allows, however, for the proletariat to lead the resolution of all these contradictions (even those pending from the bourgeois revolution) and, therefore, marks the beginning of the New Epoch, the epoch of the World Proletarian Revolution.

Let us now see how the leadership of the UOC (MLM) seeks to economically justify its conception of imperialism and the particular type of capitalist development in oppressed countries. In their most recent criticism of our Party and the ICL, they state that:

“Imperialism has made the growth of the reserve army even more drastic and has taken advantage of the ‘*cheapness and abundance of available or vacant wage-workers*’ as well as of the relative backwardness of the other productive forces in the oppressed countries, cheapness which, as we have already said, means **super-exploitation of the proletariat in the oppressed countries**, and relative backwardness which in turn is reproduced in that it is compensated in **super-profits for the imperialists and the native ruling classes**.”²⁸¹

They state that imperialism takes advantage of the growth of the reserve army to super-exploit the proletariat in the “*oppressed countries*”, thus ensuring super-profits for the imperialists “**and the native ruling classes**”. They say that the semi-colonial bourgeoisies earn super-profits just like imperialism, in the same way that they claim that these bourgeoisies achieve the same rate of profit as finance capital. As Lenin demonstrates in his studies on imperialism, super-profit becomes a particularity of finance capital, in the phase of monopoly capitalism.

Imperialist profit as monopolist profit, as we will see in detail, is necessarily exclusivist, because of it, monopoly corporations and imperialist states fight against each other for the loot of oppressed countries by making them colonies and semi-colonies, precisely to guarantee the best condition in competition and, thus, be able to ensure captive markets for their corporations' goods and, at the same time, sources of raw materials and energy, in addition to the super-

²⁸⁰ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis

²⁸¹ UOC (MLM), Negation of Negation Magazine, n 6, 2023, our emphasis.

exploitation of workers which is provided by the conditions of backwardness that imperialism impose on these countries and the hindrance of their independent development. Monopoly implies the exclusivity of certain more favorable conditions for the production and circulation of goods. *Free competition*, its opposite, corresponds theoretically, at least, to equal conditions of competition. This economic reasoning used by the UOC (MLM) has already been previously formulated by old revisionists, but before discussing the authorship of this artifice, let us first see how it is in total opposition to Leninism, which thus analyzes the particularity of the imperialist monopoly, in relation to the England's monopoly on manufacturing industry in the 19th century:

“On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type [compared to British monopoly in the 19th century] of monopoly: firstly, **monopolist associations of capitalists in all capitalistically developed countries**; secondly, **the monopolist position of a few very rich countries**, in which the accumulation of capital has reached gigantic proportions. **An enormous “surplus of capital” has arisen in the advanced countries.**” ²⁸²

Lenin makes it clear that accumulation of capital in enormous proportions occurs in *a few very rich countries*, never in all countries. Because the reason for the formation of this “surplus of capital” lies precisely in the monopolistic conditions of which oppressed countries are deprived. The condition of privileged monopolist is the economic basis of the inter-imperialist contradiction, the powers dispute among themselves for the privileges that allow monopoly profits, as explained above. To assume that an oppressed country can accumulate capital with the same rate of profit as the imperialist bourgeoisie is to completely oppose the economic foundations of the Leninist theory of imperialism. Lenin treats the inter-imperialist dispute over monopoly status as follows:

“Any country which has more colonies, capital and armies than ‘we’ have, **deprives ‘us’ of certain privileges, certain profits or super-profits**. Just as among individual capitalists’ super-profits go to the one whose machinery is superior to the average (...) **so among nations the one that is economically better off than the others gets super-profits.**” ²⁸³

In other words, super-profits, the rate of accumulation obtained by imperialists, can only be achieved by depriving the competing power of certain privileges. Let alone in relation to colonial and semi-colonial countries, therefore, it is complete nonsense to assert that the ruling classes of these countries can earn super-profits just like imperialism. Monopoly is essentially exclusivist; this is one of its particularities. However, the monopoly of what production conditions ensures these super-profits? Lenin gives us this answer:

“The imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the division of the world among a handful of states, each of which today exploits (**in the sense of drawing super-profits from**) a part of the ‘whole world’ (...) **each of them occupies a monopolist**

²⁸² V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

²⁸³ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism and socialism in Italy*, our emphasis

position in the world market thanks to trusts, cartels, finance capital and creditor and debtor relations; **each of them enjoys to some degree a colonial monopoly (...)**" ²⁸⁴

The issue is extremely clear: a handful of states exploit a part of the world to obtain super-profits; they earn these super-profits precisely because they occupy a monopolistic position in the world market, thanks to the high concentration of productive capital in trusts; they earn monopoly profits because they are colonial monopolists. How could the colonial or semi-colonial bourgeoisie achieve the same rate of profit as the financial oligarchy, to the point of becoming an exporter of capital? The economic formulations of the leadership of the UOC (MLM) reach this point, indicating that the bourgeoisie of the semi-colonial and colonial countries are becoming exporters of capital: the bourgeoisie of the 'oppressed capitalist countries' has achieved "*a great accumulation of capital by **making it excessive there as well***", one cannot "*evade its real monopoly character and **imperialist aspirations***." ²⁸⁵

To consider this possibility is to make apology for imperialism, it is to say that "imperialist integration" allows all bourgeoisies to grow in the same proportion. As Marx analyzes in *Capital*, when dealing with the concentration and centralization of capital, this harmonious growth was not possible even in the stage of *free competition*, because as he demonstrates, the largest capitals always tend to expropriate the smallest, thus centralizing, increasingly, the capital in the hands of a smaller number of bourgeoisie. The imperialist stage results precisely from this extremely high concentration of capital. This therefore makes it impossible for a bourgeoisie with less capital to accumulate enough to become a competitor to the imperialist bourgeoisie in the market of capital export. Judging that the bourgeoisies of different countries freely associate and share the entire social surplus value among themselves is the silliest fantasy of liberalism and the most perverse illusion spread by revisionism.

In the imperialist stage, the super-profit of finance capital is the maximum profit, exclusive to monopolies and imperialist states. We will begin the study of maximum profit departing from the economic foundations established by Marx and Engels regarding the **relationship between production, circulation and distribution** of the wealth of a society. Capitalist profit and its derivation, imperialist maximum profit, belong to the sphere of distribution analyzed as by Marx. Understanding these foundations of Marxist political economy is essential for us to understand why the transformation of free competition capitalism into monopoly capitalism implies a transformation of the law of profit in the capitalist mode of production, that is, the transformation of the law of average profit into the law of maximum profit.

1.1 - The particularity of the capitalist mode of production according to Marx

Contrary to what the leadership of the UOC (MLM) claims, imperialism does not result in a qualitative change in the capitalist mode of production. In general, the mode of production continues with the same fundamental characteristics analyzed by Marx. This does not mean that

²⁸⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

²⁸⁵ UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation Magazine*, n 6, 2023, our emphasis.

qualitative changes have not occurred in the sphere of production, on the contrary, it is precisely in this sphere that the qualitative changes analyzed by Lenin begin, as well as in the sphere of circulation:

“Half a century ago, when Marx was writing *Capital*, free competition appeared to the overwhelming majority of economists to be a ‘natural law’. (...) by a theoretical and historical analysis of capitalism [Marx] had proved that **free competition gives rise to the concentration of production**, which, in turn, at a certain stage of development **leads to monopoly**. Today, monopoly has become a fact.”²⁸⁶

Monopolist production and monopoly in the sphere of circulation, key economic characteristics of the imperialist epoch, do not change the essence of the capitalist mode of production. So much so that the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process continues to be between social production and private appropriation, and its social expression continues to be the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The essence of the productive process continues to be the one highlighted by Marx, in *The Poverty of Philosophy*: “*I have (...) shown, for the first time, that Division of Labor as practiced in manufactures, is a specific form of the capitalist mode of production.*”²⁸⁷ That is, the segmentation of the productive process, of one same act of work, into a succession of combined partial acts, this is the specific form that the division of labor acquires in the capitalist mode of production. The division of labor predates the capitalist mode of production, but it is only at this historical stage that it acquires the aforementioned specificity. The division of labor in manufacturing, therefore: “*is a special creation of the capitalist mode of production.*”²⁸⁸

It is this specific form of the capitalist mode of production, prior to machine tools, that creates the *new social productive power*:

“In such cases the effect of the combined labor could either not be produced at all by isolated individual labor, or it could only be produced by a great expenditure of time, or on a very dwarfed scale. **Not only have we here an increase in the productive power of the individual**, by means of co-operation, **but the creation of a new power**, namely, the **collective power of masses.**”²⁸⁹

The fact that the productive process is divided on a planetary scale, that the socialization of production has massively increased, does not correspond to the qualitative change in the productive sphere in the imperialist epoch. After all, as Marx analyzes, the international division of labor and its consequences had already occurred in the stage of *free competition*, as Marx analyzes:

²⁸⁶ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

²⁸⁷ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Book 1, our emphasis.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

“By constantly making a part of the hands “supernumerary,” modern industry, in all countries where it has taken root, gives a spur to emigration and to the colonization of foreign lands, which are thereby converted into settlements for growing the raw material of the mother country; just as Australia, for example, was converted into a colony for growing wool. A **new and international division of labor**, a division suited to the requirements of the chief centers of modern industry springs up, and converts one part of the globe into a chiefly agricultural field of production, for supplying the other part which remains a chiefly industrial field.” ²⁹⁰

What, therefore, are the changes in the economic basis of imperialism resulting from the huge concentration of capital? To answer this question, let us take ***Engels' analysis of the development of the contradiction between the mode of production and the mode of circulation in capitalism.***

As we saw in the first section of this text, it is in the work of Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, that the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society being between the social character of production and private capitalist appropriation appears formulated in a more complete and developed way. Later, in *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, Engels would complement this analysis by laying the foundations from which Lenin would formulate his theory of imperialism. In this work, Engels analyzes how the rebellion of the mode of production against the mode of circulation is at the basis of the crises of overproduction and, ultimately, leads to the formation of trusts and monopolies:

“In these crises, the contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation ends in a violent explosion. The circulation of commodities is for the moment reduced to nothing; money, the means of circulation, becomes an obstacle to circulation; all the laws of commodity production and commodity circulation are turned upside down. The economic collision has reached its *culminating point: the mode of production rebels against the mode of exchange.*” ²⁹¹

This rebellion of the mode of production against the mode of circulation is the demand of the social productive forces for full recognition of their social and not private condition:

“Thus, on the one hand the capitalist mode of production stands convicted of its own incapacity to continue the administration of these productive forces. On the other hand, these productive forces themselves press forward with increasing power towards the abolition of the contradiction, **to their deliverance from their character as capital,** *towards the actual recognition of their character as social productive forces.*” ²⁹²

Thus, from this economic conflict between the mode of production and the mode of circulation, important changes arise in the economic basis of capitalist society:

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁹¹ Friedrich Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, our emphasis.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

“It is this counterpressure of the productive forces (...) against their character as capital, this increasingly compulsive drive for the recognition of their social nature, which forces the capitalist class itself to treat them more and more as social productive forces, as far as this is at all possible within the framework of capitalist relations. The period of industrial boom with its unlimited credit inflation no less than the *crash* itself operating through the collapse of large capitalist establishments drives towards that form of the socialization of larger masses of means of production which we find in the, various kinds of joint-stock companies.” (Engels)

However, more than this formal recognition, the rebellion of social productive forces determines a change in the content of the mode of circulation in capitalist society:

“At a certain stage of development this form, too, no longer suffices; the large-scale producers in one and the same branch of industry in a country unite in a "trust", an association for the purpose of regulating production. They determine the total amount to be produced, parcel it out among themselves and thus enforce the selling price fixed beforehand. (...) In the trusts, free competition changes into monopoly and the planless production of capitalist society capitulates before the planned production of the invading socialist society.” ²⁹³

The contradiction between social production and private ownership invariably results in cyclical crises of overproduction in the capitalist economy; These crises, in turn, imply the rebellion of the mode of social production against the mode of circulation, *free competition*. The result of this contradiction is masterfully pointed out by Engels: *“free competition changes into monopoly”*, the anarchy of capitalist social production capitulates in the face of the planned production of the nascent socialist mode of production. The rebellion of the social productive forces against the mode of appropriation and the capitalist mode of circulation is already the transition to another regime, as defined by Lenin, fully developing the ideas of the great Engels:

“(...) certain of its [of capitalism] fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, (...) Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the basic feature of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, (...) At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist above it and alongside it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system (...) the deepest economic foundation of imperialism is monopoly.” ²⁹⁴

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

The concentration of production, in the productive sphere, determines the qualitative modification of the capitalist mode of circulation. The monopoly imposes itself and dominates, but *free competition* continues to exist alongside and below the monopoly; the stage in the capitalist process changes. As Chairman Mao highlights: in a given process of development or at a given stage, the principal aspect is one, but “**at another stage or in another process the roles are reversed.**”²⁹⁵ Imperialism is not characterized, therefore, as a new mode of production, because if it were so it would change the process; What occurs, however, is a profound change in the productive sphere and in the mode of circulation. That is, a higher stage of development of capitalism. Let's see what other changes in the economic base of society these changes determine. To do this, let us follow Engels' analysis of the relationship between the mode of production, mode of circulation and mode of distribution of capitalism.

1.2 The mode of production and the mode of circulation determine the mode of distribution in a society

Marx and Engels elaborate a complete critical theory of the capitalist economy, covering all its spheres: production, circulation, distribution and consumption; defining the sphere of production as the principal one that therefore determines the others, and *ultimately*, the totality of these spheres as the material basis of society determines its superstructure. In the *Introduction to For the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx analyzes the dialectical relationship between these economic factors, however, this text was never published by the founders of communism. It will be in *Anti-Dühring*, with an analysis of the relationship between these spheres of the economy, that they will present the determination of the mode of distribution by the dialectical relationship between the mode of production and the mode of circulation in a more complete way:

“(...) it was seen that **all past history (...) was the history of class struggles**; that these social classes warring with each other are always the products of the **relations of production and exchange** -- in a word, of the economic relations of their epoch; that therefore the economic structure of society always forms the real basis, from which, in the last analysis, the whole **superstructure** of legal and political institutions as well as of the religious, philosophical, and other ideas of a given historical period is to be explained.”²⁹⁶

He specifies the economic structure of society as relations of production and relations of exchange. And he defines political economy as:

“The science of the laws governing the production and exchange of the material means of subsistence in human society. Production and exchange are two different

²⁹⁵ Chairman Mao, On Contradiction

²⁹⁶ Friedrich Engels, Anti-Dühring, our emphasis.

*functions. **Production may occur without exchange, but exchange – by the fact that it is only an exchange of products– cannot occur without production.***” ²⁹⁷

Rigorously supporting Marx's postulates, he shows the dialectical relationship between production and circulation, and, at the same time, the ultimate determination of production in relation to circulation. He exemplifies their mutual conditioning as follows:

“Each of these two social functions [production and circulation] is subject to the influence of what are for a large part special external factors, and consequently each has what are also for a large part its **own special laws**. But on the other hand, they constantly **determine and influence each other** to such an extent that they might be termed the abscissa and the ordinate of the economic curve.” ²⁹⁸

Finally, Engels establishes the relationship between both: production and circulation with the mode of distribution of a given society, that is, how it is distributed among the members of the social body, among the social classes of a given social formation, the productive results of the whole:

“The nature and **mode of distribution** of the products of a specific historical society are simultaneously given with the nature and **mode of production and [mode of] exchange** in that society and with its historical preconditions.” ²⁹⁹

And also:

“(…) **distribution is always the necessary result of the relations of production and exchange** in a particular society, as well as of the historical preconditions of this society; so much so that **when we know these relations and preconditions, we can definitely infer the prevailing mode of distribution in this society.**” ³⁰⁰

We saw previously that the specific form of the capitalist division of labor is the division of the same productive activity within the same production unit; that this division results in the creation of a new productive power, the collective power, which together with the social means of production (machines) shape social production. The mode of circulation specific to capitalist production is *free competition*. And the mode of distribution or appropriation of the social product is capitalist private property, as Marx defines:

*“The capitalist mode of appropriation, the result of the capitalist mode of production, produces **capitalist private** property.”* ³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 1, our emphasis.

The capitalist mode of distribution, or the elements that characterize the bourgeois mode of distribution, have two aspects. The first one deals with the distribution of the new value produced in the productive process between capital and labor. The second deals with the distribution of *surplus value* appropriated by the capitalist in this same productive process, or the distribution of *surplus value* between the productive branches, its distribution in the forms of entrepreneur 's profit, interest and ground rent.

The first law of this mode of distribution is that, as a rule, the worker sells his *labor power* to the capitalist for its *exchange value*; When purchasing it, the capitalist acquires the right to consume the *use value* of *labor power* throughout the productive day. However, the particularity of this commodity (*labor power*) is that the consumption of its use-value results in the production of *more value*. This new value produced by the laborer in a working day is divided into two parts: the first constitutes the *value necessary* for the reproduction of his *labor power*, the second constitutes a *value in excess*. The *necessary value* [*value of labor power*] corresponds to the *wage*, the *excess value* is the *surplus value* appropriated by the capitalist.

The second law of the capitalist mode of distribution is that which deals with the distribution of *surplus value*. According to Marx, *surplus value* is distributed among capitalists according to the magnitude of their capital, regardless of whether they are employed in productive branches with greater or lesser *organic composition of capital*. Thus, a capitalist does not appropriate the *surplus value* directly extracted by him from his workers. The free circulation of capital, *free competition* between them, determines that the totality of *social surplus value* is distributed among capitalists according to an *average rate of profit*. This is the average profit that is earned by capitalists in proportion to the magnitude of their capital.

According to the analyzes of Engels and Lenin, at the end of the last decade of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century, substantial transformations occurred in the productive sphere and in the capitalist mode of circulation. In the first, there is a very high concentration of production, the establishment of trusts and monopolies in certain branches of the economy, which determine the transformation of *free competition* into monopoly. According to Engels' dialectical formula, given a mode of production and a mode of circulation it is possible to deduce a corresponding mode of distribution. Social production of goods and *free competition* thus determine the laws of capitalist distribution. The aforementioned transformations in the productive sphere and in the capitalist circulation mode determine, in turn, modifications in the distribution mode in the monopolistic stage of capital, imperialism. What are these changes and what do the great leaders of the international proletariat tell us about this issue?

1.3 Two particularities of the mode of distribution in imperialism: permanent super-exploitation and maximum profit

Lenin establishes very clearly the two changes in the mode of distribution in the imperialist stage. He demonstrates how the concentration of capital, cartels, monopolies, in the sphere of production and the fusion of this industrial capital with banking capital, originating financial capital, allows it to earn *super-profits*, which are precisely profits above the average

profit, thus subverting the law that regulates the distribution of *surplus value* in capitalism at the stage of *free competition*:

“Monopoly yields super-profits, i.e., a surplus of profits over and above the capitalist profits that are normal and customary all over the world.” ³⁰²

These monopolist profits are what he later classifies as *“super-profits gained by finance Capital.”* ³⁰³

Super-profits, in themselves, do not constitute a phenomenon exclusive to imperialism, they are a common phenomenon in the stage of *free competition* in capitalism. Whenever a given capitalist exploits more favorable production conditions than his competitors, he can earn a super-profit or an *excess surplus value*. The determination of the price of a commodity is its value, which corresponds to the socially necessary labor time to produce it; Whenever a capitalist manages to produce it in working time below the socially necessary average, he can earn a super-profit. However, as soon as these production conditions become universal, such as a new machine or a new method of exploiting the proletariat (a more intense pace of production, for example), the production time of all competitors tends to be balanced and that relative difference is eliminated. Eliminated until a new method of obtaining *excess surplus value* emerges. The search for *excess surplus value* is the main variable of competition between capitalists in the same productive branch.

The particularity of super-profit in the imperialist era is that it crystallizes as an exclusive form of financial capital, as there are exclusive production conditions that only the capital of the great imperialist powers, that is, financial capital, can obtain. These conditions of production are achieved by imperialism through the export of capital to oppressed countries, because in these, as Lenin highlights: *“capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap.”* ³⁰⁴ In other words, financial capital can only earn super-profits by establishing monopolistic control over these production conditions in colonies and semi-colonies.

As Lenin and Engels highlight, the transformation of *free competition* into monopoly does not eliminate competition between capitals. On the contrary, it intensifies, rises, transforms the commercial wars of the national states of the 17th and 18th centuries into the wars of the imperialist powers at the turn of the 19th century to the 20th century and beyond. The financial capital of one power competes with the financial capital of another in the search for these super-profits, in the dispute for those production conditions that allow this benefit to be achieved. This is the economic basis for the partition and repartition of the world, the dispute for monopolistic control of colonies and semi-colonies with the plundering of their natural wealth and the possibility of permanently super-exploiting their proletariat and other workers. The role of the local big bourgeoisie of oppressed countries, which has become a big bourgeoisie tied to

³⁰² V. I. Lenin, Imperialism and the Split in Socialism.

³⁰³ V. I. Lenin, Theses for the 2nd Congress of the Communist International.

³⁰⁴ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

international financial capital, will always be “subaltern” and lackey to it; it is not integrated, it is totally dependent and subjugated and it willingly accepts this subjugation.

Comrade Stalin, developing Leninism, drawing important economic conclusions after the end of World War II, makes a decisive contribution to the analysis of imperialism:

“It is said that the average profit might nevertheless be regarded as quite sufficient for capitalist development under modern conditions. That is not true. The average profit is the lowest point of profitability, below which capitalist production becomes impossible. But it would be absurd to think that, in seizing colonies, subjugating peoples and engineering wars, the magnates of modern monopoly capitalism are striving to secure only the average profit. No, it is not the average profit, **nor yet super-profit** -- which, as a rule, represents only a slight addition to the average profit -- but precisely the **maximum profit that is the motor of monopoly capitalism.**” ³⁰⁵

This is the first particularity of the mode of distribution in the imperialist stage: the goal of the imperialist bourgeoisie, of monopoly capitalism, is not the average profit, nor an ephemeral super-profit, but rather the *maximum profit*. If the economic law of capital in the stage of free competition is the search for profit, that of monopoly capital is the search for *maximum profit*, that profit above which there can be no other. It is also clear that this *maximum profit* is monopolized by financial capital, as it is only possible to obtain it if *colonies are seized, people are subjugated and wars are engineered*. We will deal with other consequences of this concept established by Comrade Stalin, but first we will analyze another particularity of the mode of distribution in the imperialist stage: the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations.

As seen previously, the super-exploitation of labor is also not exclusive to the monopolistic stage of capital, the imperialist one. We saw how this brutal form of exploitation emerged in England, was analyzed by Marx and constituted a way of accelerating capitalist accumulation. However, the continued super-exploitation of labor has at least two economic-social consequences. Continuously paying the labor force below its value invariably leads to the languishing of the class, and a reduction in life expectancy, etc. The capitalist can only adopt this form of exploitation if there is the renewal of a constant excess of overpopulation, as this way, this mass outside the labor market replaces the one that is languishing due to continuous super-exploitation. Population is a decisive economic factor for super-exploitation.

On the other hand, continued super-exploitation leads to social explosions of the working class, which would rather die fighting than starve to death under the lash of the capitalists. This was the case in England, in the 19th century, with the outbreak of the Chartist movement and the *trade unions*, and this was the case in continental Europe, mainly from 1848 onward. Still in the stage of *free competition*, England's monopolistic condition in the production of manufactured goods, until the middle of the 19th century, allowed it to earn super-profits that began to be used to bribe a certain layer of the working class in its country, aiming to reduce

³⁰⁵ J. V. Stalin, Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR.

social tensions in its own territory. This phenomenon was characterized by Marx and Engels as the emergence of a “*labor aristocracy*”.

Developing Marxism, Lenin will demonstrate that in the imperialist stage the super-profits earned by financial capital make it possible for the generalization of this “worker aristocracy” in all the states of that handful of countries that oppress the remaining immense majority of the world's nations. He thus establishes a direct link between the emergence of imperialism and the temporary predominance of opportunist rule on the labor movement in oppressive countries. At the same time, he highlights the impossibility of prolonging this bribery to this layer of the proletariat for a long time. Imperialism is the inevitable tendency towards crises, the dispute between powers over the repartition of the world and competition between monopoly corporations in their respective countries, and this situation also causes instability in the *labor aristocracy*.

This way, also in the mode of distribution of the new value created, in the dispute between capital and labor, there is a change in the laws that were in force in the *free competition* stage. While in this stage super-exploitation was transitory, in the imperialist stage it also crystallizes and becomes more or less permanent for the proletariat of the oppressed countries. Imperialism thus imposes a much worse living condition for the proletariat of semi-colonies than for the proletariat of imperialist countries. They thus aim to obtain super-profits from exported capital and “social peace” in their own territory. They thus seek to make part of the proletariat of their own country complicit in the oppression and national subjugation of oppressed countries.

But as already seen, super-exploitation is not exclusive to oppressed countries. This happens in two senses: firstly, this super-exploited proletariat is a source of *surplus value*, mainly for the profit of financial capital and, only to a lesser extent, for big capital in oppressed countries; second, the proletariat of oppressed countries is also super-exploited within the territories of the imperialist powers. Today the existence of the immigrant proletariat is decisive for maintaining industrial production, commerce and the service sector in imperialist countries. There would be no Yankee economy without the presence of the Mexican, Colombian, in the end Latin American and Caribbean proletariat in its territory; there would be no German industry without the Turkish and Kurdish proletariat; there would be no trade and service sector in Europe without the proletariat of India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Senegal, Nigeria, Ecuador, Brazil, etc.

This mass of immigrant workers is a direct source of *surplus value* and is super-exploited, as the imperialist bourgeoisie takes advantage of their precarious legal condition to impose degrading conditions of exploitation on them, extracting from them a much higher rate of *surplus value* than from the national proletariat. But at the same time, this immigrant mass serves as pressure on the country's proletariat, putting downward pressure on wages and allowing the ruling classes to foment all kinds of reactionary, chauvinist and fascist ideology that aims to blame these immigrants for the increase in unemployment and lower wages.

On the one hand, *maximum profit* crystallizes as a way of distributing the *surplus value* of financial capital; on the other, the super-exploitation of the proletariat is characterized as a permanent form on the masses of semi-colonial countries, whether they live in their countries of origin or work in imperialist territories.

1.4 *Maximum profit is the economic law of monopoly capital*

Imperialist *maximum profit* is a particular form of capitalist super-profit. As seen, in the super profit characteristic of the *free competition* stage, capitalists who have the best production conditions earn this form of profit. When these conditions are not subject to monopolization, such as the expansive force of heated water used in the steam engine, taking up Marx's example, they are universalizable, they can be used by all competing capitalists; As soon as the most advantageous production condition disappears, super-profit ceases to exist. In the imperialist stage, super-profit acquires particular characteristics that transform it into *maximum profit*. This is because transformations in the productive sphere determine that the gigantic concentration of capital implies that certain productive branches can only be exploited in a capitalist manner exclusively by capital of extremely high magnitude. The exploitation of these branches, therefore, becomes a monopoly of these extremely concentrated capitals. Lenin, in his study of imperialism, points out how this phenomenon firstly appears in heavy industry; and Engels had already shown this particularity necessary for capitalism in the construction of railways, for example.

The monopolistic exploitation of capital expanded throughout all branches of the economy, determining a qualitative change in the mode of circulation; *free competition* turned into monopoly. The super-profit that was ephemeral among free-competing capitalists in the same branch of production, initially crystallizes, in certain productive branches, in those that can only be exploited by gigantic amounts of concentrated capital. In these branches, the super-profit of financial capital is transformed into the maximum profit characteristic of imperialism. Lenin gives us two examples of the creation of monopolies in the industrial production of sugar and cement:

"The Sugar Trust set up monopoly prices, which secured it such profits that it could pay (...) dividend (...) *about 70 per cent on the capital actually invested at the time the trust was formed!*" ³⁰⁶

And:

"Where it is possible to capture all or the chief sources of raw materials, **the rise of cartels and formation of monopolies** is particularly easy. It would be wrong, however, to assume that monopolies do not arise in other industries in which it is impossible to corner the sources of raw materials. The cement industry, for instance, can find its raw materials everywhere. Yet in Germany this industry too is strongly cartelized. (...) The

³⁰⁶ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

prices fixed are **monopoly prices**: 230 to 280 marks a car-load, when the cost price is 180 marks!" ³⁰⁷

The sugar cartel allowed a 70% profit rate after the cartel was formed; The cartelized cement industry, in turn, enables much higher **monopoly prices** than would normally be the case over production costs. This stabilization of super profit, initially in certain productive branches and soon after, in all branches, indicates its transformation into *maximum profit*. As Engels makes clear, the relationship between the mode of production and circulation and the mode of distribution is not passive, as one determines the development of the other: "*Distribution, however, is not a merely passive result of production and exchange; it reacts just as much on both.*" ³⁰⁸, therefore, it is necessary to see in detail the implications of this change in the whole economic base in the imperialist stage.

What is the result of the cement cartel's *monopoly price*? Where can the sugar cartel extract this super profit from? Marx demonstrates in detail in *Book I*, of *Capital*, that profit cannot be explained from the sphere of circulation. That is, the fact that a producer sells his commodities for a price above its value cannot socially explain the profit. As he demonstrates, in capitalist production, the only source of profit is *surplus value*, it is unpaid labor, extracted from the worker through the relation of waged production. This does not change in the imperialist stage. The question, however, is that the *surplus value* appropriated by a capitalist is not the *surplus value* immediately produced by the workers he exploits. As seen above, a capitalist's profit is mediated by the distribution of the entire social *surplus value* produced; This *surplus value* is distributed between the different branches of production, between the different forms of capital (industrial, banking and commercial), between the different forms of profit (entrepreneur's profit, interest and ground rent), according to the general rate of profit in a given society.

From the point of view of the relationship between *value* and *price*, according to Marx's formulations, the distribution of *surplus value* in the stage of *free competition* occurs as follows. Different capitalists, who produce the same commodity, that is, who are direct competitors, manufacture under different conditions of production. The working time necessary for the production of the commodity varies, therefore, depending on these conditions, the capitalist who has the best condition produces in the shortest time necessary, the one who has the worst condition consumes a longer time. The value of the commodity, however, is not defined by the singular conditions of production, but by the *socially necessary labor time*. The social value of industrial commodities is determined by the **average conditions of production** of competing capitalists. In the next topic, we will see that the laws that determine the social value of agricultural and extractive commodities are different in relation to industrial commodities, in agriculture it is not the average condition that determines the social value, but the condition of the worst terrain, but this is a point that requires a separate analysis. Let us continue with the analysis of the production price of industrial goods.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁸ Friedrich Engels, Anti-Dühring, our emphasis.

Social value is the productive basis that determines the price of the product on the market. The laws that govern the distribution of social surplus value apply on social value; it is the *law of average profit* that operates in the case of the *free competition* stage. So, the production price of a commodity is equal to the social value, or production costs, plus the *average profit*. The producer with lower production costs, as already noted, will earn an *excess profit*, which does not constitute the particular form of profit of the monopolistic stage of capital, imperialism.

What happens in imperialism, as indicated in Lenin's examples, is that, initially, in some productive branches, financial capital imposes a *monopoly price*, that is, a price above the price of production, thus ensuring a profit higher than the average profit. This surplus profit cannot simply arise from exchange; it therefore implies a change in the distribution of *surplus value*. In other words, the branches of production that manage to impose a *monopoly price* over society appropriate a greater portion of the *social surplus value* than capitalists in other branches. Thus, the monopoly profit of a branch implies a profit below the average profit in the other branches. Lenin emphasizes this change in the distribution of *surplus value* between the different productive branches in the imperialist stage when he says that:

“(...) the “heavy industries” **exact tribute from all other branches of industry.**” ³⁰⁹

Before analyzing the sources that ensure the payment of this tribute to the monopolized branches, it is necessary to highlight that the existence of a super profit that crystallizes as *maximum profit*, as a result of the monopoly of financial capital in production, this condition **determines the existence of different rates of profit in the imperialist stage of capitalism**. It is not possible to have a *maximum profit* for all capitals because the monopolist profit of a productive branch will always come at the expense of a decrease in the profit rate of non-monopolized branches. However, with the progressive takeover of the productive branches by financial capital, one by one, they fall under its control and become monopolized branches. When this happens, do imperialist super-profits, or *maximum profit*, cease to exist? No, “*maximum profit that is the motor of monopoly capitalism*” and that is why in imperialism competition, far from disappearing, is transformed into the unbridled rivalry of imperialist powers and between corporations in their respective countries in the search for this monopolist profit. *Maximum profit*, due to its monopolistic nature, is exclusive and can only arise from the violent defeat of the competitor, “*employing dynamite*” ³¹⁰ against it and the increasing subjugation of colonial and semi-colonial possessions. As the great Lenin highlights:

“Imperialism *is* monopoly capitalism. Every cartel, trust, syndicate, every giant bank is a monopoly. **Super-profits have not disappeared; they still remain.** The exploitation of ***all other countries*** by one privileged, financially wealthy country **remains and has become more intense**. A handful of wealthy countries—there are only four of them, if we mean

³⁰⁹ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

independent, really gigantic, ‘modern’ wealth: England, France, the United States and Germany—have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain **super-profits** running into hundreds, if not thousands, of millions, they ‘ride on the backs’ of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people in other countries and fight among themselves for the division of the particularly rich, particularly fat and particularly easy spoils. This, in fact, is the **economic and political essence of imperialism**, the profound contradictions of which Kautsky glosses over instead of exposing.” ³¹¹

Maximum profit, therefore, is only possible for a handful of countries that live by exploiting billions of men and women from all other countries. This is the engine of monopoly capitalism, as *maximum profit*, as a result of the development of the *law of surplus value*, became the law that regulates distribution in the imperialist stage. As Stalin states:

“Is the law of value the basic economic law of capitalism? No. The law of value is primarily a law of commodity production. (...) the law of value, of course, plays a big part in the development of capitalist production. But not only does it not determine the essence of capitalist production and the principles of capitalist profit; it does not even pose these problems. Therefore, it cannot be the basic economic law of modern capitalism.” ³¹²

And:

“Most appropriate to the concept of a **basic economic law of capitalism is the law of surplus value**, the law of the origin and growth of capitalist profit. It really does determine the basic features of capitalist production. But the law of surplus value is too general a law that **does not cover the problem of the highest rate of profit** (...) the law of surplus value **must make more concrete and developed further in adaptation to the conditions of monopoly capitalism**.” ³¹³

Maximum profit is the law that determines the *monopoly price* and the distribution of *surplus value* in imperialism. Let us now analyze some of the sources that feed this imperialist profit.

1.5 *Maximum profit as social tribute paid to financial capital*

The expansion of monopoly to all productive branches of the world economy does not make super-profits disappear. While cartels and trusts were exclusive to the branches of heavy industry, this one received a tribute from other productive branches. When monopoly becomes generalized, this tribute begins to be paid by society as a whole:

³¹¹ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism and the Split in Socialism*.

³¹² J. V. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*.

³¹³ *Ibid.*

“Finance capital, concentrated in a few hands and exercising a virtual monopoly, exacts enormous and ever-increasing profits from the floating of companies, issue of stock, state loans, etc., strengthens the domination of the financial oligarchy and levies tribute upon the whole of society for the benefit of monopolists.” ³¹⁴

The increased profit of financial capital in relation to what would be the average profit in the *free competition* stage is composed of this tribute imposed by the financial oligarchy on the entire society for its benefit. The main source of this tribute is found in the colonies and semi-colonies and, as already seen, this constitutes one of the economic foundations of the struggle for the repartition of the world between the imperialist powers. Everyone wants to ensure for themselves the best conditions for producing this *maximum profit*. For this reason, Lenin highlights that:

“The struggle among the world imperialisms is becoming more acute. The tribute levied by finance capital on the most profitable colonial and overseas enterprises is increasing.”

³¹⁵

All the militarization of imperialism, all the tendency towards violence, is based and justified by the unbridled race for *maximum profit*. Therefore, the conclusion of the leadership of the UOC (mlm) that the semi-colonial bourgeoisies would earn a rate of profit equal to the rate of profit of the imperialist bourgeoisies is completely nonsense. After all, as Comrade Stalin explains:

“It is precisely the necessity of securing the maximum profits that drives monopoly capitalism to such risky undertakings as the enslavement and systematic plunder of colonies and other backward countries, the conversion of a number of independent countries into dependent countries, the organization of new wars -- which to the magnates of modern capitalism is the ‘business’ best adapted to the extraction of the maximum profit -- and, lastly, attempts to win world economic supremacy.” ³¹⁶

It is the search for *maximum profit* that explains the worsening of national oppression in the imperialist stage, the conversion of independent countries into dependent countries. And we have already seen in Lenin's explanation what are the economic reasons that allow capital exported from imperialist countries to earn super-profits in semi-colonial countries, after all in these: *“capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, wages are low, raw materials are cheap.”* ³¹⁷ To understand the relationship between the low price of land and cheap raw materials, we first need to deal with the *Marxist theory of ground rent*, so we will analyze this aspect in the next session. We will deal here with the other two elements: *scarce capital* and *low wages*.

³¹⁴ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

³¹⁶ J. V. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*.

³¹⁷ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism*, our emphasis.

When discussing the transformations in the mode of distribution in the imperialist stage, we have already addressed the issue of the super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations, whether they are working in their nations or as immigrants in imperialist countries. It is only necessary to highlight that the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations is the main source of *maximum profit* for financial capital. In other words, the majority of this tribute paid by the entire society to the financial oligarchy is paid by the proletariat of oppressed countries. As Lenin highlights when analyzing the phenomenon of *labor aristocracy* in imperialist countries:

“Economically, the difference is that sections of the working class in the oppressor nations **receive crumbs from the *super-profits* the bourgeoisie of these nations obtains by extra exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nations**. Besides, economic statistics show that here a *larger* percentage of the workers become “straw bosses” than is the case in the oppressed nations, a *larger* percentage rise to the labor aristocracy. That is a fact. *To a certain degree* the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of their own bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations.” ³¹⁸

This passage from Lenin is very important because it highlights precisely the character of the ***permanent super exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nations***; because he highlights that this super-exploitation is the source of super-profits, of which he shares the crumbs with the *labor aristocracy*; because he highlights the exploitation not only of workers but of the masses of the population of oppressed nations; and because he links this super-exploitation of the proletariat and national oppression of imperialism to opportunism, complicit of finance capital.

The other element highlighted by Lenin for obtaining super-profits in oppressed countries is the *scarcity of capital*. In other words, when financial capital was exported, it found capital of little magnitude in colonial and semi-colonial countries, in a very initial process of accumulation. This limited accumulation of local capital made competition with financial capital impossible. After all, the production conditions resulting from the unprecedented concentration of capital in advanced countries became the exclusive monopoly of financial capital. Financial capital placed two situations before the big capital that were accumulated in colonial and semi-colonial countries: following the path of national development in unequal competition with them with all the consequences of a confrontation or tying themselves to them as lackeys to continue accumulating in the condition of complicit in the national subjugation and super-exploitation of its nascent proletariat. In the 20th century, already under imperialism, the epoch of the world bourgeois democratic revolution ended and the epoch of the world proletarian revolution had begun, as a rule, the big bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries was compelled to take the

³¹⁸ V. I. Lenin, On the Caricature of Marxism

second path, in rare exceptions it opted for the first and invariably faced imperialist military retaliation.

This society of subjugation to finance capital with the accumulated capital of the big bourgeoisie and the latifundium of the colonies and semi-colonies is one of the most important economic traits that are proper of the economic-social formations in the oppressed countries in the imperialist stage. This condition was called bureaucratic capitalism by Chairman Mao, that is, a capitalism that did not follow a revolutionary, democratic path of development, but developed linked to financial capital, allied to imperialism and local latifundium. This big bourgeoisie, bureaucratic and comprador, is a subordinate but indispensable part of financial capital. Imposing the super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations is under their direct responsibility. The political conditions necessary to ensure this exploitation, in these oppressed countries, are generally and almost invariably fascism. These are political regimes of absolute centralization of State Power in the Executive Power, in which reactionary armed forces exercise permanent tutelage over civilian shift governments or direct control via military regimes, during ascending revolutionary situations.

These are traits more or less common to semi-colonial countries around the whole world. From the point of view of the profit earned by this bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie, it is clear that it cannot be the same as that of financial capital; however, it cannot be too low either, after all, the semi-colonial big bourgeoisie fulfills functions essential to imperialism and is rewarded for it. It is, therefore, a big monopolistic bourgeoisie, it is not monopolist in the world market, but in the national market and in some cases, to a very limited extent, in a regional market. Through the old state apparatus, it controls all foreign trade, monopolizing the import and export of commodities in association with financial capital. It controls the country's industry, through state or non-state capital, based on the maintenance of latifundium and monopolistic relations of property, monopoly and concentration of land, all linked to international financial capital. For all this, they receive fractional values much lower than the imperialist profit of the financial oligarchy, profits that allow them to reproduce themselves as a monopolistic, bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie, dominant in control of the state apparatus.

This big bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie of oppressed countries, therefore, does not earn *maximum profit*, but together with financial capital it *restricts* the profit of the national bourgeoisie (middle bourgeoisie). And in doing so it earns a monopoly profit in relation to this non-monopolist middle bourgeoisie. The production of this middle bourgeoisie always takes place on a reduced scale and, being unable to compete with local and foreign monopolies, in general, it serves as an auxiliary to the enterprises of the big bourgeoisie and in the supply of secondary commodities and services to the State. Its rate of profit is incomparably lower than that of financial capital and far below that of the big bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie. From a political point of view, it lacks the privileges obtained by the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie, whether in terms of tax exemption, access to state credits and import quotas or policies that facilitate exports. It is a bourgeoisie that also super-exploits the proletariat of its country, but that does not have the economic strength to earn even the average profit, in addition to competing in a completely monopolized national market.

An important part of the *surplus value* it extracts from its workers is drained by the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie and by financial capital. It is a bourgeoisie restricted by financial capital and bureaucratic capitalism; it does not even achieve average profits; the portion of *surplus value* that would be allocated to it by the laws of *free competition* are drained by the monopoly to make up the imperialist *maximum profit*. The national bourgeoisie (middle bourgeoisie) earns a minimum profit and therefore has contradictions with bureaucratic capitalism and imperialism. However, as its profit comes from the super-exploitation of the proletariat – which it fears – it is economically dependent on imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and latifundium, which is why it is an economically weak and politically vacillating class; but which, due to its contradictions with imperialism, with the local big bourgeoisie and with latifundium, tends to support the national democratic struggle, whose revolutionary united front program must ensure its interests, and can thus be neutralized and, under certain conditions, and for certain time, to have active participation of its sectors, especially when the revolutionary war forces the imperialist invasion of national territory.

The super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations and the restriction of the profit of the national bourgeoisie are two sources of the *maximum profit* of finance capital. The first is the main source; the second most important, as we will see below, is constituted by Lenin's assessment of *low land prices* and *cheap raw materials*. As we have seen, it was the changes in the sphere of production and in the mode of circulation in the transition from the *free competition* to the monopolistic stage that determined the change in the mode of distribution in the capitalist economy. The distribution of the new value created in the productive act now has, fundamentally, two different rates of *surplus value*: that of workers in oppressed nations and that of the labor aristocracy in oppressing countries. The distribution of *surplus value*, in turn, occurs at different rates of profit: the *maximum profit* of financial capital, that is, imperialist, the monopoly profit of the big bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie of oppressed countries and the minimum profit of the national bourgeoisie (middle bourgeoisie) of the colonies and semi-colonies.

Finally, it is important to highlight that the existence of different rates of profit, depending on the magnitude of capital, was already a thought of Marx and Engels that appears even in the study of capitalism in the *free competition* stage. This is what we can see in the following note by Engels:

“In Marx's copy there is here the marginal note: ‘Here note for working out later; if the extension is only quantitative, then for a greater and a smaller capital in the same branch of business the profits are as the magnitudes of the capitals advanced. **If the quantitative extension induces qualitative change, then the rate of profit on the larger capital rises simultaneously**’.”³¹⁹

³¹⁹ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 1, note, our emphasis

Likewise, the study of the conditions for *maximum profit* are already an old object of study in political economy. In the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, for example, Marx quotes the following passage from Adam Smith:

“The highest rate to which ordinary profits can rise is that which in the price of the greater part of commodities **eats up the whole of the rent of the land**, and **reduces the wages** of labor contained in the commodity supplied **to the lowest rate, the bare subsistence of the laborer** during his work. The worker must always be fed in some way or other while he is required to work; **rent can disappear entirely**. For example: the servants of the East India Company in **Bengal**.” (Adam Smith *apud* Marx) ³²⁰

In other words, according to Smith, the maximum rate of profit can be obtained when the salary is reduced to the minimum, and when ground rent is entirely suppressed. He presents us as an example of these conditions in Bengal, when it was still a colony of England. In this topic we studied the relationship between imperialist *maximum profit* and the super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations. In the next chapter we will study the mechanisms for suppressing ground rent in semi-colonies as a fundamental part of the formation of the *maximum profit* of financial capital.

2 - Ground rent in semi-colonial countries in the epoch of imperialism

To analyze the process of ground rent in semi-colonial countries during the imperialist epoch, it is necessary to assimilate the Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent. Without mastering this theory well, it becomes impossible to understand the phenomenon today, in those countries that are the vast majority in the world, as well as the development of this process in the stage of monopoly capitalism. As Marx makes clear, the formulation of his theory of capitalist ground rent departs from the specific case of England, since it was under English conditions that modern landownership “*has been adequately developed*.” ³²¹ As the classical form of bourgeois landownership developed in England, this allowed Marx to formulate the most universal theory on this complex and crucial question of political economy. Departing, therefore, from the formulations of Smith and Ricardo, but especially from the latter, Marx conceives his *theory of capitalist ground rent*.

Mastering this theory is key to applying it correctly to particular conditions other than those in England. Particular distinctions of time (we are in the monopoly stage of capitalism) and place, in this case Latin America, whose genesis of economic-social formations is very different from that of England. Among these particularities, the following stand out: more recent colonization, the vastness of the territory and the little capitalist industrial development. Marx himself, in his formulations, provides the proletariat of semi-colonial countries with germinal analyzes of the ground rent of the agro-exporting latifundium in America, as well as the particularities of peasant ground rent when linked to a capitalist market.

³²⁰ Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, our emphasis.

³²¹ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 4

These are very important starting points for understanding current phenomena; however, they demand theoretical development on the part of the international proletariat. After all, Marx's *theory of ground rent* was formulated at a stage of the capitalist process in which big monopolies did not yet predominate in production, in which *free competition* ruled the circulation of capital and *average profit* was the law of distribution of *surplus value*. These conditions, as established by Lenin and Stalin, changed from the 20th century onwards, what are their impacts on the functioning of ground rent in the imperialist stage? This is a question that must be answered, theoretically and practically, by the ICM, as it involves understanding the particular relations of exploitation of the imperialist stage, as well as part of the economic foundation of national oppression and the super-exploitation of the proletariat and the peasantry of oppressed countries. nowadays. Our Party, in the midst of the present two-line struggle in the ICM, hopes to contribute to its resolution.

In its magazine criticizing the ICL and, in particular, our Party, the UOC (MLM) addresses the issue by pejoratively characterizing us as “*supporters of the theory of semi-feudalism*.”³²² Epithets often make the two-line struggle toxic, but we gladly accept this characterization, with quotation marks, of course, because the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist characterization and that of the UOC (MLM) can only be opposites, even though we do not have the slightest idea of what our critics from UOC (MLM) understand by “*the theory of semi-feudalism*”. As Marxists-Leninist-Maoists, we are advocates of the theory of feudality and semi-feudality, as are the great leaders of the international proletariat: Chairman Mao, Chairman Gonzalo, Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, Charu Mazumdar and José Maria Sison. We defend this conception because it is scientific and true, as well as being decisive in bringing about the revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries.

After throwing this “epithet” at us, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) argues that there would be a “*coincidence of the theory of semi-feudalism with the theorists of neo-liberalism regarding capitalist land rent*”.³²³ Comparing Chairman Mao's theory of semi-feudality with “neoliberal” positions is, to say the least, nonsense, not understanding clearly what is one thing and another. They state, for example, that:

“One of the main errors of the supporters of the theory of semi-feudalism is due to the confusion of the concept of **absolute land rent**. This fact, by the way, coincides with the theories of neo-liberal theorists. In such theorizing, **the tenant farmer is considered on a par with the wage laborer**, the only difference being that the wage of the former is not in cash but in kind. These gentlemen completely ignore the fact that the tenant farmer owns his means of production, invests capital, **controls the work process** and makes production decisions.”³²⁴

They claim that, like neoliberal theorists, we do not understand the concept of absolute rent; that for us the peasant farmer tenant would be considered as a wage laborer without

³²² UOC (MLM), Negation of Negation Magazine, n 6, 2023, our emphasis.

³²³ *Ibid.*

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

distinction; and that we would ignore the fact that the peasant farmer controls the work process. The theoretical confusion of the UOC (MLM) is complete, as neoliberal theorists do not consider the peasant farmer tenant as a wage laborer, but rather as a “sharecropper” of the big landowners who receive a share in the profits. This is the liberal and neoliberal conception of sharecropper relationships previously analyzed. Regarding the other two points, Marx is extremely clear in his *theory of capitalist ground rent*: the peasant does not receive absolute rent, not even when he owns his plot, much less when he is a tenant; Furthermore, he does not control the work process, but rather is controlled and oppressed by it.

The leadership of the UOC (MLM), in fact, assumes a bourgeois liberal economic position by considering peasants as typical **capitalist tenants**:

“For them [the theorists of semi-feudality], this tenant is an unfree and indigent laborer, and not a **capitalist tenant** who owns the means of production. The capital must be provided by the landowner and the sharecropper only provides labor. This **indigent sharecropper** receives only a meagre wage and the landlord gets a rent (as Ricardo says!). But if we look closely, what **these theorists call ‘wages’ is in reality the profit of the capitalist tenant**” ³²⁵

In this criticism, they only reveal their theoretical indigence, as they do not understand the formulation regarding semi-feudality, nor “neoliberalism”, much less Ricardo's theory of ground rent. After all, for Ricardo, the tenant in no way receives a “*meagre wage*”, on the contrary, he always receives the average profit. The error in Ricardo's rent theory, revealed by Marx, is that he was unable to explain the ground rent of the worst soils, that is, the absolute rent, a key theoretical issue solved only by Marxist political economy. Furthermore, in this strange position of January 2023, the UOC (MLM) contradicts their own formulation presented in their *Program*, published in 2015. As we saw in their analysis of the development of capitalism in agriculture in semi-colonial countries, the UOC (MLM), A few years ago, considered the sharecropper relation as a covert wage relation, feudal in appearance, but wage in practice. Let us remind the leadership of the UOC (MLM) of their old formulation:

“Sharecropping (...) was converted into a capitalist mode of exploitation of land. This wage relation of production has remained covert with the old veil of sharecropping.” ³²⁶

Today, in their criticism of our Party, they reformulate their position to say that the sharecropper relation in agriculture in semi-colonial countries is a relationship between a capitalist tenant and a landowner. Above, we demonstrated that the sharecropper relation is not pure wage employment as the leadership of the UOC (mlm) previously defended, however, even less can it be considered a capitalist profit relation of the peasant tenant. Treating the relationship of exploitation, covert in partnership, as capitalist profit, this is the most shameful “neoliberal” conception, which seeks to transform all those exploited by capital into

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ UOC (MLM), *Program for the Revolution in Colombia*, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

entrepreneurs, small business owners, etc. This is what is defended when treating peasants as capitalist tenants:

The **tenant peasant produces surplus on the rented farm** with family and hired labor. Part of this surplus is transferred to the landlord in the form of rent, part to the usurer/creditor in the form of interest and **the rest is pocketed as profit.**" ³²⁷

For the UOC (MLM), the relation between the peasant tenant and the landowner is typically capitalist. Therefore, this capitalist peasant hires labor force, pays the ground rent to the landlord and pockets the profit that accrues to him. Thus, the rent paid by the peasant to the landowner is a capitalist ground rent, the rent received by the peasant from the sale of his production is a capitalist profit and the amount paid to the hired labor force constitutes a capitalist wage. These conclusions are in complete opposition to the foundations of Marxist political economy. One of Marx's criticisms of Ricardo is that he, like bourgeois political economists in general, saw in capitalist relations of production "natural" relations that have always existed and will always exist. So that for Ricardo every ground rent lease constituted a capitalist ground rent. It is the UOC (MLM), therefore, that repeats Ricardo's errors. Marx states that:

"Ricardo, after postulating bourgeois production as necessary for determining rent, **applies the conception of rent, nevertheless, to the landed property of all ages and all countries.** This is an error common to all the economists, who represent the bourgeois relations of production as eternal categories." ³²⁸

Marx demonstrates that considering peasants as capitalist tenants is a huge theoretical error; and if this was already an error in the *free competition* stage, in the monopoly stage of capital it is something completely unrealistic. What UOC (MLM) is arguing here is that a peasant tenant, after commercializing his commodities, receives a capitalist profit. Nor does it seem absurd or strange to them that he uses family labor (without wage payment) for production. All of this is presented by the UOC (MLM), purely and simply as capitalist relations of production. Marx had already clarified this issue clearly, when analyzing the rent paid by Irish peasants:

"Such is the case, e. g., in Ireland. **The tenant there is generally a small farmer.** What he pays to the landlord in the form of rent frequently absorbs not merely a part of his profit, that is, his own surplus labor (to which he is entitled as possessor of his own instruments of labor), **but also a part of his normal wage, which he would otherwise receive for the same amount of labor.**" ³²⁹

In other words, when the tenant is a peasant, the rent paid to the land owner absorbs not only the profit, but also part of the wage, that is, the peasant tenant receives less than he would receive for the same labor, if he were a wage laborer. It is in this ruined peasant, with a living condition worse than that of agricultural wage laborers, that the UOC (MLM) wants to see

³²⁷ UOC (MLM), Negation of Negation Magazine, n 6, 2023, our emphasis.

³²⁸ Karl Marx, The Poverty of Philosophy, our emphasis.

³²⁹ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

a “**capitalist tenant**”. Marx shows, on the contrary, that there is no capitalist ground rent in peasant renting, that it exists only formally:

“The landlord can also lease his land to some laborer, who may be satisfied to pay to the former in the form of rent, all or the largest part of that which he realizes in the selling price over and above the wages. In all these cases, however, **no real rent is paid in spite of the fact that lease money is paid**. But wherever conditions correspond to those under the capitalist mode of production, rent and lease money must coincide.” ³³⁰

As we will see later, capitalist ground rent only exists as an excess above the average profit established in an economy. For Marx, if the tenant does not earn this average profit, and as rent subtracts part of what would be his wage, or part of what would be his profit, this rent does not constitute capitalist ground rent. The UOC (MLM) completely ignores this issue and even *synthesizes* a new category of political economy (non-Marxist): the “**capitalist peasant landowner**”:

“Now, capitalist agriculture can be dominated by the capitalist rentier landlord (CRL) or by the **capitalist peasant landowner** (CFL [its English acronym]), depending on the conditions of production.” ³³¹

How far have they gone! How can capitalist agriculture be dominated by the “capitalist peasant landowner” class? Depending on the conditions, a landowner can become, at the same time, a capitalist; and under more specific conditions a peasant can also become a capitalist. But how can a big landowner be a small landowner at the same time? Above we saw Marx's criticism of Proudhon, due to the synthesis he made of two arbitrary concepts to construct “new” economic categories; the UOC (MLM), following in the “dialectical” footsteps of Proudhon and Prachanda, achieves the feat of **combining three into one**, to synthesize the concept of “**capitalist peasant landowner**” and even provide us with its “*acronym in English*”.

Even after carrying out this “dialectical” juggling act, the leadership of the UOC (MLM) continues to insist that we, the “*semi-feudalism theorists*”, do not understand “*the concept of absolute rent*”. ³³² Let's see, then, how some key concepts of the *Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent* are understood by them. For the UOC (MLM), capitalist differential rent can be defined as follows:

“The differential rent **is born** from the fertility of the lands and their favorable location (differential rent I) or from successive capital investment in the land itself (differential rent II).” ³³³

As for absolute rent, it is defined as follows:

³³⁰ *Ibid.*

³³¹ UOC (MLM), *Negation of Negation Magazine*, n 6, 2023, our emphasis.

³³² *Ibid.*

³³³ UOC (MLM), *Contradiction Magazine*, n 18, 1996, our translation and emphasis.

“The absolute rent is born from territorial monopoly of land – it is the tribute that society pays to the monopoly of private appropriation of the soil.” ³³⁴

The UOC (MLM) depart from the false assumption that capitalist differential rent is “born” from the difference in fertility or the accumulation of work on the same land; in the same way they define that absolute rent is “born” from the monopoly of land appropriation. Thus, they confuse *ground rent factors* with their genesis. Capitalist ground rent is born from the capitalist mode of production, which appears in manufactures and later advances to the countryside. That is why Marx states that fertility and location factors *are* “quite independent of capital”. ³³⁵

The difference in the economic fertility of the soil and its limitation are part of the objective basis of capitalist ground rent, but do not correspond to its particularity, as these factors also acted in different ways in other modes of production. Since the earliest times of humanity, the most fertile and best located lands (close to rivers, for example) have constituted economic factors determining production. What is important to know, in order to understand the *Marxist theory of ground rent*, is how these factors act under the dominance of capitalist production. In other words, what constitutes the particularity of capitalist ground rent.

In advancing its explanation, the UOC (MLM) states that:

“(...) the differential rent is a surplus profit that is not generated as the quality of soil itself, but from the use of it by capital; **it is a capitalist rent that comes from the exploitation of wage labor in agriculture.**” ³³⁶

In the quote above, they correct the previous statement about the “birth” of rent, but now, they make the mistake of saying that rent comes from the exploitation of waged labor in agriculture. Waged labor in agriculture, one of the foundations of capitalist production, explains the extraction of *surplus value* in the countryside, but in no way explains capitalist *ground rent*. For this does not consist of *surplus value* in general, but a ramification of it that benefits the landed proprietor; it is what the landowner extracts from the capitalist and not directly from the agricultural worker, that is, it is with part of the (social) *surplus value* extracted from workers in the city and countryside by the bourgeoisie in general that the capitalist in agriculture pays rent to the landlord and this is the particularity that needs to be explained. For Marx, the explanation of capitalist rent cannot be confused with the explanation of *surplus value* in general:

³³⁴ UOC (MLM), Program for the Revolution in Colombia, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

³³⁵ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³³⁶ UOC (MLM), Program for the Revolution in Colombia, Fourth Edition, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

“The whole difficulty in analyzing rent, therefore, consists in explaining the excess of agricultural profit over the average profit, not the surplus value, but the excess of surplus value characteristic of this sphere of production”.³³⁷

The leadership of the UOC (MLM), is not unaware that capitalist ground rent consists of an excess of agricultural profit over the average profit, they even state that:

“The capitalist relations of production that have developed in Colombian agriculture generated an excess of agricultural profit over the average profit. This excess is the ground rent. In appearance, the rent comes from the land itself, as if it was an amount that was inherent of the land.”³³⁸

Correct, capitalist ground rent consists of the surplus of agricultural profit over average profit, this is what Marx says. But the UOC (MLM) states that in Colombian agriculture it was capitalist relations of production that gave rise to this surplus; they take as a presupposition what they should demonstrate in their conclusion. They need to answer the following economic questions: does Colombian peasant production earn the average capitalist profit? Does the rent paid by Colombian peasants to landowners constitute a value in excess of this average profit? To answer these concrete questions, however, it is necessary to explain theoretically what is the mechanism that gives rise to this surplus profit in agricultural production above the average profit and why this surplus is appropriated by the land owner and not by the capitalist who exploits the land. However, the UOC (MLM) cannot do so, as they are based on two important errors: first, they consider that rent is **“born”** from the difference in fertility and soil limitations, as stated above; second, they consider that rent comes directly and exclusively from the wages of agricultural workers.

The complexity of the problem of capitalist ground rent is that it is the result of the capitalist mode of production, mode of circulation and mode of distribution. That is why Marx could only address it in *Capital* Book 3, because there he studies the relationship between these two aspects of capital: production and circulation, as well as the distribution of *surplus value* resulting from this contradiction. Thus, differential fertility and soil limitation constitute particular factors of agricultural production, however, they are insufficient to explain capitalist rent. Because it also formed by the general rate of profit, or average profit (distribution of surplus value); and by a particular law of the capitalist circulation of agricultural products: the market price of these commodities is regulated by the production price of the worst soil. The *Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent* demands an understanding of three spheres of political economy: production, circulation and distribution. In production, relations of exploitation, differential fertility and soil limitation; in circulation, the worst terrain determining the market price; in distribution, the relationship between average profit and capitalist production in agriculture.

³³⁷ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³³⁸ UOC (MLM), *Contradiction Magazine*, n 18, our translation and emphasis.

2.1- The Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent

Marx highlights that all ground rent, that is, all payment for the use of land or all value received exclusively for owning a portion of the globe, all this rent constitutes a part of the surplus labor produced by society. In this sense, ground rent in the slave, feudal and capitalist modes of production constitute part of the surplus labor. The particular feature of capitalist ground rent is that it constitutes a part of this surplus labor above the average profit earned by the bourgeoisie. Therefore, Marx states that

*“All **ground rent is surplus value, the product of surplus labor.** (...) corresponding to the capitalist mode of production — **which is always a surplus over and above profit**”.*³³⁹

In capitalism, surplus labor is *surplus value*, therefore capitalist ground rent is a particular branch of social *surplus value* that is appropriated by landowners. And land owners appropriate this part of the *surplus value*, solely and exclusively because they own portions of land, inherited, conquered or purchased, but which are not the result of human labor like other means of production (tools, machines, etc.). Marx thus highlights this power of landowners to appropriate part of the social *surplus value*:

*“The singularity of ground rent is rather that together with the conditions in which agricultural products develop as values (commodities), and together with the conditions in which their values are realized, **there also grows the power of landed property to appropriate an increasing portion of these values, which were created without its assistance**; and so, an increasing portion of *surplus value* is transformed into ground rent.”*³⁴⁰

Marx further emphasizes that:

*“The rent, then, forms a portion of the value, or, more specifically, **surplus value, of commodities**, and instead of falling into the lap of the capitalists, who have extracted it from their laborer’s, **it falls to the share of the landlords, who extract it from the capitalists.**”*³⁴¹

Briefly, Marx demonstrates that in the capitalist mode of production all social *surplus value* is extracted by capitalists (in agriculture and industry) through the exploitation of workers in the city and the countryside; capitalist ground rent is a part of this social *surplus value* that land owners *extract from capitalists*; Thus, in capitalism, landownership has *the power to appropriate a portion of the surplus value which was created without interference from the*

³³⁹ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ *Ibid*

landowner. It is this process of extracting part of the capitalists' *surplus value* by landowners, which Marx unveils in his magnificent theory of ground rent.

One of the theoretical challenges for the formulation of the *Marxist theory of ground rent* is to maintain coherence with the fundamental postulate of scientific political economy: the *law of value*. This law was initially formulated by classical political economy, mainly by Smith and Ricardo, establishing that only human work is capable of creating new values. However, how would it be possible to explain, based on this postulate, the empirical phenomenon that the market value of agricultural production, in addition to ensuring profit for the capitalist tenant and the salary for the agricultural worker, could also pay a rent to the landed proprietor? If, according to the *law of value* and the law of *free competition*, the profits of capitalists and the wages of workers tend to converge towards the same average, how can we explain this excess value of the commodities from the land without collapsing the main theoretical foundation of classical political economy? The question, therefore, was correctly formulated by the bourgeois classics: it is necessary to explain the ground rent that accrues to the land owner without using the theoretical artifice, the false explanation, that agricultural commodities would be sold for a price above their value. Although it correctly formulated the conditions of the problem, bourgeois political economy could not resolve it, as to do so it was necessary to unravel the question of *surplus value*; and thus, only with the *theory of surplus value* entirely formulated by the proletariat, could capitalist ground rent be explained in a manner consistent with the *law of value*. This great task, as we know, fell to the giant of thought and action, the founder of communism, Karl Marx.

In bourgeois political economy, Ricardo is the one who progresses the most in solving this theoretical problem. In his formulation of the theory of value, all additional value created in the productive process results from just two factors: capital and labor. However, this new value created is divided into: profit, salary and rent of the land proprietor. Ground rent in Ricardo's theory already appears, correctly, as a part of the value distributed only in the sphere of distribution; that is, for him, the land owner has no role in the process of producing additional value, although he has a part of it in the distribution of the new wealth produced. How does Ricardo explain, then, the existence of this ground rent, consistently maintaining the foundation that agricultural commodities, even when sold for a price equal to their value, provide this extra rent to the land owners?

For Ricardo, the social value of goods, whether industrial or agricultural, would always be established by the worst conditions of production. That is, if, through competition, it is necessary for manufacturers A, B, C and D to produce to meet the needs of the consumer market, the value of this commodity will always be the necessary labor time consumed in the worst production condition; that is, for the longest time. With this postulate, Ricardo assumes that producers whose individual values are lower than the social value will obtain an additional profit. In industry, competition between capitals tends to suppress this additional profit; In agriculture, this process of optimizing production also occurs, but as land is the main factor of production, the difference in fertility between soils will always be a limit for production conditions to

equalize with the most fertile soils. That is, land with lower fertility will always require more capital or more work to achieve the same productivity as land with higher fertility.

However, as for Ricardo, it is always the worst production condition that determines the social value of the commodity and, in the case of agriculture, the worst terrain, capitalist ground rent could be explained by the relative difference in soil fertility. Thus, in his theory of rent, the social value of the agricultural commodity is defined by the labor time consumed in the worst terrain. The capitalist who produces in this worst terrain, like everyone else, earns the same rate of profit as his competitors. However, as their competitors exploit more fertile soil, even employing an equal amount of capital and labor they will obtain a greater production of commodities, for example twice the amount of wheat compared to that obtained by the capitalist on the worst soil. All wheat, whether from the worst or the best soil, are sold for the same market price, which for Ricardo is always the price of the worst production conditions. Therefore, the capitalist with the best land earns twice as much value as his competitor with the worst soil, as he sells twice as much wheat. However, he does not pocket this surplus value, because what would be the surplus profit from better production conditions is extracted from him by the land owner, who pockets this value as ground rent for conceding this land to the capitalist tenant. Thus, Ricardo manages to explain the existence of the land owner's rent, without contradicting the foundation of the *law of value*, as this appears even when commodities are sold for a price equal to their social value.

The most evident logical problem with Ricardo's theory is that it assumes that the owner of the worst soil would not charge rent for using his land. Because, if the owner of the worst soil charges rent, his theory will be dismantled. After all, as it is the value of the commodities produced on the worst soil that regulates the market price, if the owner of this land charges a rent, the market price will be: value + rent of the worst soil, and thus the price would be higher than the value. If there were rent on the worst soil, capitalist ground rent could not be explained using the *law of value*.

The practical problem is that the owners of the worst soil charge rent to produce production on their properties, after all, as Marx says:

*“The fact that the tenant farmer could realize the usual profit on his capital did he not have to pay any rent, is **by no means a basis for the landlord to lend his land gratis**”.*³⁴²

Although Ricardo advances in the explanation, he was unable to resolve the issue, as circumventing, abstracting the circumstance of the rent from the worst soil, does not solve the problem, on the contrary, it makes it harder to resolve.

The merit of Ricardo's rent theory, according to Marx, is that it lays the foundations for differential rent, but one of its main limits is that it denies the possibility of absolute rent, that is, the rent earned by the worst terrain. Ricardo could not reach the resolution of this issue due to the limits in his theory of value; When Marx resolves these limits, the question of rent of the

³⁴² *Ibid.*

worst terrain becomes an easy solution. Marx comments on the results of the resolution of this problem posed by classical political economy in a letter to Engels in 1862:

“All I have to prove *theoretically* is the *possibility* of **absolute rent, without infringing the law of value**. This is the point round which the theoretical controversy has revolved from the time of the physiocrats until the present day. Ricardo denies that possibility; I maintain it. I likewise maintain that his denial rests on a **theoretically false dogma** deriving from A. Smith—the **supposed identity of cost prices and values of commodities**.”

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With the *theory of surplus value*, Marx manages to resolve the theoretically false dogma contained in Smith and Ricardo's formulation of the *law of value*. After all, with his formulation of the distribution of *surplus value*, based on the formation of a *general rate of profit*, Marx demonstrates how commodities, in general, are sold at market prices that are different from their intrinsic values. That is, unlike what Smith and Ricardo assumed, commodities from the same branch of production are not always sold for a price equal to their value. Marx demonstrates that value and price are identified only when all productive branches of a society are considered; Only in these circumstances does the price of the goods correspond exactly to the value of this total. However, in each productive branch, taken separately, there is no absolute identity between price and value.

This development of the *law of value* by Marx, taken from classical economics, resolved a series of inconsistencies of the followers of Smith and Ricardo, among them, the issue of ground rent in the worst terrain. In the first three books of *Capital*, Marx theoretically summarizes the historical process of transforming the value of commodities into production prices and this into market prices. He demonstrates how the value of constant capital is reproduced in the value of the commodity; and how the new value produced, the product of living human labor, is decomposed only into salary (variable capital) and *surplus value*. In turn, he shows how this *surplus value* “*transfigures*” into profit and, as in the capitalist's perception, profit is value that exceeds the cost price. He details, therefore, that the cost price of a commodity is equal to the constant capital actually spent on its production (raw material + machinery outwearing) + variable capital (salary). And that profit is everything that exceeds this cost price. In this way, a capitalist can make a profit, even selling his commodities below its value, thus realizing only part of the intrinsic *surplus value* in it, the other part being shared with capitalists in other branches of production.

Understanding, therefore, the process of distribution of *surplus value* is a prerequisite for assimilating the *Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent*. When analyzing the process of capitalist production, in Book I, Marx abstracts the effects of circulation; in this way, he considers the profit of a commodity = the *surplus value* contained in it. This demonstration is key to revealing how all capital is the product of *unpaid labor*. However, when studying the global process of capitalist production, that is, considering the relationship between production and circulation,

³⁴³ Karl Marx, Letter to Engels on “Capital”, August 9, 1862, our emphasis

Marx shows us how this identity between *profit* and *surplus value* is not immediate. That is, it continues to exist, the *totality of profit is = the totality of surplus value* produced; however, this identity is mediated by the *general rate of profit*, which distributes this totality of *social surplus value* among capitalists, at first, according to the magnitude of the capital of each.

Marx argues that if this were not the case, another type of incompatibility between economic theory and reality would be reached. After all, if the *surplus value produced* were identical to the *surplus value appropriated* (profit), we would have to conclude that in the productive branches in which there is greater mechanization, a greater amount of constant capital in relation to variable capital, the profit would be lower. After all, in a productive branch whose proportion between constant capital and variable capital was $90c + 10v$, at a *surplus value rate* of 100%, the value of the commodity would be 110. If this commodity were sold for a price of 110, that is, in an immediate coincidence between price and value, the profit of capitalists in this branch would be 10%. In turn, a capitalist whose organic composition of his capital was distributed in the proportion of $60c + 40v$, at a *surplus value rate* of 100%, the value of the commodity would be 140. If the market price of this commodity were identical to its individual value, the profit earned would be 40%. This would lead to the absurd conclusion that profits are much greater in less mechanized branches than in more modern industries. This would be just one of the absurd results, incongruous with reality, of the errors contained in the *law of value* as formulated by Smith and Ricardo.

Marx demonstrates, as already seen above, that *free competition* between capital from different branches of the economy tends to shape a *general rate of profit* in society. Thus, it is demonstrated that profit is independent of the organic composition of capital. With the *general rate of profit*, the already studied *average profit* is formed, which accrue to all capital in proportion to its magnitude. In this way, the *general rate of profit* distributes the *social surplus value* proportionally across the different productive branches. Thus, commodities produced at a higher organic composition (in the example above $90c/10v$) are sold for a production price that is higher than their intrinsic value. In turn, commodities produced at a lower organic composition (such as $60c/40v$) are sold for a production price lower than their intrinsic value.

With this development of the *law of value*, of the relation between value and price of production, between *surplus value* and *average profit*, Marx solves the fundamentals of the problem of formulating a *theory of ground rent* that does not contradict this fundamental law of scientific political economy. He can thus explain both the *differential rent* and the *rent of the worst soil*, or the *absolute rent*. Marx shows that once the market price of an agricultural product has been established, competing producers who produce under the best conditions, that is, on the most fertile soil, will obtain an individual production price lower than the market price. This difference, this additional profit, which in industry would accrue to the capitalist, in agriculture becomes ground rent; in this case in differential rent, which in general terms had already been explained by Ricardo.

As Marx demonstrates that the market price of agricultural commodities is lower than their intrinsic value, due to the organic composition being lower than the social average, this

market price may be slightly above the individual production price of the worst soil, but still below its intrinsic value. Thus, through the distribution of *surplus value*, Marx manages to explain the real existence of *ground rent in the worst soil* without contradicting the *law of value*. Classical political economy could not resolve this issue, as it was tied to the dogma that the price of each and every commodity immediately corresponded to its value. Marx, when developing the law of value established by Smith and Ricardo, shows that the identity between price and value of commodities is not immediate, but rather mediated by the distribution of surplus value according to the organic composition of capital in the different branches of production. This is the fundamental theoretical basis for the formulation of the Marxist theory of *absolute rent*.

In accounting terms, just to further exemplify the theory, taking the data above: in the industrial branch, capital is divided into $90c + 10v$ and in agriculture $60c + 40v$. For the same *rate of surplus value* (m') of 100%, the surplus value (m) produced in industry would be $= 10$ ($m = v.m' = 10 \times 100\% = 10$), whereas the surplus value produced in agriculture would be $= 40$ ($40 \times 100\% = 40$). The value produced in the industry ($c + v + m$) would be $= 90c + 10v + 10m = 110$; the value produced in agriculture would be $= 60c + 40c + 40m = 140$. The total surplus value produced would be $= 10m + 40m = 50m$. As the surplus value is not immediately realized by productive branches, but is distributed between these branches, of the total social surplus value, in this example, 25m would be allocated to industry and 25m to agriculture. Thus, every capital of 100, regardless of its organic composition and the surplus value immediately extracted by it, earns a profit of 25. The average rate of profit in society would, therefore, be 25%.

Capitalist ground rent, however, constitutes the *particular branch* of surplus value. Landed proprietors in the capitalist mode of production receive this part of the social surplus value without participating in the production process with either capital or labor. Taking the example above, part of the 50m is appropriated by landed proprietors, for example, 10m, thus reducing the surplus value distributed between industrial and agricultural capitalists to 40m, and the average rate of profit from 25% to 20%. The particular condition that guarantees this power to landed proprietors is that the main economic factors in the branches of agriculture and extractive industry are constituted by nonenolizable natural forces. The exercise of this monopoly allows landed proprietors to charge rent for its use. The higher the ground rent, the lower the average rate of profit of a given society.

To understand this particular form of distribution of surplus value in more depth, let us now take the branch of agriculture separately to understand the Marxist theory of *differential rent* and *absolute rent*.

Let's start with differential rent. Let us suppose two competing capitalists, applying the same amount of capital in the same planting area with soil of different qualities. Both pay 100 in capital, divided into $60c + 40v$; the capitalist on soil A, with this capital of 100, produces 60 kg of wheat, while the capitalist on soil B, with the same magnitude of capital, produces 120 kg of wheat. The cost price of the two capitalists is the same $= 100$ (60 with constant capital and 40 with salary); the difference is that the capitalist on the best soil produces 120 kg of wheat, while the capitalist on the worst soil produces only 60 kg. However, as seen, in capitalist agriculture it

is the production price of the worst soil that determines the market price. The production price of the worst soil, according to the formula established by Marx would be = cost price + average profit = $(60c + 40v) + 25m = 125$. Thus, every 60 kg sack of wheat, regardless of whether it was produced on the best or on the worst soil it will be sold at 125. The capitalist on the worst soil, selling his 60 kg bag of wheat at 125, earns an average profit of 25, and is satisfied with this result as it ensures the average rate of profit in a given society; although he would not be paying the rent to the owner of the worst soil, this issue will be clarified later when we discuss absolute rent.

On soil B, with higher fertility, the economic results would be different. In this soil, the capitalist with the same investment of capital and labor ($60c + 40v$) obtains 120 kg of wheat. His cost price for each sack of wheat (60 kg) would be = $100:2 = 50$. However, as the market price is established by the production price of the worst soil, he would sell each sack at 125 and pocket 250 for both sacks sold. With an invested capital of 100, he would obtain a total profit of 150. What is the reason for this additional profit? There was no new method of exploitation of agriculture or greater exploitation of its workers (we are assuming the same *rate of surplus value* for both). The reason for this difference was that greater natural fertility of the soil allowed it, with the same expenditure of capital and labor, to produce twice as much compared to the worst soil.

However, this naturally high fertility constitutes a natural force monopolized by the owner of the best soil B, who charges a rent from the capitalist for the use of his soil, for example, 125. In this way, of the total profit obtained from the sale of the two sacks of wheat produced by capitalist B, the ground rent paid to the owner of this soil is discounted, that is, $150 - 125 = 25$. Thus, the capitalist who produces on soil B receives exactly the same profit as the capitalist who produces on the worst soil, which is the same profit obtained in the industry, as shown in our example.

The rent or ground rent received by the owner of the best land constitutes the differential rent. **For Marx, therefore, the differential rent is equal to the difference between the individual production price and the market price, which is the production price of the worst soil.**

But what about absolute rent?

As we know, the owner of the worst soil A will also charge a rental price. Marx does not bypass this practical problem as Ricardo does in his theory. For Marx, as per the example above, the rental of the worst soil could reach a value of 15 and still not violate the *law of value*. Let's see: since the production price of the worst soil is $(60c + 40v) + 25m$, if the lease is 15 the market price will be = $125 + 15 = 140$. In this case there would be the rent from the worst soil and the price of the agricultural product would not be above its intrinsic value (140). Marx thus manages to prove the existence of ground rent from the worst soil without violating the *law of value*. For the capitalist who produces on the worst soil to be able to pay rent worth 15 to the owner of A, the market price has to rise from 125 to 140. This increase in the market price also favors the owner of land B, who then charge a rent of $125 + 15$. Therefore, the ground rent of the worst soil

is an absolute rent, because it is earned by all landed proprietors in capitalist agriculture, while the differential rent is relative, as it varies according to the relative fertility of the soils. The owner of the worst soil receives only the absolute rent, while the owners of the most fertile soil receive the differential rent + the absolute rent.

From an economic point of view, agricultural commodities then become an exception: they are the only ones whose market price is higher than the production price. This constitutes a kind of monopoly in these branches of the economy. But as Marx highlights, this is not a "*monopoly per se*", as would be the case if commodities with a lower organic composition were sold for a market price higher than their value. Marx's theory of ground rent thus is able to explain the rent of all landed proprietors, of the most fertile soil and the worst soil, without violating the *law of value* or the *law of free competition*.

For Marx, the fact that commodities produced in branches with higher organic composition are sold for a price higher than their intrinsic value, that is, because they appropriate part of the *surplus value* produced in other branches, does not constitute a paradox. After all, as Marx demonstrates, these branches demand greater accumulation and concentration of capital and, therefore, dominate the economy as a whole. When they receive their share of *surplus value*, through the *general rate of profit*, they therefore receive their share of capitalist production. However, it would be absurd if capitalists in sectors with a lower organic composition, generally agriculture and extractive industries, were able to sell their commodities for a market price above their intrinsic value. If this were to occur, it would imply that agriculture would be dominating industry, whereas in practice the opposite is true in capitalism.

As we have already seen, the *monopoly price* itself is one of the characteristics of the imperialist stage. We saw that Lenin pointed out precisely this in the example of cartelized sugar production in the USA. In this case, the agricultural product is sold for a market price higher than its value; the difference between this market price and this value constitutes a form of rent particular of imperialism, which is different from the *absolute rent* studied by Marx. In Lenin's example, it is not about the eccentric domination of sugar producers over the Yankee economy, but the domination of financial capital over society which, by imposing this *monopoly price* itself, extracts part of the social tribute that forms the its *maximum profit* from society.

Marx's formulation contains different questions that require reflection for their assimilation and correct application in the study of concrete cases. Marx, in his formulation of the *theory of differential* and *absolute rent*, although he develops Ricardo in several aspects, maintains his correct postulates about capitalist production in agriculture, namely: 1) the same amount of capital and labor employed on different soils in the same area of land produce different results; 2) capitalists who apply this capital demand to achieve society's *general rate of profit*; 3) the production price of the worst soil is the market regulating price. In other words, differential rent for Marx is not "*born*" as the leadership of the UOC (MLM) believe, solely from the difference in land fertility; it also depends on the average profit achieved by tenants on all the lands and to this end, the market price is established by the production price of the worst soil. Wherefore, Marx says that the price of production of the worst soil is "*the basis of*

differential rent".³⁴⁴ To assimilate Marx's theory, therefore, it is necessary to understand the question of why the price of production of the worst soil determines the market price in the pure form of capitalist ground rent.

As seen, for Ricardo it is always the worst conditions of production that determine the social value of the commodity and, for him, there is an immediate identity between price and value of a given product. Marx, already in Book I of *Capital*, demonstrates that it is the average conditions that are responsible for establishing the working time socially necessary for the production of a commodity. For Marx, this law is valid for both industrial production and agricultural production, however in the latter there is a specific functioning of this law, which constitutes a very important particular feature in the *Marxist theory of rent*.

The same competition that exists in industry, between manufacturers of the same product, exists in capitalist agriculture. All capitalist wheat producers, for example, compete with each other and seek to reduce the cost prices of their product as much as possible, either by reducing the value of the constant capital employed (seeds and tractors, for example) or by increasing the exploitation of their workers as much as possible. Any capitalist who manages to reduce wheat production costs, through a new planting method, for example, will achieve that the individual value of his product is lower than the average social value of all producers. He will thus earn additional profit, just as occurs in industry. As already seen, competition pushes all capitalist producers to use the most rational methods of production and to increase exploitation, this leads to an equalization of socially necessary working time, individual values tend to converge towards one same value, additional profit thus tend to disappear, and the commodity to become cheaper.

However, in agriculture and the extractive industry there is a particularity that prevents, to a certain extent, this equalization of individual values and the tendency to suppress additional profits. In agriculture, land is the *main element of production* and in the extractive industry, the main is the *reserve of use-values*. A new method of production or a new way of intensifying work can all be generalized and used by competing capitalists. However, a source of oil at the surface of the soil is not a universalizable production condition. Private ownership of this source necessarily excludes other competitors from exploiting it. Thus, the capitalist who exploits this source will have much lower production costs than one who exploits the worst soil, such as oil sources embedded in underground rocks. This differential soil fertility cannot be universalized, it therefore constitutes a natural force that can be monopolized and is monopolized by a land owner. In the capitalist mode of production, as we have seen, the monopolization of these natural forces allows land owners to extract part of the *surplus value* that would belong to capitalists.

These two conditions: monopolize natural force and the need for average profit, determine that in agriculture and the extractive industry, unlike the manufacturing industry, it will be the production price of the worst soil that will determine the market price. Following the

³⁴⁴ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 3, our emphasis.

example seen above, of two capitalists who produce on soil A (worse fertility) and B (higher fertility); capitalist A will only plant wheat in A if he earns the average profit; the soil owner of B will only rent his soil if he pockets the additional profit that the natural forces of his soil provide, in this case differential rent, as ground rent; the owner of land A, in turn, will be satisfied with an absolute rent, which must constitute at most the difference between the production price of this worst soil and the intrinsic value of this commodity. These are the basic conditions of capitalist production in agriculture: all owners demand rent for the exploitation of their land, rent that varies in value depending on the economic fertility of the land; and all tenants demand the *average profit*.

In this way, as Marx demonstrates, for the worst soil to be exploited it is necessary for the market price of wheat, for example, to rise to the point where the capitalist tenant who cultivates there reaches the *average profit*, and the owner of this soil receive a rent, however small it may be. Therefore, in pure capitalist conditions, in agriculture and the extractive industry, the price of production of the worst soil will always be the market regulator. However, this regulation by the worst soil does not only imply the excess increased value of *absolute rent*, it also implies an artificial increased value of the commodities from the most fertile soils. This is what Marx calls “*false social value*”. Let's see:

“Regarding differential rent in general, it is to be noted that the market value is always above the total price of production of the total quantity of products. As an example, let us take Table I. Ten quarters of total product are sold for 600 shillings because **the market price is determined by the price of production of A, which amounts to 60 shillings per quarter**. But the actual price of production is:

Soil	Quarters		Price of production by plot		Quarter		Actual production price by quarter
A	1	=	60		1	=	60
B	2	=	60		1	=	30
C	3	=	60		1	=	20
D	4	=	60		1	=	15
TOTAL	10	=	240	Average	1	=	24

The actual price of production of these 10 quarters is 240 shillings; but they are sold for 600 shillings, i. e., at 250% of the price of production. The actual average price for 1 quarter is 24 shillings; the market price is 60 shillings, i. e., also 250% of the production price. This is determination by market value as it asserts itself on the basis of the capitalist mode of production through competition; the latter **creates a false social value**. This arises from the **law of market value, to which the products of the soil are subject**. The determination of the market value of products, including therefore agricultural products, is a social act, albeit a socially unconscious and unintentional one. **It is based**

necessarily upon the exchange value of the product, not upon the soil and the differences in its fertility.”³⁴⁵

In other words, production on the four soils (A, B, C and D), cultivated by different capitalist tenants, corresponds to a total of 10 *quarters* of wheat. The production price of the worst soil is 60 *shillings* each quarter, with the cost price (constant capital + variable capital) = 50 *shillings* and the average profit of 10 *shillings*, corresponding to a general rate of profit of 20%. If the market price is not 60 *shillings* a *quarter*, the capitalist who produces in A will not earn the average profit, much less will it be possible to pay the rent on the worst soil. So, there will only be 10 quarters available on the market, if the market price reaches this level. However, the greater the difference in fertility between the most fertile soil and the worst market-regulating soil, the greater the differential rent earned by the most fertile soil will be. This phenomenon, governed by the “*law of market value*” to which soil production is subject, implies that society has to pay a market price much higher than the real average production price of each quarter of wheat. Under these conditions, society pays 60 *shillings* for each *quarter* of wheat, while the real average production price for each quarter is only 24 *shillings*. This difference, as Marx indicates, from 600 to 240 *shillings*, for 10 quarters of wheat, that is, this value of 360 *shillings* is the excess value that society pays to landed proprietors in the condition of differential rent. This value, as Marx points out, is not “*born*” from the difference in soil fertility, but is based on the law that regulates the *exchange-value* of soil production; which determines that the worst soil regulates the market price.

This irrational behavior of market prices for production from soil is a reflection of the irrationality of landed private property in the capitalist mode of production. Property of a means of production that is not a product of labor enables its owner to appropriate part of the *social surplus value* without participating in anything in the production process. Landed private property and the need for *average profit* imply that society, as in the example above, pays more for each *quarter* of wheat and supports the parasitic class of big landed proprietors. As Marx analyzes this situation, it is not inherent to agricultural production, but characteristic of its capitalist exploitation:

“If we suppose the capitalist form of society to be abolished and society organized as a conscious and planned association, then the 10 quarters would represent a quantity of independent labor time equal to that contained in 240 *shillings*. Society would not then buy this agricultural product at two and a half times the actual labor time embodied in it and **the basis for a class of landowners would thus be destroyed**. (...) The identity of the market price for commodities of the same kind is the manner whereby the social character of value asserts itself on the basis of the capitalist mode of production and,

in general, any production based on the exchange of commodities between *individuals*. What society overpays for agricultural products in its capacity of consumer, **what is a**

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.* Some adjustments were made in the Table to illustrate it better.

minus in the realization of its labor time in agricultural production, is now a plus for a portion of society, for the landlords.” ³⁴⁶

Big landed proprietors and capitalist production lead to irrational phenomena in agricultural production, such as false social value. This situation, in turn, which to a certain extent contradicts the basic foundations of the capitalist mode of production, is partly due to the fact highlighted by Marx about the historical content of landed property:

“From the standpoint of capitalist production, *capital property* does in fact appear as the “original” because capitalist production is based on this sort of property and it is a factor of and fulfils a function in capitalist production; **this does not hold good of landed property**. The latter *appears* as derivative, because **modern landed property is in fact feudal property, but transformed by the action of capital upon it**; in its form as modern landed property it is therefore *derived* from, and the result of capitalist production.” ³⁴⁷

The nationalization of land, therefore, as explained by Marx and Lenin, is an attempt by the bourgeoisie to turn against this feudal irrationality from which its modern form derives. As Marx highlights:

“Only this much is correct: Assuming the capitalist mode of production, then the capitalist is not only a necessary functionary, but the dominating functionary in production. **The landowner, on the other hand, is quite superfluous in this mode of production**. Its only requirement is that land should *not* be common property, that it should confront the working class as a condition of production, *not belonging to it*, and the purpose is completely fulfilled if it becomes state-property, i.e., if **the state draws the rent**. The landowner, such an important functionary in production in the ancient world and in the Middle Ages, is a useless superfetation in the industrial world. The radical bourgeois (with an eye moreover to the **suppression of all other taxes**) therefore goes forward theoretically to a **refutation of the private ownership of the land**, which, in the form of state property, he would like to turn into the common property of the bourgeois class, of capital. But in practice he lacks the courage, since an attack on one form of property—a form of the private ownership of a condition of labor—might cast considerable doubts on the other form. Besides, the bourgeois has himself become an owner of land.” ³⁴⁸

If the bourgeoisie lacks the courage to negate private landed property in imperialist countries, this does not mean that it is obstructed from negating it, for its own benefit, in semi-colonial and colonial countries. In this way, the imperialist bourgeoisie suppresses ground rent in oppressed countries, or appropriates it according to the conditions. After all, it would be

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁷ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 4, our emphasis

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

unthinkable that financial capital would be willing to pay this false social value to big landed proprietors in semi-colonial countries, or that it would be willing to pay the tribute that represents *absolute rent*, as a market price above the production price of the worst soil, to the landlords of oppressed nations. Likewise, it would be unthinkable to conclude that the big bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries would be willing to pay the *average profit* and, in addition, an additional profit to small landed peasant.

It is common knowledge that the reality of the exploitation of the mineral wealth of semi-colonial countries, that the export of agricultural products from these nations and that peasant production does not generate the payment of an additional profit to these nations or to these peasant masses. This seems to contradict the *Marxist theory of capitalist ground rent*, but there is no such incongruity. Marx completely solved the problem of the *laws of capitalist ground rent*; What occurs, therefore, is not a violation of the law, but the explanation that the manifestation of these laws in semi-colonial mineral and agricultural production and in peasant production is different from their pure, or classical, form of ground rent in England in the 19th century. Fully understanding the *theory of capitalist ground rent* is key to seeing how the dominance of financial capital imposes non-capitalist forms of rent on oppressed nations and the peasant masses of these countries. Understanding this theory is the basis for understanding the international significance, in the imperialist phase, of the evolution of the forms of semi-feudal relations of production. Without this understanding it is impossible to precisely analyze the relationship between the fundamental contradictions in the world today, as well as identify which of them is the principal contradiction. Marx himself is the precursor of what the leadership of the UOC (MLM) calls the *theory of semi-feudalism*. For it is the founder of communism who provides us with the demonstration that peasant production and semi-colonial production **do not provide capitalist ground rent**. A distorted understanding of the *Marxist theory of ground rent* can only lead to absurd conclusions such as the existence of a “*capitalist peasant landowner*”, and never clarify the current phenomena and the functioning of ground rent under imperialism.

2.2- Marx's analysis of the ground rent of peasants in general and of big landed proprietors in semi-colonial countries

Before moving on to the analysis of the functioning of ground rent in the era of imperialism, it is necessary to return to the studies carried out by Marx on the ground rent of peasants and big landed production in semi-colonial countries in the stage of *free competition* capitalism. Marx does not reach the formulation a complete theory on feudal and semi-feudal ground rent or on its functioning in semi-colonial production already subject to the capitalist world market. However, he highlights that these modalities do not conform to capitalist forms of ground rent and, in doing so, ingeniously establishes the theoretical foundations that allow us to understand in greater depth the development of the relations of production in the countryside and the relations of exploitation of imperialism towards oppressed nations.

Anyone who has even the slightest knowledge of the living conditions of the peasant masses in colonial and semi-colonial countries realizes that the economic relation of these

masses with the capitalist market does not include those principles of capitalist ground rent established by Marx. Whether they are peasants who own small or medium-sized plots of land, or whether they are peasants who are “tenants” of the lands of latifundium, it would be difficult to conclude that these “rural producers” receive the average profit, which would fall to them as capitalists, or the additional profit (differential rent) as owners of more fertile soil, or would be able to impose a market price higher than their production price (absolute rent) if they owned the worst soil. As already mentioned above, Marx shows that poor peasants, even the owners of their land, as a rule, do not receive the average profit, the differential rent or the absolute rent; In most cases, the results of their production only cover the value corresponding to the wage they would receive for the same work and in many cases they do not even earn this value.

We know that in general, peasants who own land are in the worst soil. If the laws of capitalist ground rent governed the peasant economy in a pure way, what would be the result? The production price (which includes the average profit) of the peasants would regulate the market price, and would also be slightly above this value in order to provide absolute rent to these small landed proprietors. Everyone who minimally knows the history and the countryside of semi-colonial countries knows that this is not the situation that prevails. As a rule, the market price is always below the peasants' production price, who, when succeeding in selling all their production, are barely able to cover the necessary costs. This condition imposes exactly the situation of ruined economy in which the peasant masses live. There are several ways to manipulate this market price, whether through commercialization in which peasants are forced to sell their production at very low prices because they are unable to sell it, or through competition with the production of big landed property which can produce at much lower costs. Any of these or other forms converge to the same result: the poor peasant does not receive the average profit, does not receive differential rent or absolute rent. In this way, it is not hard to see that in semi-colonial economies, it is not the price of production of the worst soil (generally owned or rented by poor peasants) that regulates the market price. An indispensable condition for the existence of capitalist ground rent is missing; Peasant landed property, therefore, implies production relations other than capitalist ones. Lenin highlights Marx's conclusion that peasants do not earn absolute rent in the following way:

“Of course, the existence of small landed property, or, more correctly, of small farming, introduces **certain changes in the general propositions of the theory of capitalist rent**, but it does not destroy that theory. For example, **Marx points out that absolute rent as such does not usually exist under small farming**, which is carried on mainly to meet the needs of the farmer himself (...) But the more commodity production develops, the more all the propositions of economic theory become applicable to peasant farming also, since it has come under the conditions of the capitalist world.” ³⁴⁹

This passage is very important, because in it, Lenin highlights precisely the changes in the general theses of the theory on ground rent that are essential to be studied by Communist Parties,

³⁴⁹ V. I. Lenin, Agrarian Program of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, CW 4th Edition, Volume 13, our emphasis.

especially in semi-colonial countries. It is also very important the note that for Marx, in general, there is no *absolute rent* for peasants. As for Lenin's statement about the validity of these laws when developing the mercantile economy, it is correct as a general tendency of the *free competition* stage. But in the course of capitalist development in the 20th century, this tendency changed, as we entered the era of monopoly capital. In the imperialist stage, the peasant economy always remains subjugated by monopoly capital and, in this way, it is impossible for the peasants to impose on the bourgeoisie, on imperialism, on the city in general, a *monopoly price* on their production that would guarantee them at least the *absolute rent* from the worst soil. To survive as peasants, this mass is forced to accept only a rent corresponding to the wage for equal work, sometimes a little more, most of the time a little less. Regarding the peasant economy in the epoch of imperialism, Chairman Mao highlights the following issue:

“To serve the needs of its aggression, imperialism ruined the Chinese peasants **by exploiting them through the exchange of unequal values** and thereby created great masses of poor peasants, numbering hundreds of millions and comprising 70 per cent of China's rural population.” ³⁵⁰

Chairman Mao, when highlighting the “*exchange of unequal values*” imposed by imperialism on the Chinese peasantry, is highlighting precisely one of the most common ways for financial capital to control the market price in the era of imperialism. In this way, it imposes on the peasants a *monopoly price* in the strict sense (that is, in which the market price of industrialized commodities not only exceeds their value, but also exceeds the *average profit* that would correspond to these commodities). Thus, tools, machines, fertilizers, pesticides, etc., are sold to peasants at monopoly prices, increasing the production cost of small properties, preventing them from earning *average profit*, *differential rent* or *absolute rent*. As Chairman Mao points out, in the epoch of imperialism the tendency of the *free competition* stage that the *laws of capitalist ground rent* would govern the peasant economy as it became mercantile was not confirmed. The more mercantile the peasant economy became in semi-colonial countries, the more ruined it became. The difficult thing is not to see this situation, the difficult thing, theoretically speaking, is to understand why the reproduction of this ruined economy becomes necessary for monopoly capital, an issue that we will seek to clarify further on.

Let's look in more detail at Marx's analysis of why peasant property, under normal circumstances, does not earn *absolute rent* in capitalism (in the stage of *free competition*):

“**This form of landed property** (...) The assumption here is generally to be made that **no absolute rent exists**, i. e., that the worst soil does not pay any rent (...) **For, absolute rent presupposes either realized excess in product value above its price of production**, or a monopoly price exceeding the value of the product. But since agriculture here is carried on largely as cultivation for direct subsistence, and the land exists as an indispensable field of employment for the labor and capital of the majority of the population, **the**

³⁵⁰ Chairman Mao, Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle

regulating market price of the product will reach its value only under extraordinary circumstances.”³⁵¹

As we saw above, Marx, developing and rectifying the flaws of Ricardo's rent theory, demonstrates that the existence of capitalist ground rent in the worst soil can exist without violating the *law of value*. Because as agriculture is a branch of production in which there is an organic composition lower than the social average, the market price of these commodities is sold below their value, but with an *average profit*. Marx then demonstrates that *absolute rent* represents, at its maximum, this difference between the market price and the intrinsic value of the commodity. In the passage above, he is saying that the market price of peasant production can only reach intrinsic value in exceptional circumstances; in other words, the peasantry only receives *absolute rent* in situations where demand is much greater than supply, for example, when there is an excessive scarcity of certain commodities. Under normal circumstances, Marx states that there is no *absolute rent* for the peasantry.

Marx demonstrated in his theory of *ground rent* that the worst soil is only exploited in a capitalist way, if its production price regulates the market price. In this way, if there is demand above supply for wheat, for example, and all the best quality soil is producing their maximum, a capitalist will only expand production to the worst soil if the market price rises enough for him to earn the *average profit* and, in addition, rise enough for him to pay the rent to the owner of the worst soil. This requirement, Marx highlights, does not exist for peasant production:

“For the peasant owning a parcel, the limit of exploitation is not set by the average profit of capital, in so far as he is a small capitalist; nor, on the other hand, by the necessity of rent, in so far as he is a landowner. The absolute limit for him as a small capitalist is no more than the wages he pays to himself, after deducting his actual costs. So long as the price of the product covers these wages, he will cultivate his land, and often at wages down to a physical minimum.”

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As long as the market price covers the salary that the peasant pays himself, he will produce to sell. In other words, unlike capitalist production, the peasant cultivates on the worst soil even if he does not earn a profit, even if he does not receive rent in case he is the owner of this land. From this it is important to draw the following conclusion: even in the stage of *free competition*, the peasant's cost price does not regulate the market price; Ultimately, those who regulate the market price are the worst soils cultivated by large-scale production. Therefore, when the peasantry competes with the products of large-scale production, they are forced to sell their commodities at the market price established by it, that is, at a market price that makes it impossible for them to earn a satisfactory rent. As Chairman Mao demonstrates, this market regulation is even more unthinkable in the imperialist stage. Both *absolute rent* and the possibility of imposing a *monopoly price*, in strict sense, on agricultural commodities (as in

³⁵¹ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³⁵² *Ibid.*

Lenin's example of the price of sugar in the USA at the beginning of the 20th century) are not possible, in general, for the peasant economy, as Marx highlights:

“[Absolute rent and the monopoly price are two cases that] are **least of all the case under the management of land parcels and small landownership** because precisely here production to a large extent satisfies the producers' own wants and **is carried on independently of regulation by the average rate of profit**. Even where cultivation of land parcels is conducted upon leased land, the lease money comprises, far more so than under any other conditions, a portion of the profit and even a deduction from wages; **this money is then only a nominal rent**, not rent as an independent category as opposed to wages and profit.” ³⁵³

It seems quite clear to us that for Marx, peasant rent obtained from small agricultural exploitation does not constitute *capitalist ground rent*. Let's now see how he analyzes the rent from large agricultural exploitation in semi-colonies focused on exporting to the world market:

“(...) it is a mistaken assumption that the land in colonies and, in general, in young countries which can export grain at cheaper prices, must of necessity be of greater natural fertility. **The grain is not only sold below its value** in such cases, but below its price of production, i.e., **below the price of production determined by the average rate of profit in the older countries.**” ³⁵⁴

Marx is stating that the price of wheat exported by the colonies is not low because their soils are more fertile, but rather because they are sold below the production price determined by the average rate of profit in the metropolises. The economic meaning of Marx's conclusion is this: if the low price of wheat in the colonies was due to greater soil fertility, this would mean that with the same amount of capital and labor, in the same area of land, a greater quantity of wheat would be obtained in the colonies compared to in the metropolis; These conditions, as already seen, would allow an additional profit for colonial wheat in relation to wheat from the metropolis, which could be converted into *differential ground rent*; If under these conditions colonial wheat were sold at a lower price, it would only fail to provide *differential rent*, but would still provide average profit and *absolute rent*. However, the situation is even more acute; Marx shows that colonial wheat not only fail to receive a hypothetical *differential rent*, because as it is produced on worse land and is sold below the production price of wheat in the metropolis, in a similar way to peasant production, colonial production does not receive *differential rent*, *absolute rent* not even the *average profit* in its entirety.

In this there is a coincidence with *peasant ground rent*, but there is also an enormous difference in this. Because, while peasant rent at best covered what would be the salary for the same work, the rent of the agro-exporting latifundium can be enormous. The conditions that

³⁵³ *Ibid.*.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

determine this enormous rent are highlighted by Marx when analyzing colonial production as follows:

“[The colony’s] **entire surplus production appears, therefore, in the form of grain**. This from the outset **sets apart the colonial states founded on the basis of the modern world market** from those of earlier, particularly ancient, times. They receive through the world market finished products, such as clothing and tools which they would have to produce themselves under other circumstances. Only on such a basis were the Southern States of the Union enabled to make cotton their staple crop. **The division of labor on the world market** makes this possible. Hence, if they seem to have a large surplus production considering their youth and relatively small population, **this is not so much due to the fertility of their soil, nor the fruitfulness of their labor, but rather to the one-sided form of their labor**, and therefore of the surplus produce in which such labor is incorporated.”

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In other words, colonization based on the capitalist world market, on the international division of labor, allows all surplus production (for commercialization) to be configured as wheat. The gigantic volume of this surplus is due neither to soil fertility nor labor productivity, **but to the unilaterality of production**. Thus, regarding this gigantic volume of wheat, Marx was analyzing that in this case the production in the north of the USA, could be sold below the production price of the metropolis and still receive a sumptuous profit. This is a huge difference in relation to peasant production, which is permanently ruined by big property. However, in both cases, peasant production in general and large-scale production for export, analyzed by Marx, receive neither the capitalist ground rent nor the *average profit* typical of this mode of production.

This condition of colonial production and peasant production, that is, of not retaining all or even any part of the additional profit that constitutes capitalist ground rent, was already the object of an important struggle between the English industrial bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy. After all, as we have seen, capitalist ground rent is a branch of the *social surplus value* that land owners extract from capitalists; It is clear that the industry reacts against this extraction and seeks to reduce ground rents as much as possible. In this, peasant and colonial production, especially the latter, played an important role throughout the 19th century. Because as Marx analyzes, when colonial wheat is imported, especially without tributes, as it is sold for a price below the production price, it is this one what starts to regulate the market price. This way, when the market price falls, the differential rent of the best metropolitan lands is reduced. When this market price is reduced thanks to the import of colonial wheat, which generates neither capitalist rent nor average profit, the value of labor power is reduced, as a large part of this is made up of food costs. The reduction in the value of labor power is followed by a reduction in the wages of the proletariat and consequently an increase in the rate of surplus value. Thus, colonial wheat, even at the time of *free competition*, was already an important factor for increasing the rate of surplus value and the rate of profit. As Marx highlights:

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

“Inasmuch as the value of labor power rises because there is a rise in the value of the means of subsistence required for its reproduction, or **falls because there is a reduction in their value** (...) a drop in surplus value corresponds to such appreciation and an **increase in surplus value** to such depreciation (...)” ³⁵⁶

Engels, in an important addition to Book III of *Capital*, explains to us, then, how agricultural production (large and small) contributes to counteracting the growth tendency in ground rent due to the occupation of increasingly larger amounts of land of the globe and successive capital investments in the same portion of land (differential rent type II):

“Thus, **the more capital is invested in the land**, and the higher the development of agriculture and civilization in general in a given country, the more rents rise per acre as well as in total amount, and **the more immense becomes the tribute paid by society to the big landowners in the form of surplus profits** — so long as the various soils, once taken under cultivation, are all able to continue competing. This law accounts for the amazing vitality of the class of big landlords. (...) **However, the same law also explains why the vitality of the big landlord is gradually being exhausted.** When the English corn duties were abolished in 1846, the English manufacturers believed that they had thereby turned the landowning aristocracy into paupers. Instead, they became richer than ever. How did this occur? Very simply. (...) **Since no total displacement of the poorest soil took place**, but rather, at worst, it became employed for other purposes — and mostly only temporarily — rents rose in proportion to the increased investment of capital, and the landed aristocracy consequently was better off than ever before.

“But everything is transitory. **Transoceanic steamships and the railways of North and South America and India enabled some very singular tracts of land to compete in European grain markets.** These were, on the one hand, the North American prairies and the Argentine pampas — plains cleared for the plough by Nature itself, and virgin soil which offered rich harvests for years to come even with primitive cultivation and without fertilizers. And, on the other hand, **there were the land holdings of Russian and Indian communist communities** which had to sell a portion of their produce, and a constantly increasing one at that, for the purpose of obtaining money for taxes wrung from them — frequently by means of torture — by a ruthless and despotic state. **These products were sold without regard to price of production, they were sold at the price which the dealer offered, because the peasant perforce needed money without fail when taxes became due.** And in face of this competition — coming from virgin plains as well as from Russian and Indian peasants ground down by taxation — the European tenant farmer and peasant could not prevail at the old rents. A portion of the land in Europe fell decisively out of competition as regards grain cultivation, and rents fell everywhere (...) and

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

therefore the lament of farmers from Scotland to Italy and from southern France to East Prussia.”³⁵⁷

In this passage, Engels makes a very important analysis of the economic role of agricultural production in the colonies for industrial production and for agriculture in industrialized Europe in the 19th century. The unilaterality of large colonial production allows landlords to export their commodities with high profitability but without earning capitalist ground rent. The poverty of peasants in the colonies forces them to sell their commodities at a market price that does not cover the costs of production. The end of import taxes on agricultural commodities, in 1846, in England, increased the influx of these agricultural products whose market price did not pay for a high capitalist ground rent. The immediate result of this measure was the reduction of the capitalist ground rent of the English aristocracy, as the market price of these products fell, and, in turn, led to a substantial increase in the surplus value extracted by English industrialists. Capitalist ground rent not paid to colonial producers allowed the lowering of food market prices, thus a reduction in wages and an increase in surplus value and capitalist profit. This relationship of exploitation of oppressed nations and peasants, already identified by Marx and Engels, far from being eliminated, worsened in the monopolist phase of capitalism.

There is no doubt, therefore, that peasant and colonial production for export, that is, monoculture for the world market, so characteristic of Latin American economic-social formations, according to Marx's analysis, do not constitute forms of capitalist rent. What type of rent are these? Marx's studies on the *genesis of capitalist ground rent* help us clarify this very important question. In this section of Book III of *Capital*, Marx shows that ground rent, like capital, is a social relation, that every social relation is based on a relation of production and that in class society every relation of production is a relation of exploitation, of extracting surplus labor. Marx concludes, therefore, that the characterization of the type of ground rent received is the key for the characterization of the predominant relations of production. He shows, for example, that, for an autonomous producer, who owns the means of production and working conditions, to transfer part of the result of his production to an exploitative agent, this concession can only occur through **extra-economic “extortion”**:

“The direct producer, according to our assumption, is to be found here in possession of his own means of production, the necessary material labor conditions required for the realization of his labor and the production of his means of subsistence. He **conducts his agricultural activity** and the rural home industries connected with it **independently**. (...) Under such conditions **the surplus labor for the nominal owner of the land can only be extorted from them by other than economic pressure**, whatever the form assumed may be.”³⁵⁸

³⁵⁷ Friedrich Engels, *Capital*, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³⁵⁸ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 3, our emphasis.

As Marx's analysis demonstrates, the agro-exporting landlords of the semi-colonies and the peasants supply their commodities without earning an average profit and capitalist ground rent, the former with a huge rent, the latter in permanent ruin. These agricultural commodities without capitalist ground rent, in turn, result in a greater production of *surplus value*, a higher *rate of profit* for capitalists, as they provide conditions for reducing the wages of laborers in these countries. The negative rent from this agricultural and peasant production is realized as *surplus value* for the capitalists, mainly for imperialist financial capital, according to its distribution. Even though they are legal and *de facto* owners of their land, the agro-exporting landlords and the peasant do not fully realize their property economically, that is, they are unable to transform this property into the power to extract the *surplus value* of the bourgeoisie, which characterizes *capitalist ground rent*. After all, as Marx highlights: “(...) **the appropriation of rent is that economic form in which landed property is realized**”.³⁵⁹ However, those who economically realize the landed property of the semi-colonial large estates and of the peasantry, in general, is the big industrial bourgeoisie, ultimately and to a greater extent imperialist finance capital, as it transforms this negative ground rent into an increase in *surplus value*.

Between the metropolis and the colony/semi-colony there is a relationship of domination by the first and dependence on the second, in short, of vassalage, which by different means (economic, political and military) coerces the landlords to hand over their commodities below the production price. The unilaterality of monoculture for exporting makes these economic-social formations doubly dependent: they need the metropolises to obtain manufactured commodities, they need the metropolises to transport their production, they need the metropolises for capital to invest. What happens at the local level with the peasants is repeated at the global level with the semi-colonial agro-exporting latifundium. The city exploits the countryside in general and industry exploits agriculture in particular, and the metropolis exploits the colonies/semi-colonies. The big landlords, therefore, are like vassals of the metropolitan bourgeoisie, politically and ideologically aligned with the ideas, customs and culture of the metropolis.

All these tendencies that appeared in the 19th century have fully developed in the imperialist stage. The ground rent of the agro-exporting latifundium is, therefore, an evolved form of the *feudal ground rent* which, even based on the exploitation of wage labor, does not provide a *capitalist ground rent*. It is, therefore, a *semi-feudal rent*. The *peasant's ground rent* is also not capitalist, even if he is the legal and *de facto* owner of his plot of land, he is not the one who economically realizes this property. Its ruined production increases capitalist profits, despite low productivity. The negative rent contained in his commodity is the tribute that the peasant pays to society in order for him not to descend to the condition of proletarian. Or as Marx teaches us:

“For the peasant parcel holder to cultivate his land, or to buy land for cultivation, it is therefore not necessary, as under the normal capitalist mode of production, that the

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

market price of the agricultural products rise high enough to afford him the average profit, and still less a fixed excess above this average profit in the form of rent. It is not necessary, therefore, that the market price rise either up to the value or the price of production of his product. **This is one of the reasons why grain prices are lower in countries with predominant small peasant land proprietorship than in countries with a capitalist mode of production. One portion of the surplus labor of the peasants, who work under the least favorable conditions, is bestowed gratis upon society (...).** This lower price is consequently a result of the producers' poverty and by no means of their labor productivity.” ³⁶⁰

Peasants are violently oppressed. Latifundium is satisfied with huge revenues at the expense of the loss of the entire nation; dependent on imperialism, it becomes the most loyal ally of foreign domination in the colonies/semi-colonies. We will now seek to demonstrate, theoretically, the mechanisms of suppression and appropriation of ground rent by imperialism in its search for *maximum profit*.

2.3- *Suppression or appropriation of ground rent from oppressed nations and peasants by monopoly capital to realize maximum profit*

In the topic studied previously, *Maximum profit as a particularity of monopoly capitalism*, we saw how the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations and the restriction of the profit of the national bourgeoisie, that is, the non-monopoly middle bourgeoisie of colonial and semi-colonial countries, constitute two sources for the creation of super-profits for finance capital. We saw that the search for *maximum profit* constitutes a particularity of the imperialist stage, resulting from qualitative changes in the sphere of production and in the mode of circulation of *free competition* capitalism. At the same time, we seek to demonstrate how Marx already considered plausible the modification of the law of distribution of social surplus value, that is, the law that governs the conformation of a general rate of profit that determines an average profit for all capitalists according to the magnitude of their capital. As seen, Marx questioned how the *rate of profit* would behave in the face of a very large concentration of capital in relation to small and middle capitalists. In his studies on ground rent, for example, Marx states that: “(...) **small capitalists, as is partly the case in England (...), are satisfied with making a profit below the average**”. ³⁶¹

In the imperialist stage this tendency is consolidated, which does not mean the suppression of the *general rate of profit*, only that there is a *general rate of profit of financial capital*, which regulates the distribution of *maximum profit* among the imperialist bourgeoisie in its rampant race for the dominance of the entire globe; another *general rate of profit*, which regulates the distribution of monopoly profit among the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie in semi-colonial countries; and, finally, a *general rate of profit*, which regulates the distribution of the minimum profit among the national bourgeoisie in a given country. **All of these based on the super-exploitation of the proletariat and benefited from the suppression of**

³⁶⁰ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

³⁶¹ Karl Marx, Capital Volume 4, our emphasis.

ground rent. In semi-colonial countries, the suppression of peasants' ground rent directly benefits the bureaucratic bourgeoisie and, in part, the national bourgeoisie; and, for the imperialist bourgeoisie, the suppression of the *ground rent of the peasants*, of the agro-exporting latifundium and of the nations as a whole (in the exploitation of sources of raw material and energy and a captive market for their corporations' commodities) constitutes an enormous source for forming its *maximum profit*.

In this way, the study of the *Marxist theory of ground rent* helps us to understand that the set of sources for imperialist *maximum profit* are: 1) the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat of oppressed nations; 2) the suppression or appropriation of ground rent from sources of raw materials and energy in colonial/semi-colonial countries; 3) limitation of the *ground rent* of the semi-colonial agro-exporting *latifundium* which, although enormous, is far below what it would represent if it were *capitalist ground rent* ; 4) suppression of the *ground rent of the peasants*; and 5) the restriction of the profit of the national bourgeoisie, which, reduced to a minimum profit, helps forming the *maximum profit* of the imperialist bourgeoisie. Three of these sources are directly related to ground rent: suppression of the *ground rent of the peasants*, limitation of semi-colonial latifundium's ground rent and suppression or appropriation of *ground rent* related to sources of raw materials and energy from oppressed nations. All these particular forms of ground rent were studied by Marx, let us quickly highlight some of his conclusions about these three sources and their importance for the global functioning of capitalist production. Regarding peasant production, Marx concludes that:

“The moral of history, also to be deduced from other observations concerning agriculture, is that **the capitalist system** works against a rational agriculture, or that a rational agriculture is incompatible with the capitalist system (although the latter promotes technical improvements in agriculture), and **needs either the hand of the small farmer living by his own labor** or the control of associated producers.” ³⁶²

In other words, to the extent that the peasant economy sells its production for a value below its cost price, this helps the bourgeoisie to increase *surplus value*, as it allows it to reduce wages. Not because the peasant production, in small parcels, is more productive than large-scale production, but because it does not require average profit or capitalist ground rent, it benefits the bourgeoisie by increasing its *rate of surplus value* and *rate of profit*. In turn, the semi-colonial latifundium, by disposing of agricultural commodities produced at the expense of the natural wealth of oppressed nations, helps the imperialist bourgeoisie in reducing *ground rent* in their own country, and, mainly, providing them with an increase in *surplus value* to the extent that land concentration imposes the existence of a peasant economy permanently ruined due to producing food below its cost:

“(…) in a country like the United States [in the 19th Century], (….) it is possible over a considerable period (….) that **the surplus-value which the farmer produces on top of average profit is not realized in the price of his product, but that he may have to share it**

³⁶² Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

with his brother capitalists in the same way as this is done with the surplus-value of all commodities which would give an excess profit, i.e., raise the rate of profit above the general rate, if their surplus-value were realized in their price. In this case **the general rate of profit would rise**, because wheat, etc., like other manufactured commodities, **would be sold *below* its value**. This selling *below* its value would not constitute an exception, but rather would prevent wheat from forming an exception to other commodities in the same category.” ³⁶³

This situation, particular to the United States in the 19th century, whose production of wheat for the English market led to an increase in the *general rate of profit* for the English bourgeoisie, became the rule of the world food market in the imperialist stage. The agricultural commodities of oppressed nations, as a rule, are sold below their value, below the production price from the worst soil; although they earn enormous profits and, therefore, do not constitute a class oppressed by imperialism, they pocket money at the expense of squandering the natural wealth of semi-colonial countries in consortium with the imperialist powers. A similar situation occurs with raw materials, where the reduction of the market price below the production price had already been highlighted as a decisive economic measure, by Marx, for increasing the profit rate:

“This shows, among other things, how important the low price of raw material is for industrial countries (...) It follows furthermore that **foreign trade influences the rate of profit**, regardless of its influence on wages through the cheapening of the necessities of life. (...) economists like Ricardo, b who cling to general principles, do not recognize **the influence of, say, world trade on the rate of profit.**” ³⁶⁴

Marx, unlike Ricardo, shows the double importance of the world market in forming the *rate of profit*, both in the commerce of raw materials at low prices, as it results in constant capital savings and, therefore, a reduction in the cost price and an increase of capitalist profit; as well as the reduction of means of subsistence, food, as they allow a reduction in wages and an increase in the *rate of surplus value*. In this way, it is clear that for imperialism the suppression of *capitalist ground rent*, which would be attributed to agricultural commodities and minerals produced in the colonies/semi-colonies, constitutes an essential source for obtaining *maximum profit*. The methods of suppressing ground rent by finance capital follow the same logic used in all economic relations of monopolies. That is, monopolistic control of production and circulation allows finance capital to suppress capitalist rent from the primary products of colonies/semi-colonies, whether by paying a *modest compensation*, royalties enough to bribe the few colonial/semi-colonial landlord class which, although being relatively high values, are far below what would be the *capitalist ground rent* for these commodities. Or finance capital resorts to the use of dynamite, so used by Yankee imperialism, to plunder the natural resources of oppressed nations. As Lenin highlights regarding this logic:

³⁶³ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 4, our emphasis.

³⁶⁴ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

“Monopoly hews a path for itself everywhere without scruple as to the means, **from paying a ‘modest’** sum to buy off competitors, to the American device of employing dynamite against them.” ³⁶⁵

The result of the use of these two methods by imperialism is always the same: the control of finance capital over all production in colonial/semi-colonial countries. When this control is established, the ground rent that had previously been suppressed becomes artificially raised, thus establishing the particular form of the market price in the imperialist era: *the monopoly price*. This phenomenon was studied by Marx, but it constituted an exception to the *free competition* mode of circulation. As Lenin demonstrates, it becomes the norm in the imperialist stage:

“(...) where it is possible to seize all or the most important sources of raw materials, **the emergence of cartels and the establishment of monopolies are particularly easy. (...) Monopoly prices govern**”. ³⁶⁶

The *monopoly price* itself, as we have already mentioned, is a distinct phenomenon from the *monopoly price* of agricultural commodities resulting from *absolute rent*. This is an important economic question, to understand the particular characteristics of the imperialist monopoly. We saw that the *theory of absolute rent* formulated by Marx elucidates how there can be payments for rent in the worst soil without violating the *law of value*. In the case of agricultural commodities, there is a *monopoly price* not because these commodities are sold above their value, but because the market price is higher than the production price of the worst soil. In this case, it is the *absolute rent* that generates the *monopoly price*. In the case of the *monopoly price* itself, the opposite is true, it is the monopoly that generates the rent:

“It must be distinguished, [1] whether **the rent springs from a monopoly price, because a monopoly price** of the product or the land **exists independently of it**, or [2] whether the products are sold at a monopoly price, because a rent exists. (...) **Here, then, the monopoly price creates the rent**. On the other hand, the rent would create a monopoly price if grain were sold not merely above its price of production, but also above its value, owing to the limits set by landed property to the investment of capital in uncultivated land without payment of rent.” ³⁶⁷

The imperialist *maximum profit* fits precisely in this case: it is a rent generated by the *monopoly price* and not generated by the *remuneration* of the worst soil. Imperialism's *maximum profit* is rent generated by *monopoly price*; This *monopoly price* in turn is ensured by monopolistic control of production and by violence in inter-imperialist competition and, mainly, by the national subjugation of oppressed countries. Does the *monopoly price* typical of imperialism and the rent it provides constitute a violation of the *law of value*? In other words, is

³⁶⁵ V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, our emphasis.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ Karl Marx, Capital, Volume 3, our emphasis.

it possible to obtain a consistent rent from the *monopoly price*, from selling commodities at a price above their value? Yes, it is possible for this to happen, without violating the *law of value*; Let's see how Marx deals with the issue:

“Finally, if equalization of surplus value into average profit meets with obstacles in the various spheres of production in the form of artificial or natural monopolies, and particularly monopoly in landed property, so that a **monopoly price** becomes possible, which rises **above the price of production and above the value of the commodities** affected by such a monopoly, then the limits imposed by the value of the commodities would not thereby be removed. **The monopoly price of certain commodities would merely transfer a portion of the profit of the other commodity producers to the commodities having the monopoly price.** A local disturbance in the distribution of the surplus value among the various spheres of production would indirectly take place, but it would leave the limit of this surplus value itself unaltered. Should the commodity having the monopoly price enter into the necessary consumption of the laborer, it would increase the wage and thereby reduce the surplus value, assuming the laborer receives the value of his labor power as before. It could depress wages below the value of labor power, but only to the extent that the former exceeds the limit of their physical minimum. In this case the monopoly price would be paid **by a deduction from real wages** (i. e., the quantity of use values received by the laborer for the same quantity of labor) **and from the profit of the other capitalists.** The limits within which the monopoly price would affect the normal regulation of the prices of commodities would be firmly fixed and accurately calculable.”³⁶⁸

Marx provides us with a brilliant analysis of the global functioning of *monopoly price*, very important for a deeper understanding of imperialism. The *monopoly price*, the sale of a commodity at a price above its value, or its production price, does not allow for greater generation of wealth, an additional production of *surplus value*. What the *monopoly price* allows is a greater concentration of wealth for those capitals that control the production of commodities that can be sold at this price. The realization of the *monopoly price* of a commodity occurs at the expense of the profits of other capitalists and the greater exploitation of the proletariat. In the world market, therefore, it is not possible for all commodities to be sold at a *monopoly price*, but as this price ensures the rent that constitutes *maximum profit*, it is easy to conclude that the commodities produced by finance capital are those that are able to impose the *monopoly price* as its market price. A particular form of inter-imperialist competition is the dispute over production and market conditions that ensure the *monopoly price*.

But how does ground rent behave in this distribution of *surplus value* altered by the *monopoly price*? Let us start once again from Marx's considerations on the issue:

“Profit of capital (profit of enterprise plus interest) and ground rent are thus no more than particular components of surplus value, categories by which surplus value is

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

differentiated depending on whether it falls to the share of capital or landed property, headings which in no whit however alter its nature. **Added together, these form the sum of social surplus value.**" ³⁶⁹

The total *social surplus value* can be divided into two parts: profit of capital and ground rent. *Surplus value* can only be created in the productive process, ground rent does not form the value of commodities, as Smith's theory of value supposed, it is a portion of the *surplus value* extracted by landed proprietors from capitalists after the productive process has concluded. Ground rent does not generate value, it absorbs value. Only as negative rent, that is, as unrealized ground rent, it enables the creation of a greater amount of *social surplus value*. Imperialism acts to suppress and annul the ground rent of oppressed nations and their peasants; on the other hand, it seeks to increase it artificially when it becomes a monopolist, as in Lenin's examples of the sugar and cement cartel. What is always at stake is the total *surplus value* produced by society, which cannot be increased by the *monopoly price*, but can be redistributed differently, which implies the existence of different *rates of profit*: monopoly profit and non-monopolistic profit.

In his analysis of *average profit*, Marx demonstrates that the *surplus value* produced directly in agriculture does not participate in forming the *general rate of profit*. This is because the *surplus value* produced in agriculture, when used to pay *absolute ground rent* to rural landed proprietors, does not constitute the *social surplus value* to be shared between the different branches of industry. As seen, Marx assumes that all the *surplus value* produced in agriculture is retained by land owners in the form of *ground rent*, thus not allowing the *surplus value* produced in agriculture to be distributed to other capitals. In the imperialist phase of capitalism, this principle discovered by Marx remains valid, as the *surplus value* produced in agriculture in fact continues without composing the *general rate of profit*. From the colonial/semi-colonial rule of Finance capital, it is able to appropriate part of this *surplus value* that in free competition capitalism would belong to land owners. However, finance capital appropriates part of this *surplus value* not for the benefit of the *general rate of profit*, but for the imperialist *maximum profit*.

In relation to monopoly rent, that is, that rent generated by the *monopoly price*, as is the typical case of imperialist *maximum profit*, Marx analyzes it as follows:

"Even monopoly rent (...) it is at least part of the surplus value of other commodities, i. e., of commodities which are exchanged for this commodity having a monopoly price. The sum of average profit plus ground rent can never be greater than the magnitude of which they are components and which exists before this division." ³⁷⁰

The sum of profit of capital and ground rent form the totality of *social surplus value* produced by society. Under the conditions of *free competition* capitalism, where the *law of*

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

average profit governs, total ground rent will be the result of subtracting the total *surplus value* from the global average profit. In the era of imperialism, the profit of finance capital needs to seize the ground rent of oppressed nations to become *maximum profit*. The imperialist bourgeoisie thus realize, in the lands of the semi-colonies, its project of suppressing private property of land. However, it suppresses private property over the natural forces of oppressed nations not for social progress but rather for colonial enslavement for *maximum profit*. When it controls all primary production in semi-colonies, the imperialist bourgeoisie artificially increases ground rent, which becomes monopolistic and not typically capitalist. It does so not for the benefit of the nation from which natural wealth is extracted, but for the benefit of its gigantic capitalist accumulation.

In this way, finance capital seeks to artificially increase ground rent from primary production under its control, aiming not to reduce the profit of its own capital but, rather, to reduce that of its competitors; subtracting from them part of the previously appropriated *surplus value*. In this game of forces of finance capital, the rentier and parasitic content of imperialism is reinforced, which seeks to increase the price of primary products by earning *monopoly ground rent* as a component of its *maximum profit*. Of course, this finds a limit in capitalist production itself, as the disproportionate increase in the price of raw materials and food implies a reduction in the *rate of surplus value* and the *rate of profit* by increasing the *value of labor power* with it. But it is under these conditions that the phenomena of competition among the big capital occur in the epoch of imperialism.

The phenomenon of the suppression of ground rent in semi-colonial countries on the world market was extensively studied in the 1950s. The process characterized by Chairman Mao as an “*exchange of unequal values*”,³⁷¹ in the exploitative relationship between imperialism and the Chinese peasantry, was not a local process, but with global scope. Numerous statistical data collected at that time proved the imposition of a monopolized international price for industrialized production by finance capital. This monopoly price, as we have seen, implied a greater profit of capital that was compensated by the reduction in ground rent that would correspond to the primary products of the oppressed nations. This is the economic cause that explains the *monopoly price* of manufactured commodities and the deficit in the prices of primary products.

After the 1970s, an opposite phenomenon was observed, but in which the same essence was preserved: there was a significant increase in the price of primary products. This implied a greater realization of ground rent in these commodities, particularly in oil. Initially, it causes a problem for imperialism, as it tends to reduce the profits of finance capital. But this is circumvented by imperialism as it gradually assumes, through the intertwining of finance capital, the economic, political and military control of these sources of raw materials. The strengthening of the state of Israel, as a gendarme of Yankee imperialism in the Middle East, is part of this policy of controlling the oil sources of the region, as well as the intertwining of the USA with the

³⁷¹ Chairman Mao, Abandon Illusions, Prepare to Fight, our emphasis.

Saudi monarchy. This condition only reinforces the importance of the advance of the Heroic Palestinian National Resistance for the world proletarian revolution.

This way, Yankee imperialism, with its capital exported to oil-producing countries, earns additional profits when the price of oil is high; on the other hand, it loses profit to the extent that the *monopoly price* of oil implies a reduction in the profit of capital. Today, Yankee imperialism is a major oil producer, but oil extraction in Yankee territory takes place through drilling of bituminous shale rocks. This is the worst soil for oil production, as it has the lowest economic fertility. For Yankee producers to make a profit, the market price must rise until they achieve *absolute rent*, in addition to a sumptuous profit. That is why the oil being above US\$50 per barrel is in the interest of Yankee imperialism. However, as an industrialized economy, whose capital controls large sectors of industrial production, they are not interested in the price rising much above this level, unlike the atomic superpower Russia, whose industrialization is smaller and the most fertile oil sources benefit from the artificial increase in the price of oil. For Yankee imperialism, as it is the worst soil, it is essential to remove more fertile sources controlled by capital from different powers from competition. Through war and embargo policy, it restricts as much as possible the participation of Iran and Venezuela in the global crude oil market, for example. This military control, economically artificial, is essential for Yankee imperialism to ensure *maximum profit* for its corporations. At the core of this issue is the particular behavior of ground rent during the era of imperialism.

The same issue can be said in relation to soybean. The USA and Brazil are today the two largest soybean producers in the world, most of which is appropriated by China. Although there is a lot of Yankee capital exported for this production in our country, Brazilian soybeans producers also appear as competitors to Yankee soybeans. Of course, it is completely disproportionate competition, as most of the soybean produced in Brazil depends on seeds, pesticides and machinery produced in the USA; in a way that the growth of soybean production here directly benefits the economy of the imperialist superpower. However, as soybean production in Brazil grows significantly, there is a tendency to reduce the market price, a situation that would directly benefit Chinese imperialism, but which would on the other hand harm the finance capital invested in Yankee soybeans. With the process of the war in Ukraine, the invasion by the atomic superpower Russia of Ukrainian territory, the production price of agricultural inputs rose, increasing the cost price of soybeans produced both in the USA and in Brazil. Here, however, the impact was different, as the expansion of soybean planting to the Amazon region provided a relative advantage over competition from Yankee soybeans. With new land from the felled forest, fewer inputs were consumed to produce a greater quantity of soybeans per hectare. Due to this tendency, the state of Mato Grosso, in its Amazon area, quickly became the largest soybean producer in the country, surpassing the state of Paraná. This high fertility allowed a greater increase in Brazilian soybeans in purchases from the Yankees. One of the ways for US imperialism to limit this competition is the intensification of its environmental policy, monitoring the deforestation of the Amazon Forest and the Cerrado region, aiming not at conserving the natural environment and our national wealth, but rather ensuring that the best soils are expelled from the market, thus ensuring *maximum profit* for their finance capital invested in the production of Yankee soybeans.

Phenomena of artificial increase in ground rent can also be observed in Europe. The European Agreement of Agriculture (AoA), for example, establishes the number of hectares that must be produced in each country, as well as what will be produced. The soils forced out of competition receives ground rent paid by the European Union and are paid to produce nothing. This artificial way of limiting competition aims to ensure a higher market price for French wine, for example. It is, therefore, an imperialist policy for manipulating ground rent in order to obtain *maximum profit*. In this case, also aiming social control. Because, the taxation imposed by the European Union on milk from Uruguay, for example, aims to artificially conserve the ground rent of small milk producers on the European continent. What European society pays extra for their food ensures this artificial form of rent from small production. This is a way for European imperialism to keep continent's peasantry under its control and corporatize them, which in the 1990s showed important displays of fighting and organizational capacity. This phenomenon was studied by Lenin and is analogous to that of the labor aristocracy:

“In addition, a specific feature of Danish imperialism is the **super-profits it obtains** from its monopolistically advantageous position in the meat and dairy produce market: using cheap maritime transport, she supplies the world’s biggest market, London. As a result, the Danish bourgeoisie and the **rich Danish peasants** (bourgeois of the purest type, in spite of the fables of the Russian Narodniks) **have become ‘prosperous’ satellites of the British imperialist bourgeoisie**, sharing their particularly easy and particularly fat profits.”

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This phenomenon of a peasant aristocracy in imperialist countries is another by-product of this particular stage of capitalism. It is important to be studied, as its existence today shows that despite being partially paralyzed, this class, as the crisis of imperialism deepens, could constitute an important force alongside the proletariat in the Socialist Revolutions in imperialist countries. Thus, as the worker aristocracy cannot be maintained for long, the same will happen with this peasant aristocracy.

The study of imperialism and the *Marxist theory of ground rent* allows us to understand in a deeper way the current phenomena and the perspectives of the World Proletarian Revolution. Mastering this Marxist arsenal of political economy is key to understanding the relationship between the fundamental contradictions in the world today and why the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism constitutes the principal contradiction of the epoch.

3- The principal contradiction of the monopolistic stage of the capitalist process

The two-line struggle that went through the ICM in 2022, impulsed by the publication of the *Bases for Discussion* proposed by the parties and organizations that were members the then CUMIC, focused particularly on the question of the fundamental contradictions in the world and which of these constitutes the principal contradiction today. The struggle should rightly focus on this point, because its correct delimitation is essential for the establishment of a common

³⁷² V. I. Lenin, Ten “Socialist” Ministers, our translation and emphasis.

Political Line for the ICM, which would allow it to unify. Important two-line struggles also took place on this issue during the UMIC itself and, as a result of this struggle, the *Political Declaration and the Principles* of the ICL established that:

“The whole process of the capitalist society has the **contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as the fundamental contradiction**. Yet, **three fundamental contradictions** are developed in the world when it transits from non-monopoly capitalism into monopoly capitalism – or imperialism:

First contradiction: between oppressed nations, on the one hand, and imperialist superpowers and powers on the other. This is the principal contradiction in the current moment and **the principal contradiction of the epoch of imperialism** at the same time.

Second contradiction: between proletariat and bourgeoisie.

Third contradiction: inter-imperialist”³⁷³

This definition constitutes an important political leap in the line of the ICM, as it develops what the CPC established in the *Chinese Letter* from 1963, as well as rectifies important errors and deviations in the 1984 *RIM Declaration*, which the PCP had already pointed out in the 1980s. Continuing the debate and struggle around this issue is important for raising the ICM's understanding on the foundations of its General Political Line. Our Party assess that the debate in 2022 was fruitful, as it served to clarify many issues. As part of the ongoing two-line struggle in the ICM after the founding of the ICL, we are also publicly expressing our views on this question, approaching it from two perspectives, one philosophical and the other economic and political. Before analyzing this key question of the ICM from these two aspects, we will briefly look back at the development of formulations on this issue in the course of the development of the ideology of the international proletariat. In this way, we aim to rebut the terminological prevarications made by the UOC (MLM) in last year's debates.

By studying the economic essence of capitalist society, Marx masterfully established the economic foundations of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In *Anti-Dühring*, Engels completes this formulation, presenting it in its most developed form. In *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, the formulation becomes even more precise, as Engels already incorporates the emerging elements of monopoly capital into his analysis of the genesis, development and resolution of the contradiction. He highlights the transformation of free competition into monopoly as follows:

“At a further stage of evolution, this form also becomes insufficient. **The producers on a large scale in a particular branch of an industry in a particular country unite in a "Trust", a union for the purpose of regulating production**. They determine the total amount to be produced, parcel it out among themselves, and thus enforce the **selling price fixed beforehand**. (...) In the trusts, **freedom of competition changes into its very opposite** —

³⁷³ International Communist League, *Political Declaration and Principles*, 2022.

into monopoly; and the production without any definite plan of capitalistic society capitulates to the production upon a definite plan of the invading socialistic society. Certainly, this is so far still to the benefit and advantage of the capitalists.”³⁷⁴

And he summarizes the fundamental contradiction and its manifestations as follows:

“Production has become a social act. Exchange and appropriation continue to be individual acts, the acts of individuals. The *social product is appropriated by the individual capitalist*. **Fundamental contradiction**, whence arise **all the contradictions** in which our present-day society moves, and which modern industry brings to light.

A) (...) *Antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.*

B) (...) *Contradiction between socialized organization in the individual factory and social anarchy in the production as a whole.*

C) (...) *unheard-of development of the productive forces, excess of supply over demand, overproduction, glutting of markets, crises every ten years, vicious circle: here, superabundance (...) The contradiction has grown into an absurdity: the mode of production rebels against the form of exchange. The bourgeoisie is convicted of incapacity to manage its own social productive forces any further. (...)*

D) *Partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces forced upon the capitalists themselves. Taking over of the great institutions for production and communication, first by joint-stock companies, later in by trusts, then by the State.”*³⁷⁵

Developing the formulation in *Anti-Dühring*, Engels then demonstrates that the constitution of private and state monopolies in capitalism corresponds to the obligatory partial recognition of the social character of the productive forces, but not the resolution of this contradiction. When Chairman Mao, in *On Contradiction*, summarizes Marxist discoveries in social sciences, he departs precisely from this formulation by Engels, and establishes the issue as follows:

“When Marx applied this law [of contradiction] to the study of the economic structure of capitalist society, he discovered that the basic contradiction of this society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of ownership. This contradiction **manifests itself** in the contradiction between the organized character of production in individual enterprises and the anarchic character of production in society as a whole. In terms of class relations, it **manifests itself** in the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.”³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ Friedrich Engels, *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, our emphasis

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁶ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*, *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Volume 1, our emphasis.

In other words, the economic foundation of the social contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is the contradiction between social production and capitalist private appropriation. In turn, as the economic basis is not restricted to the sphere of production, the fundamental contradiction manifests itself as a reflection of the sphere of circulation, that is, of free competition over production, as the contradiction between the organized character of production in individual enterprises and the anarchic character of social production. Enhancing Engels' formulation, Chairman Mao presents the same fundamental contradiction in its different manifestations: political and economic (production and circulation). Both are dealing with the same issue, so much so that Engels summarizes the proletarian revolution as follows:

*“Proletarian Revolution — Solution of the contradictions. The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production (...) into public property. (...) Socialized production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the State dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master — free.”*³⁷⁷

The resolution of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in its political aspect, begins with the seizure of power by the proletariat and, in the economic aspect, the socialization of the means of production and the planning of production, now totally socialized. This set of measures transforms social classes into an anachronism and the state gradually becomes extinct, losing its functions part by part until it is completely extinguished with the disappearance of the vestiges of classes, culminating the proletarian revolution with communism. Chairman Mao improves and simplifies Engels' formulation, showing one single social contradiction in its different manifestations, economic and political. The content of the formulation, however, is the same.

Something similar takes place regarding the formulation of Stalin on the most important contradictions in the imperialist stage. Stalin, also departing from the same formulation of Engels, analyzes the *most important contradictions* in the imperialist epoch as follows:

“Lenin called imperialism ‘moribund capitalism.’ Why? Because imperialism carries the contradictions of capitalism to their last bounds, to the extreme limit, beyond which revolution begins. Of these contradictions, there are three which must be regarded as the most important. The first contradiction is the contradiction between labor and capital. (...)

The second contradiction is the contradiction among the various financial groups and imperialist Powers in their struggle for sources of raw materials, for foreign territory. (...)

³⁷⁷ Friedrich Engels, *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, our emphasis.

The third contradiction is the contradiction between the handful of ruling, "civilized" nations and the hundreds of millions of the colonial and dependent peoples of the world. (...)

Such, in general, are **the principal contradictions of imperialism** which have converted the old, "flourishing" capitalism into moribund capitalism." ³⁷⁸

Chairman Mao, referring precisely to this passage, states that:

"When Stalin explained the historical roots of Leninism in his famous work, *The Foundations of Leninism*, (...) analyzed **those contradictions** of capitalism which reached their culmination under imperialism, and showed how these contradictions made proletarian revolution a matter for immediate action and created favorable conditions for a direct onslaught on capitalism." ³⁷⁹

Chairman Mao could not repeat the same term used by Stalin, the *principal contradictions of imperialism*, precisely because in *On Contradiction* he was formulating for the first time in the history of Marxism that in any complex process, where there are many contradictions, at a given stage there will always be **only one principal contradiction**. In *The Foundations of Leninism*, Stalin is not dealing with this philosophical question, which is why he uses *most important contradictions* and *principal contradictions* as synonyms. After the qualitative leap in Marxist philosophy established by Chairman Mao, it is clear that these terms can no longer be used synonymously. With regard to the political and social content, there is no difference between Stalin's and Chairman Mao's formulation on this question, however, there is an important improvement in the formulation on the contradictions of the imperialist epoch, such improvement corresponds to the development in philosophy achieved in the third stage of Marxism. In other words, when dealing with a phenomenon and identifying its contradictions, it is necessary to establish which are the fundamental contradictions and, of these, which is the principal one at each stage of the process of transformation of that phenomenon.

That is why, in the *Chinese Letter*, the CPC presents the contradictions of the imperialist era as follows:

"In defining the general line of the international communist movement, the starting point is the concrete class analysis of world politics and economics as a whole and of actual world conditions, that is to say, of the **fundamental contradictions** in the contemporary world. (...)

What are the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world? Marxist-Leninists consistently hold that they are:

- the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp;

³⁷⁸ J. V. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, our emphasis

³⁷⁹ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*, *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Volume 1, our emphasis.

- the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist countries;
- the contradiction between the oppressed nations and imperialism; and
- the contradictions among imperialist countries and among monopoly capitalist groups.”

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Chairman Mao, when referring to the development of the Chinese Revolution, also uses the term fundamental (basic) contradictions to characterize the process:

“The contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation and the contradiction between feudalism and the great masses of the people are the **basic contradictions** in modern Chinese society. (...) But the contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation **is the principal one.**” ³⁸¹

This improvement in the nomenclature of concepts made by Chairman Mao corresponds to the philosophical development of the Maoist stage in relation to both Engels and Stalin. It doesn't make sense, therefore, to continue using terms that were not wrong when they were used, but have become outdated with the development of the ideology. We should therefore unify the concepts and, instead of the most important contradictions, adopt fundamental contradictions and highlight the principal contradiction among them. To waste too much time on this question, as the leadership of the UOC (MLM) does, is to reduce the philosophical debate to a question of semantics that muddles the issue in order to confuse - above all - themselves. Aiming to respond to PCC-FR, they criticize it for "*abandoning the idea of the most important contradictions in order to embrace that of fundamental contradictions*". And the UOC (MLM) even finds this "error" in the document of the CPC:

“Going back to the problem of the fundamental contradiction, doubtlessly the ‘Letter in 25 points’ or the ‘Chinese Letter’ from 1963 incurs in an **imprecision when putting forward four fundamental contradictions.**” ³⁸²

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) says that those of us who make up the ICL cling to "*the 1963 General Line as if it were the tablets of Moses*". What we are doing is taking it as the most advanced formulation of the General Line of the ICM in the period of Chairman Mao, and we are trying to apply it to the new conditions. At the same time, we identify limits in this very important document, such as the lack of specification of what was the principal contradiction in the world. In the same way, we recognize the positive aspect of the 1984 RIM Conference, but we principally criticize the ideological and political errors in its Declaration, an expression of the

³⁸⁰ CPC, A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement, our emphasis

³⁸¹ Chairman Mao, The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party, our emphasis.

³⁸² UOC (MLM), Negation of Negation Magazine, n°6, 2023, our emphasis

rotten Avakianist theses, so applauded by the UOC (MLM). In this *Declaration*, the question of the fundamental contradiction is formulated as follows:

“All the **major contradictions** of the world imperialist system are rapidly accentuating: the contradiction between various imperialist powers, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed peoples and nations, and the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the imperialist countries. All of these contradictions have a common origin in the capitalist mode of production and its fundamental contradiction. The rivalry between the two blocs of imperialist powers led by the US and the USSR respectively is bound to lead to war unless revolution prevents it and **this rivalry is greatly affecting world events.**”³⁸³

The big mistake implicit in this formulation is that it contains one of the dogmas of Avakianism: the inter-imperialist contradiction is the motive force of history. This is why it is listed as the first contradiction and highlighted at the end as the contradiction that will greatly influence world events. Another error, which our Party believes needs to be corrected, is the characterization today of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as being restricted to the imperialist countries. After all, already at the beginning of imperialism, as Stalin shows in *Foundations of Leninism*, this contradiction becomes international, in force in all countries of the world, regardless of the percentage of workers in the population of an oppressed nation.

With regards to the *Letter in 25 points*, we believe that there are two inaccuracies in it, resulting from the weight of the right wing in the leadership of the CPC before the GPCR. The first inaccuracy, already mentioned above, is that four fundamental contradictions are presented, but the principal one is not specified among them. After all, according to the *law of contradiction* fully established by Chairman Mao, since the world in the imperialist era is a complex process in which there are several contradictions, one of them is the principal contradiction. In this case it is, as Chairman Mao always said, the contradiction between nation and imperialism, based on the formulation of the great Lenin that in the epoch of imperialism the world was divided between a handful of advanced nations, powers, on the one hand, and the vast majority of backward nations, on the other.

The second inaccuracy lies in the characterization of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie only in capitalist countries; this coincides, in part, with the position of Liu Shao-chi, who defended the farcical theory of the end of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in socialism. These two errors were rectified by the CPC in the preparatory debates and resolutions of its 9th Congress in 1969. *The Political Declaration and the Principles* approved at the UMIC corrects all these issues and therefore constitutes the most developed formulation of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists for the ICM.

³⁸³ RIM, Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement – Adopted by the delegates and observers at the second International Conference of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations which formed the RIM, 1984, Our emphasis.

3.1- The philosophical aspect of the problem

Having clarified the content of the issue and demonstrated the biblical misrepresentation of it by the leadership of UOC (MLM), let's take a deeper look at its philosophical aspect. There are two important philosophical problems in this debate: 1) **the dialectical relationship between the universality and particularity of contradiction**, and 2) **the question of the principal contradiction in a process and in the stages of this process**. These two problems are part of the *law of contradiction* and have already been sufficiently clarified by Chairman Mao. Its resolution, therefore, can be directly found in *On Contradiction* itself.

Let's start with the first problem:

In his formulation of the *law of contradiction*, Chairman Mao highlights the need to study the universality and particularity of contradiction. He begins his presentation with the universality of contradiction, as it is the simplest aspect, and defines that the universality or absolute character of contradiction consists of the fact that contradiction exists in the process of all things and phenomena and that its existence runs from the beginning to the end of every process. He thus shows that, at the beginning of a phenomenon, even if the struggle between opposites is not apparent, contradiction is already present. Furthermore, he demonstrates that **"the universality of contradiction" "resides in the particularity of contradiction"**, already establishing the dialectical, contradictory relationship between the universal and the particular.

After this definition, he begins **"the special analysis of the particularity"** of contradiction. This is a special analysis because particularity is more complex than universality, and harder for dogmatic thinking to understand. It shows that different **forms of movement of matter** each have a particular character. That in the study of contradiction, it is necessary to take what is **common** between a certain form of movement of matter and other qualitatively distinct forms and, specially, it is necessary to examine what is **particular** about the form of movement being studied. The common element between different forms of movement constitutes the **universal** aspect; what is distinct in each form of movement constitutes its **particular** trait or aspect.

It shows how the different sciences, due to studying different forms of movement of matter, deal with different particular contradictions and points out that in the social sciences the particular contradiction lies in how the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production manifests itself. He reveals, however, that in every form of movement of matter there are different processes that are qualitatively different in relation to the others and that, therefore, it is not enough to study only the particular contradiction of a large system of forms of movement of matter, that it is necessary to study **" (...) the particular contradiction and the essence of each process"** ³⁸⁴ in this form of movement. In order to discover the particularity of the contradictions in the process of development of a thing or phenomenon, in other words, the

³⁸⁴ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*, *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Volume 1, our emphasis.

essence of this process, he emphasizes the need to study "*the particularity of each one of the aspects of each contradiction.*"

Finally, he emphasizes that it is not enough to study the particular contradictions of a process and the opposing aspects of each of the contradictions of this process; in studying the particularity of the contradiction, it is also necessary to study *the particular features of each one of the stages of the process of development of a thing*:

"Not only does the whole process of the movement of opposites in the development of a thing, both in their interconnections and in each of the aspects, have particular features to which we must give attention, but **each stage in the process has its particular features** to which we must give attention too." ³⁸⁵

He concludes by affirming that "(...) *The fundamental contradiction in the process of development of a thing*" and the essence of this process do not disappear as long as the process is not completed. He points out, however, that in a given process "*conditions usually differ at each stage*", although this does not mean that the fundamental contradiction of the process is altered in the course of these stages. In other words, in the course of the development of one same process, when stages occur, each one of them will have particular traits, which do not imply a change in the essence of this process.

In short, in his study on the particularity of the contradiction, Chairman Mao departs from the forms of movement of matter, moves on to the different processes that exist within a given form of movement of matter, until reaching the different stages of the development process of a thing. This is where the dialectical relationship between the universality and the particularity of the contradiction is already present: the common characteristics of different forms of movement of matter constitute the universal aspect, while the distinctive features constitute the particularity of each form. Considering one same form of movement, each process has particular contradictions, while what is common to these processes constitutes their universality. If we take a single process of development of a thing separately, the particular contradiction that distinguishes it from other processes becomes the universal aspect of this particular process, while the specific characteristics of each stage constitute the particularity of one stage in relation to another stage.

After philosophically studying this dialectical movement from the universal to the particular, Chairman Mao illustrates this process with examples from social science, discovered by Marxism. He thus shows that Marx and Engels, in studying society as a **specific form of movement of matter**, discovered the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between the exploited and exploiting classes and, stemming from these, the contradiction between the economic base and the superstructure. In applying the *law of contradiction* to the study of a **specific process within this form of movement**, that is, capitalist society, points out that Marx discovered the fundamental contradiction in this society between the social character of production and the private

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

character of property - as seen in the previous topic. He thus describes the dialectical relationship between the universal and the particular present in Marxist discoveries:

“Because the range of things is vast and there is no limit to their development, what is universal in one context becomes particular in another. Conversely, what is particular in one context becomes universal in another. The contradiction in the capitalist system between the social character of production and the private ownership of the means of production is common to all countries where capitalism exists and develops; as far as capitalism is concerned, this constitutes the universality of contradiction. But this contradiction of capitalism belongs only to a certain historical stage in the general development of class society; as far as the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production in class society as a whole is concerned, it constitutes the particularity of contradiction.” ³⁸⁶

What is universal in one context is particular in another, and vice versa. This is the essence of the dialectical relationship between universality and particularity: both are interdependent, opposed and, in certain circumstances, transform into each other. The contradiction between social production and private appropriation, for example, when capitalist society is taken as a process, constitutes the universal aspect of this process. However, when it is class society that is taken as a process and capitalist society as a stage in this process, the contradiction between social production and private appropriation constitutes the particular aspect in capitalist society of the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production. In this passage, therefore, we can see the dialectical relationship between process and stage handled by Chairman Mao. When taking class society as a whole, capitalist society is a stage in this process; in turn, if capitalist society is taken as a process, imperialism is a particular stage in this process. And Chairman Mao concludes the chapter on *the particularity of contradiction* by giving us the example of Comrade Stalin's analysis of the particular contradictions of the imperialist stage of the capitalist process. He states that:

“Since the particular is united with the universal and since the universality as well as the particularity of contradiction is inherent in everything, universality residing in particularity, we should, when studying an object, try to discover both the particular and the universal and their interconnection, to discover both particularity and universality and also their interconnection within the object itself, and to discover the interconnections of this object with the many objects outside it. When Stalin explained the historical roots of Leninism (...) analyzed those contradictions of capitalism which reached their culmination under imperialism (...) What is more, he analyzed the reasons why Russia became the cradle of Leninism, why tsarist Russia became the focus of all the contradictions of imperialism, and why it was possible for the Russian proletariat to become the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat.” ³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

This example brings together three levels, the philosophical understanding of which is key to firmly advancing the ICM's common understanding of the contradictions in the world: the universal, the particular and the specific; in other words, capitalism as a process, imperialism as a stage in this process and the manifestation of the particular contradictions of imperialism in a specific country, in this case Russia. Thus, we have a double relationship between the universal and the particular: firstly, the particular contradictions of imperialism in relation to the universal capitalist process; and secondly, the universal contradictions, common to the whole world in the imperialist era, and their particular manifestation in a singular country. Because of Stalin's handling of the dialectical relationship between the universal and the particular, Chairman Mao states:

“Thus, Stalin analyzed the **universality of contradiction in imperialism**, showing why Leninism is the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, and at the same time analyzed **the particularity of tsarist Russian imperialism within this general contradiction**, showing why Russia became the birthplace of the theory and tactics of proletarian revolution and how the universality of contradiction is contained in this particularity. Stalin's analysis provides us with a model for understanding the particularity and the universality of contradiction and their interconnection.”³⁸⁸

The particular contradictions of a stage cannot suppress the particular contradiction of a process, because if the particular contradiction of the process were eliminated in a stage, it would no longer be a stage of a process, but a new process. However, there will only be a change of stage in the same process if there are different particular contradictions between one stage and another. Otherwise, there would be no stages in the process, just a mechanical growth of the same contradictions. Chairman Mao shows how, by aggravating the fundamental contradiction of the process, certain contradictions are deepened, others are resolved and new contradictions emerge. It is this modification of particular features in the course of the process of development of a thing that marks the emergence of a new stage, or the overcoming of an old one.

In the public debate last year, in the criticism of the definition of the principal contradiction in the world, the argument was raised that pointing out one principal contradiction in the world could lead revolutionary parties and organizations to mechanically and immediately identify the principal contradiction in the world with the principal contradiction in their country. Although this argument demonstrated a lack of understanding of the law of contradiction, it did bear certain meaning as a warning, since in the past, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a tendency for Maoist parties and forces to mistakenly identify the principal contradiction of their revolution with the principal contradiction of the epoch, that is, between oppressed nations and imperialism. Even in the history of the Communist Party of Brazil, this error occurred: the different Maoist fractions existing in the Brazilian revolutionary process in that period characterized the fascist military coup of 1964 as a direct intervention by Yankee imperialism, and thus erroneously defined the country's principal contradiction as that between

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

the nation and imperialism. This underestimated the fact that the principal contradiction in Brazilian society was the one between the poor peasantry and the latifundium, which expressed itself as a contradiction between the masses and semi-feudality, manifesting itself in an acute and massive peasant struggle. There were very significant efforts and results from the Maoist intervention in the countryside during that period, most notably the heroic Araguaia Guerrilla, the first attempt to unleash the People's War in our country. However, the error in this understanding of the principal contradiction in society and of the Brazilian revolution, opened up gaps for the detour from the path of the People's War towards revisionism, after the military defeat of that important initiative. This resulted in great ideological damage to the Party, with its almost complete liquidation.

What is necessary to avoid repeating this mistake is to improve the Communist Parties' understanding and handling of the *law of contradiction*. It is necessary to grasp more deeply the dialectical relationship between the universal and the particular, in order to understand that, in the imperialist stage, particular contradictions are configured distinctively from the previous stage of *free competition*, while essential, universal, common characteristics are maintained. That these characteristics of imperialism, which are particular to the capitalist process as a whole, also constitute "*the universal of the contradictions of imperialism*", and that this universal manifest itself in a particular way in each of the countries of the world. And that, therefore, the general line of the ICM can never replace the need to develop the political line of each revolution, which will have its particularities and specificities, as well as universal aspects common to all revolutionary processes around the world.

This brings us to the second philosophical problem we mentioned: ***the question of the principal contradiction in a process and in the stages of this process***. Chairman Mao studies this in a separate chapter of *On Contradiction*, but he emphasizes that the question of the *principal contradiction* is part of the problem of the *particularity of contradiction*. He shows that in the process of development of a complex thing there are many contradictions and one of them is necessarily the principal one. This principal contradiction, in turn, is the contradiction "*whose existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of the other contradictions*." ³⁸⁹

In illustrating the problem of the principal contradiction, Chairman Mao compares the complexity of revolutionary processes in imperialist countries with the Chinese revolution. He thus states that in revolutions in imperialist and developed capitalist countries "*the two forces in contradiction, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, form the principal contradiction*". ³⁹⁰ In semi-colonial countries like China, he states, "*the relationship between the principal contradiction and the non-principal contradictions presents a complicated picture*." ³⁹¹ He shows that when imperialism unleashes a war of aggression against a semicolonial country, the different social classes can temporarily unite in a revolutionary national war:

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

“At such time the contradiction between imperialism and the country concerned **becomes the principal contradiction**, while all the contradictions among the various classes within the country (including what was the principal contradiction, between the feudal system and the great masses of the people) **are temporarily relegated to a secondary and subordinate position.**” ³⁹²

As seen above, Chairman Mao considered in the 1930s that there were two fundamental contradictions in Chinese society: between the oppressed nation and imperialism; and between the feudal system and the popular masses. What he is now demonstrating is that, depending on the circumstances, these contradictory pairs can swap places and one take over the principality while the other becomes subordinate, and vice versa. The modification of the principal contradiction determines the modification of the stage of the Chinese Revolution, the CPC's united front policy and the military strategy in the People's War. Understanding the modification in the principal contradiction in a specific revolutionary process is decisive for its correct conduction.

In making this analysis of China's revolutionary process, Chairman Mao puts forward a formulation that is key to the present polemic in the ICM:

“But whatever happens, there is no doubt at all that **at every stage in the development of a process, there is only one principal contradiction** which plays the leading role.” ³⁹³

In other words, in the case of China, as long as there was no direct imperialist aggression, the principal contradiction at that stage of the Chinese Revolution was that which opposed the popular masses to the feudal system. It is this contradiction that determines the political and military line of the Party. In turn, when there is imperialist aggression, the principal contradiction changes and the new one starts to govern all the others, including the one that opposes the masses to feudality. That is why, at the time of the National Revolutionary War, Chairman Mao distinguished between landowners who supported the invading enemy and those who took part in the national resistance. Only pro-Japanese landowners were attacked by the Party during the period of the anti-Japanese national resistance war. In other words, the principal contradiction of that stage of the Chinese Revolution had changed from the principal contradiction of the previous stage. The process was the same: the Chinese Revolution; but the principal contradiction changed from one stage to the other, from agrarian to national, both part of the New Democratic Revolution.

Imperialism is the higher, last and particular stage of capitalism. Its particular features are governed by the sharpening of the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process, which manifests itself in class relations as the antagonistic contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This contradiction is universal for the whole process, it will exist until the complete disappearance of the bourgeoisie and the other social classes – a task that will take place throughout the period of acute struggles in the transition to communism, as the historical

³⁹² *Ibid.*

³⁹³ *Ibid.*

experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat has already shown. However, in the course of the development of the capitalist process, at least three stages were shaped: its dawn, when it emerged as a mode of production subjugated by the feudal mode of production; its "flourishing", in the stage of *free competition*; and its agony, in the imperialist stage. Throughout this long process, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie remained a particular and fundamental contradiction. It will continue in the transition period, socialism, but as a new and qualitatively different phenomenon, since the proletariat will become the dominant aspect and the bourgeoisie the dominated aspect of the contradiction. The experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in China and Chairman Mao's formulations show that this contradiction remains the principal contradiction throughout the process of socialist revolution until we reach communism. Becoming aware of this continuity is decisive in order to sustain the dictatorship of the proletariat, smash attempts at restoration and move towards the shining communism. Although this particular contradiction in the process continued and continues as a fundamental contradiction until the complete extinction of social classes, at each stage of this process a contradiction matures that becomes the principal one. A new stage only emerges in a given process when a new principal contradiction that determines the new particular characteristics of this new stage emerges. As seen above in the example of the modification of the principal contradiction and the emergence of new stages in the process of the Chinese Revolution.

There is therefore a full correspondence between the *law of contradiction* established by Chairman Mao and the definition contained in the ICL's *Political Declaration and the Principles* that the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism corresponds to the principal contradiction of the entire imperialist stage. Dialectically, this delimitation is not only possible, but necessary. The fact that any of the other fundamental contradictions can become, depending on the conditions, the principal contradiction in the world, as in the case of a world inter-imperialist war, means that the imperialist stage is also subdivided into qualitatively different phases. Here again we find ourselves with the dialectic between the universal and the particular. Just as, by taking class society as a process, we can characterize capitalist society as a stage in this process, we can consider imperialism as a process whose different phases correspond to stages in its development. In this way, each phase in the stage is characterized by a change in the principal contradiction, but the principality tends to return to the principal contradiction that marks the stage of the process.

The fundamental contradiction of a process, therefore, is that particular contradiction that distinguishes it from other qualitatively different processes (capitalism and feudalism, for example). But when you take the stages of the same process, the fundamental contradiction will be the one that continues to govern the process as a whole, through the modification of the principal contradiction in the different stages of it (*free competition* and imperialism, for example). Every complex process is made up of countless contradictions, but what are the fundamental contradictions? They are the contradictions that shape the nature of the process and its stages or phases. Among the fundamental contradictions, one will be the principal one in the current stage and the others will be secondary.

We have seen that, philosophically, it is correct to identify the fundamental contradictions in the world today, in the imperialist stage. Furthermore, we have also seen that among these fundamental contradictions, depending on the circumstances, one will be the principal contradiction; that this does not negate the existence of a, particular, fundamental contradiction of the process. On the contrary, this is the way in which the universal contradiction manifests itself, because the universal can only exist concretely in the particular. At the same time, we have sought to demonstrate how each particular stage is also marked by a particular contradiction, or by the principal contradiction of the stage, that the change in this principal contradiction determines the overcoming of phases in the same stage. Finally, we saw that the existence of a principal contradiction in the world does not mean that the principal contradiction in all countries is the same.

The difficulty in understanding this complex relationship lies in grasping and handling the dialectical relationship between the universal and the particular, a decisive element of the *law of contradiction* formulated at a higher level by Chairman Mao. However, philosophy is not enough for us to correctly identify the fundamental contradictions in the world today and which of these is the principal contradiction of the imperialist stage. This is only possible, as the *Letter in 25 points* highlights, from a "*concrete analysis of the classes, the world economy and politics*". This is what we will try to do next.

3.2- *The economic and political aspect of the question*

The immediate economic manifestation of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the fundamental social classes of the entire capitalist process, is brilliantly presented by Marx in his work *Wages, Prices and Profits*. In this work, the founder of the scientific ideology of the proletariat demonstrates that the immediate economic contradiction between the fundamental classes of capitalist society was to be found in the opposition between the worker's wage and the bourgeoisie's profit. When he made this presentation, addressed to the leadership of the First International, Marx had already fully formulated his theory of *surplus value*. Thus, he demonstrated on solid scientific grounds how the struggle to win wage raises implied an immediate reduction in capitalist profit. He thus refuted the misconceptions within the workers' movement, which argued that any wage increase could be annulled by the subsequent rise in the price of the means of subsistence. Marx demonstrated that wages and profit make up two parts of the same unit: the new value added in the production process and that, therefore, increasing wages implies a reduction in profit. At the same time, Marx demonstrates in this same work how the struggle of the proletariat cannot be reduced to an increase in the value of labor power, to a "*fair wage*". He shows that as long as wage labor exists, as long as the bourgeoisie owns the means of production, the proletariat will be a subjugated, exploited class and also pressed by competition with its own brothers for jobs, a mechanism through which the capitalist class manages to impose wage cuts and recover its profits.

In *Capital* and *Anti-Dühring*, Marx and Engels demonstrate that the background economic contradiction in capitalist society is that between social production and private appropriation. This contradiction cannot be resolved, even momentarily, by the struggle for wages; its

resolution corresponds to the socialization of the means of production, a task that can only be accomplished, as Marx demonstrates, **through the dictatorship of the proletariat**. The immediate manifestation of this contradiction, however, is the continuous effort of the capitalists to reduce the value of labor power to its minimum, and often below it, in order to achieve an increase in the extraction of *surplus value*, which provides the bourgeoisie with its luxurious life and its gigantic accumulation of wealth. Surplus value is therefore the immediate economic basis of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

What, in turn, is the economic basis of the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism? As we saw earlier, when it comes to maximum profit, it is based on three pillars: 1) obtaining a higher *rate of surplus value*, to the extent that it is convenient and possible for it to exploit the proletariat of the oppressed nations to a more extreme degree than in the imperialist citadels; 2) restricting the profit of the non-monopolist bourgeoisie by imposing a minimum profit on it; and 3) the suppression or appropriation by finance capital of the ground rent from the primary products of the oppressed nations. The struggle of the proletariat in these countries for better wages is the immediate, just and necessary response to this super-exploitation. Imperialism is therefore interested in the maximum of violence, political control and the minimum of trade union freedom, in order to impose a wage below the *value of labor power*. The national bourgeoisie reacts to the restriction of its profits by demanding protective measures from the old state for the fragile, small and medium-sized national industry. As its production is, as a rule, subjugated to monopoly production, it has very precarious economic and political conditions to achieve these objectives.

The agro-exporting latifundia, due to receiving a high revenue from their production, maintain a stable alliance with imperialism, although they are always threatened by a crisis of overproduction and a generalized drop in international prices for their monoculture, and are at the mercy of the international financial oligarchy. With regard to national wealth, the oppressed nations struggle to ensure national control of this production and to guarantee a price policy that minimally guarantees the right to *capitalist ground rent*. As the ruling classes of these states are lackeys of imperialism, in general, this struggle for ground rent is reduced to bargaining for benefits, or for "*modest amends*", as Lenin characterizes it.

The resolution of the contradiction between nation and imperialism, as well as the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, cannot be merely economic; no measure of consortium of oppressed countries, or of import substitution, can resolve this tendency to subjugation, of permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat of these countries, of the restriction of the profit of the national bourgeoisie, nor of the suppression of the ground rent of national resources. Only national liberation, the definitive conquest of political independence from imperialism, can ensure the achievement of these demands; and this political liberation can only be achieved through protracted people's war in a revolution of new democracy uninterrupted to socialism, which builds from the outset a **joint dictatorship of the revolutionary classes as a transit to the dictatorship of the proletariat**.

The economic basis of the inter-imperialist contradiction is, first and foremost, the control of the highest possible part of the total *surplus value* produced worldwide. To this end, it is necessary to control the colonies/semi-colonies in order to monopolize the permanent super-exploitation of these proletarians, thus restricting the volume of the proletarian masses exploited by the financial capital of the rival powers. In addition, the control of the semi-colonies to suppress the ground rent of their primary products, thus reducing the costs of *constant capital* and allowing it to achieve *maximum profit* rates. By controlling certain sources of raw materials, by establishing a *monopoly price* on this primary production, it thus manages to reduce the *surplus value* of rival imperialist powers that are only buyers of these commodities. The way in which this contradiction is resolved are imperialist wars, which begin with aggression against oppressed nations controlled by rival powers, until they reach the point of direct confrontation between the powers themselves on their territories. This contradiction can only be eliminated by **sweeping imperialism away from the face of the earth**, because as long as there is imperialism there will be the inevitability of imperialist and inter-imperialist wars, and as an inseparable part of finance capital's pursue for *maximum profit*.

Any one of these fundamental contradictions can become the principal one and thus determine the development of the other contradictions. However, in the imperialist stage, which of these contradictions plays the most dominant role among the others? From an economic point of view, answering this question requires us to depart from the particular form of formation of *surplus value* in the imperialist stage, which is *maximum profit*. The principal contradiction of the imperialist stage, therefore, is that which determines the development of the other contradictions aimed at achieving, maintaining and disputing the surplus value produced in the world in order to achieve the formation of *maximum profit*, will be the principal contradiction of the imperialist stage. Analyzing this question from an economic point of view helps to shed light on the relations of exploitation and production in the stage of monopoly capitalism; to understand the role of social classes, in general, and the necessary relationship between imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism, with a semi-feudal basis.

Since the suppression of *capitalist ground rent* is a necessity for the *maximum profit* of finance capital, imperialism has always been interested in maintaining a feudal or semi-feudal monopoly of land. This is the economic reason for the close ideological-political relationship between big landowners in oppressed countries and their masters in the imperialist powers. Whether for food production or the extraction of raw materials, the existence of large properties in semi-colonial countries is essential for the suppression of *capitalist ground rent* in semi-colonial countries. After all, it is much cheaper for financial capital to pay rent to a small class of parasitic large landowners, for the extraction of a country's natural wealth, than to pay what would be *capitalist ground rent* for an entire nation. When the old state is the owner of these natural riches, it is generally satisfied with the payment of *royalties* by finance capital, which are always below what would be the rate of capitalist ground rent. The *royalties* paid by finance capital, whether to the big landowners or to the old bureaucratic state, are a *semi-colonial ground rent* and not a *capitalist ground rent*. The quantitative difference between the two is the *surplus value* retained by finance capital, which will make up its *maximum profit*.

The role that imperialism's exploitative relations with the oppressed nations play in the production of maximum profit is similar to the exploitation of the poor people and masses of these countries by bureaucratic capitalism and semi-feudalism. Bureaucratic capital needs to reproduce the peasant economy, because the peasant produces for the internal market in exchange for a small rent, which in no way corresponds to the *capitalist ground rent*. Thus, even though peasant production has a much lower productivity than large-scale mechanized production, it often provides a cheaper food product. This is possible, not because small-scale production is more efficient than large-scale production, but because the subjugation of the peasantry and their permanently ruined production – because it is sold at prices below the cost – ensures these lower prices. In this way, bureaucratic capital indirectly exploits the peasantry, because the peasant, isolated on his plot, cannot cope with the monopolized capitalist internal market and is always forced to sell his production at the price they pay. The rent he receives is only enough to reproduce his ruined economy. In turn, this ruined production can only be maintained in these conditions by being surrounded on all sides by big properties. Otherwise, peasants would seek better conditions to grow and prosper. In this way, it is the latifundium system that ensures peasant oppression, their miserable condition and super-exploitation, in which they provide food for the domestic market without earning either rent or profit, as was the case with the Irish peasant analyzed by Marx. The yield earned by these peasants is not *capitalist ground rent*, but *semi-feudal ground rent*. This is the first economic reason why peasant production, although in constant ruin, is never completely eliminated under imperialism. However, there is another economic reason for this phenomenon. The reproduction of the peasant economy, ruined by large landed property, serves as a *reserve labor force*, always available for seasonal agricultural work; but, in addition, the countryside in semi-colonial countries always exports waves of workers to the cities from time to time, forced to submit to the worst conditions of exploitation in industry and the service sectors. The reproduction of the peasant economy thus plays a key role in constantly producing a relative overpopulation, which in turn is essential for the other factor of *maximum profit*: the permanent super-exploitation of the working class. In Brazil, the most exhausting jobs in the construction industry are usually carried out by peasants who have recently been expelled from the countryside. If this peasant economy is liquidated, this invaluable source of workers to be super-exploited is exhausted, those are generally the peasant regions of oppressed countries.

Latifundium, due to its semi-feudal condition, is the social agent of imperialism that ensures the suppression of the capitalist ground rent that would belong to the peasants – in the case of agricultural production – and to the nation – in the case of the natural wealth plundered by imperialism. Latifundium is indispensable for bureaucratic capitalism because it ensures revenues from the export of agricultural and mineral commodities, and, on the other hand, it ensures the cheap production of food for the internal market, by the peasantry, and the production of an excess overpopulation that migrates from the countryside to the city, thus ensuring the super-exploitation of the working class in the industries of the semi-colonies. In this way, latifundium contribute both to the monopoly profit of bureaucratic capital and to the *maximum profit* of financial capital; on the other hand, bureaucratic capital and financial capital provide the latifundium with all the military, political and legal security for the most atrocious crimes against the peasants and indigenous populations. They ensure the rent of this class of

parasitic enemies of the people. This relationship of dependence between latifundia and bureaucratic capitalism; between bureaucratic capitalism and imperialism, is the basis of the system of exploitative relations that ensure imperialist *maximum profit*.

In turn, this alliance of reactionary classes, these three mountains (semi-feudalism, imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism) that weigh down on the masses of the countryside and the city of the oppressed countries, by super-exploiting the proletariat, the peasants, and the national wealth in that manner, has as its final product the endless masses of immigrants, who arrive year after year in the imperialist countries, to be super-exploited in all kinds of work. European industry would not survive without the masses of Turkish, Kurdish, Polish, Arab, African, and other immigrants; the service sector would not function without the masses from India, Bangladesh, Senegal, Vietnam, Ecuador, etc. In the same way, Yankee imperialism wouldn't survive a day without the masses of Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, etc., who produce everything there. Bureaucratic capitalism, having latifundium as one of its foundations, is responsible for the production and export of this indispensable contingent for the imperialist production. This is a proletariat besieged by migratory policies and police persecution and forced to accept the conditions of super-exploitation in the metropolitan centers of the imperialist powers. It's the third-worldization of the first world, as Chairman Gonzalo correctly analyzed.

The *monopoly price*, studied in the previous topic, is another important economic element for understanding the causes of the continued reproduction of the national bourgeoisie's outdated industry and the ruined peasant economy in colonial/semicolonial countries. Although with a much lower level of productivity than big industry, as soon as the *monopoly price* of financial capital is established in a given branch, the opportunity arises for the non-monopolistic economy to survive. With a much higher cost of production, small and medium-sized businesses become viable when a *monopoly price* is set, because it allows them to make a *minimal profit*. In Brazil, beans are one of the main food products of the masses of peasants and workers; traditionally they were a commodity produced by peasants and therefore sold at a very low market price, which benefited the industrial bourgeoisie, as it meant a reduction in the value of the workforce. With the pro-latifundium policies during the Worker's Party (PT) administrations of Lula and Dilma (2003-2016), the peasant economy's production has sharply fallen. The lack of peasant beans on the market led to a significant rise in the market price of this commodity, which came to be dominated by large landlord production. The landlord, unlike the peasants, is able to impose their market price, which generated a 200% increase in the price of this commodity. On the one hand, this impacted the masses of the population with a rise in the cost of living and, on the other, it allowed peasant beans to return to the market, which with this new price was once again viable for the peasantry, despite its low productivity. The *monopoly price* thus explains the survival of domestic industry in the cities, and small and medium-sized production in the countryside.

The imperialist *maximum profit* is therefore explained by this complex relationship between imperialism and bureaucratic capitalism, between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie, between imperialism and latifundium, between latifundium and peasantry in colonial/semicolonial countries. Thus, it is in these particular

conditions of the imperialist stage that the contradiction between social production and private appropriation develops itself, as well as its manifestation in the class relationship between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, which cannot be explained only from itself, only from the immediate relationship between *wages* and *surplus value*. So much so that the emergence of imperialism determines the consolidation of the phenomenon of the workers' aristocracy in imperialist countries. In this way, colonial/semicolonial national oppression implies a change in the conditions for the development of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the imperialist countries.

In turn, it is imperialist domination that ensures for its own benefit the existence of the semi-feudal monopoly of land in the oppressed countries; this monopoly of land ensures the reproduction of a ruined peasant economy that produces basic food and is a determining factor in the low wages of the proletariat in general, by supplying fundamental goods for the reproduction of the workforce that are produced below cost price. This ensures the reproduction of a gigantic industrial reserve army, which, due to its miserable living conditions, is the source of the constant export of surplus population to the big urban centers. The mass of poor people expelled from the countryside to the city by the semi-feudal land monopoly in turn ensures the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat in colonial/semicolonial countries. This super-exploitation is the source of values for the bribery of part of the working class in the imperialist countries. The semi-feudal monopoly of land, the overcrowding of the big cities in the oppressed countries and the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat, puts pressure on the export of huge proletarian contingents to the imperialist centers. The mass of immigrants in the imperialist countries puts downward pressure on the wages of workers in the metropolises, contributing to the deterioration of the labor aristocracy. The imperialist bourgeoisie needs more and more to increase the extraction of surplus value on its own territory, because it is constantly fighting against the *law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall*, brilliantly discovered by Marx.

Chairman Mao establishes that the principal contradiction is the one “whose *existence and development determine or influence the existence and development of the other contradictions*”.³⁹⁴ The economic, political and social analysis of imperialism shows that the principal contradiction of this stage of capitalism is between oppressed nations and imperialism, which determines the others. For, as we have just seen, it is colonial/semicolonial national oppression, sustained by latifundium, that conditions the super-exploitation of the proletariat in the oppressed countries and also in the imperialist countries. In turn, it is the colonial/semicolonial national oppression and its inseparable suppression of ground rent in these countries that ensures *maximum profit* at the expense of the profit of the rival power. The control of these sources of raw materials, the colonial/semicolonial national oppression, also determines the inter-imperialist contradiction, which is summed up as Lenin states in the struggle for the division of the world between a handful of powers.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

This is why the principal contradiction of the imperialist epoch is that between oppressed nations and imperialism. And this does not negate the existence of the fundamental contradiction of the capitalist process and its manifestation in class relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Because it continues to be a fundamental contradiction of the process even during the imperialist stage, after all, economically, all the *maximum profit* appropriated by the powers is fundamentally shaped by the *surplus value* extracted from the proletariat. In addition, the *maximum profit* is also shaped by the suppression of ground rent from agricultural products and the extractive industry in the oppressed countries, which directly leads to an increase in profit (by reducing the costs of constant capital) and indirectly to an increase in *surplus value* (when the commodities enter in the consumption of the proletariat). The principal contradiction of the stage does not cancel out the fundamental contradiction of the process, which is the dialectical relationship between the universal and the particular, masterfully established by Chairman Mao in the *law of contradiction*.

IV- Unite under Maoism!

“The celebration of this First International Conference and the foundation of the New International Organization are of historic and transcendental importance, they are an achievement of the international proletariat and a striking blow against the general counterrevolutionary offensive of imperialism and the world reaction, as well as against revisionism and all opportunism. A **great step to reunite us and to overcome the dispersion in the ICM** was given, and a new stage of the organized struggle for the reconstitution of the Communist International **under the command and guide of Maoism** was opened, a new stage which is signed by the development of new People’s Wars which will join the ones that are ongoing.”³⁹⁵

The preparation and realization of UMIC was guided by the slogan of *Unite under Maoism!* The UOC (MLM) took part in the two-line struggle at international level in the preparations for the UMIC only after the publication of the *Bases for Discussion* because they refused to do so before, taking part in the divisionist meeting in January 2020, called by the PCm (Italy). After intervening in the two-line struggle, they were not willing to continue this struggle at the conference itself. In 2022, the two-line struggle revolved around key philosophical questions of Marxism. This year, with the publication of the magazine of UOC (MLM) criticizing our Party and the ICL, and with the two editions of the magazine *Two-line Struggle*, led by this organization and the PCm (Italy), the political differences between these organizations and those that participated in UMIC became more evident. With this document, we have so far sought to analyze the most important political differences, however it is necessary to reveal the true ideological background of these divergences.

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) has argued for many years that Maoism constitutes a *new, third and higher stage of Marxism*. However, when we analyze their application of this stage of the ideology of the international proletariat in defining the political line for the world

³⁹⁵ International Communist League, Political Declaration and Principles, 2022.

revolution and in their own country, we realize how empty this claim becomes. The UOC (MLM): 1st) denies the law of contradiction as the sole fundamental law of matter; 2nd) denies the validity of the new democratic revolution in Colombia; 3rd) denies the need for the national-democratic stage as a preparation for the uninterrupted transition to socialist revolution in oppressed countries; 4th) denies the strategic importance of the peasantry in the revolutions of semi-colonial countries; 5th) denies the correctness of the definition of the fundamental contradictions in the world today, established by the *Chinese Letter (A Proposal concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement)*; 6th) in their assessment of the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the 20th century, they conclude that ***“in practice, Kautsky won the battle in both Russia and China”***.³⁹⁶ We sincerely ask the leadership of the UOC (MLM): which of the contributions and developments of Maoism do you use to formulate the political line of the revolution in your country?

The UOC (MLM) in their political proselytism defends Maoism, that the ideology of the international proletariat is *“Marxism Leninism Maoism”* and the importance of Chairman Mao for the Chinese Revolution, valuing the importance of the new democratic revolution and the strategy of encircling of the city from the countryside in this experience. They also defend the importance of the GPCR and the contributions of Maoism to the construction of socialism. However, to resolve the present problems of the world revolution and the Colombian Revolution, it does not rely on the universal contributions and developments of Maoism. **They thus treat Chairman Mao's contributions as an ideology that was important in the past and that may be necessary in the future.** For the present, they adopt formulations that are alien to the ideology of the international proletariat, such as the characterization of semi-colonial countries as *“oppressed capitalist countries”*; defends the existence of a *progressive tendency in imperialism*; defends that the task of national liberation can be resolved with the dictatorship of the proletariat; defends the immediate collectivization of peasant lands; and, finally, state that the nature of the Revolution in India, the Philippines, Brazil, Bangladesh, as well as Colombia, is socialist, that is, that the bourgeois democratic revolution has already taken place in these countries through the *progressive tendency of imperialism*. And they say that such conclusions are the result of a *concrete analysis of the concrete situation*. With this they mean that the Maoist parties in the aforementioned countries that defend and apply the fundamental theories of Maoism are mere mechanistic transplanners of the experience of the Chinese Revolution. They even believe that they are making an innovative analysis of the Colombian reality and that of other oppressed countries, when in fact they are copying old Trotskyist “theories”, specifically the falsifying *MTD [Marxist Theory of Dependency]* of Gunder Frank, Rui Mauro Marini *etc.*

There is no empty territory in the ideological field, where there is no Maoism, revisionism breeds. Let's see what the real ideological foundations of the UOC (MLM) are.

³⁹⁶ UOC (MLM), *Negación de la Negación*, nº 3, 2008, our translation and emphasis.

1- Assuming Maoism is to relentlessly combat all revisionism: the old, the modern Khrushchevist-Tengist-Hoxhaist and the revisionist modalities of the 21st century

The leadership of the UOC (MLM) formulates that the result of the supposed “*progressive tendency of imperialism*” was the emergence on the world arena of so-called “*oppressed capitalist countries*”, in which, through the work and grace of finance capital, “*pre-capitalist modes of production*” were “*swept away*”. In the international magazine *Two-line Struggle*, they do not state what is the source of this formulation, but when you search the materials published in Spanish, it is easy to find it. Well, they openly say that they took it from “*comrade Bob Avakian*”, thus valuing as very positive this excerpt from the *RIM Declaration*, from 1980, proposed by the RCP of the USA and Chile:

“There is an undeniable tendency for imperialism to introduce significant elements of capitalist relations in the countries it dominates. In certain dependent countries capitalist development has gone so far that it is not correct to characterize them as **semi-feudal**, it is better to call them **predominantly capitalist** even while important elements or remnants of feudal or semi-feudal production relations and their reflection in the superstructure may still exist.” ³⁹⁷

The big falsification of this Avakianist formulation lies in the fact that in the imperialist stage capitalist development no longer occurs in the same way as in the stage of *free competition*. As established by Lenin, imperialism is reaction everywhere. Imperialism in its search for *maximum profit* engenders capitalism in semi-colonial countries by supporting, conserving and reproducing the most backward relations of landed property and production and in the most reactionary political regimes. That is, through the export of capital it engenders a type of capitalism that does not destroy pre-capitalist relations, as the revolutionary bourgeoisies of the 17th and 18th centuries did, quite the contrary, given its reactionary character as monopoly capital, parasitic capital and in decaying, and moribund capital, the imperialist bourgeoisie relies on the rotten foundations in force in these countries, its finance capital merges with capital of feudal origin and other pre-capitalist forms and impulses capitalism of a bureaucratic type. This is how Lenin formulated about imperialism and Chairman Mao further deepened it. To classify semi-colonial countries as “*predominantly capitalist*” with only “*semi-feudal remnants in the superstructure*” is to deny the Leninist and Maoist formulations on imperialism, it is to deny fundamental theories of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is, therefore, to make apology for imperialism, as if some type of progress in social relations were possible under its rule.

The UOC (mlm) depart from this Avakianist falsification to accentuate their Trotskyist features, although the 1980 Declaration speaks of *dependent countries* and not of *dependent capitalism*, a category of Khrushchevist-Brezhnevist revisionism and *MTD* Trotskyism. From

³⁹⁷ PCR-USA and PCR-Chile, Fundamental Principles for the Unity of Marxist-Leninists and for the Line of the International Communist Movement, 1980, our translation and emphasis.

“predominantly capitalist countries” they formulate the revisionist thesis of the existence of *“oppressed capitalist countries”*, in which the revolution would immediately be socialist.

Regarding the peasant problem, the leadership of the UOC (mlm) applies Avakianist deviations in the same direction to Colombia. In the 1984 *RIM Declaration*, the Avakianist smuggling of the *“virtual elimination of the peasantry”* in imperialist countries appears; the UOC (MLM), in turn, defends the virtual elimination of the peasantry in so-called *“oppressed capitalist countries”*. They state that: *“In Colombia, the decomposition and differentiation of the peasantry between rural proletarians and bosses is a fact.”*, that is, applying Avakianism in the analysis of his country, he concludes that there are no longer peasants as such in the countryside, only agricultural workers and agrarian bourgeoisie. The peasantry, just like semi-feudality, would be just a remnant.

The first revisionist ideological foundation with which the UOC (MLM) converges is, therefore, Trotsky-Avakianism. Their theses about the supposed *progressive tendency of imperialism*, the existence of such *oppressed capitalist countries*, the complete differentiation (or *virtual elimination*) of the peasantry in semi-colonial countries, all of them are based on fallacious Trotskyist-Avakianist formulations. The importance of these formulations is explicitly recognized by the leadership of the UOC (MLM) in their publications in Spanish:

“[The revolution in the oppressed countries] Has been a problem faced by the Communists since the times of Lenin; it was masterly dealt with, resolved and developed by Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists; it was retaken with special emphasis by the Internationalist Revolutionary Movement – RIM – since the documents presented by their precursors in 1980 in the ‘Declaration’ of 1984 and in several articles on the Magazine *A World to Win*; Highlighted by the comrades of the RCP (USA) and especially by Comrade Bob Avakian”³⁹⁸

Evidently, Avakian does not continue the development of the great leaders of the proletariat on the important problem of revolution in oppressed countries. Avakian, departing from revisionist, petty-bourgeois, and notably Trotskyist positions, distorts and confuses the issue. He underestimates the importance of the contradiction between oppressed nations/peoples and imperialism and accuses comrades Stalin and Chairman Mao of *nationalist*-type errors. The UOC (MLM) departs from these anti-Marxist conceptions and accentuates the Trotskyist tendencies of Avakianism.

Let us now see the direct convergence of the UOC (MLM)'s tergiversations with Trotskyist formulations. The UOC (MLM), when defending the supposed *progressive tendency of imperialism*, only repeats the analyzes of the sycophant Trotsky, a traitor to communism who considered the Japanese invasion of China to be positive, as it would lead to the increase of the proletariat in this country, thus creating the conditions for his *permanent revolution*:

³⁹⁸ UOC (MLM), *Revista Contradição*, nº 7, 1991, our translation and emphasis.

“If Japan were to succeed in maintaining its conquered positions for an interval of some ten years, this would mean, above all, the intensive industrialization of North China in the military interests of Japanese imperialism. New railways, mines, power stations, mining and metallurgical enterprises, and cotton plantations would rapidly spring up. The polarization of the Chinese nation would receive a feverish impulse. New hundreds of thousands and millions of Chinese proletarians would be mobilized in the briefest possible space of time. On the other hand, the Chinese bourgeoisie would fall into an ever-greater dependence on Japanese capital. Even less than in the past would it be capable of standing at the head of a national war, no less a national revolution. Face to face with the foreign violator would stand the numerically larger, **socially strengthened, politically matured** Chinese proletariat, **called to lead the Chinese village.**” ³⁹⁹

Trotsky, this inveterate anti-Leninist, considered colonial enslavement as progressive. The leadership of the UOC (MLM), following the same steps, considers imperialism capable of sweeping away semi-feudality. The great Lenin highlights that imperialism exacerbates the contradictions of capitalism to the maximum, never claiming to resolve them.

Regarding the necessary national revolutionary stage of the people's war in semi-colonial countries, the 'Maoist' UOC (MLM) state in their *Program* that:

““The content of the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement, in this Epoch and in the capitalist oppressed countries, **ceases to be democratic liberation and turns into socialist**”.

⁴⁰⁰

And then:

“The semi-colonial problem is part of the problem of the proletarian revolution, it is **part of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat.**” ⁴⁰¹

What difference is there between this position and that defended by Trotsky in his revisionist work “*Permanent Revolution*”? Let's compare:

“With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semicolonial countries, **the theory of the permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat** as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses.” ⁴⁰²

Let's see what the great leader of the Chinese Revolution, Chairman Mao, says about these theses in *On New Democracy*:

³⁹⁹ Leon Trotsky, *The Chinese Revolution*, digital version, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰⁰ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Quarta Edição, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰² Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, Kairós Bookstore, 1985, p. 137, our translation and emphasis.

“We are exponents of the theory of the transition of the revolution, **and not of the Trotskyite theory of ‘permanent revolution’**. We are for the attainment of socialism by going through all the necessary stages of the democratic republic. We are opposed to tailism, but we are also opposed to adventurism and impetuosity”.⁴⁰³

The 'Maoist' UOC (MLM), just like the renegade Trotsky, conceives the solution of the national question in oppressed countries through the immediate dictatorship of the proletariat or as part of it. This is the complete negation of the Leninist thesis of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants and, even more so, of the Maoist thesis of the joint dictatorship of revolutionary classes to carry out the socialist revolution in the oppressed countries.

In an article entitled *Are we Trotskyists?*, the leadership of the UOC (MLM), when responding negatively to the question, formulates that the defense of the immediate socialist revolution in Colombia would not be Trotskyism, since according to them, “**Trotskyism does not consist in denying the stages through which the revolution must go**”.⁴⁰⁴ Trotskyism is made up of countless lies and falsifications, among them, yes, the negation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry led by the proletariat in the democratic revolution, a decisive question in advancing the socialist revolution, proven by the experience of the proletarian revolution, the negation of the need for stages of the revolution, and the negation of the need for joint dictatorship of revolutionary classes in oppressed countries. Let us observe:

“The Comintern of the epigones began by **canonizing for all countries of the Orient the formula of the ‘democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry’**”⁴⁰⁵

And:

“**The democratic revolution grows over directly into the socialist revolution and thereby becomes a permanent revolution**”.⁴⁰⁶

Just as Trotsky accuses the CI of canonizing a formula for revolution in the East, the UOC (MLM) accuses the ICL of dogmatism for stating that the new democratic revolution is valid for all semi-colonial countries. Just as Trotsky clings to the negation of the need for stages in the revolutionary process in semi-colonial countries; the UOC (MLM) formulates in its program that:

“Whichever the particularities, the capitalist character of a society in a country oppressed by imperialism demands an anti-imperialist movement, **not in a stage apart**.”⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰³ Chairman Mao, *On Contradiction*, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰⁴ UOC (MLM), *Revista Contradição*, nº 7, 1991, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰⁵ Leon Trotsky, *The Chinese Revolution*, digital version, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰⁶ Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, Kairós Bookstore, 1985, p. 137, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁰⁷ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Quarta Edição, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

In fact, Trotskyism is not limited to the negation of the stages of the revolution, in addition it constitutes the apology of imperialism, the negation of the validity of the democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat and the negation of the peasant problem. All these elements are shared by Avakian and, even more explicitly, by UOC (MLM). Let us now compare their formulation and that of the anti-Leninist Trotsky on the peasant question. As already seen, in relation to the peasant problem, the UOC (MLM) defends the need to:

“(...) **teach the peasants** that for them to save themselves they must ally with the proletariat to struggle against private property and to convert the property of their land into collective property and collective exploitation.” ⁴⁰⁸

Trotsky, in turn, defends the same old anti-peasant program:

“The very fact of the proletariat's representatives entering the government, not as powerless hostages, but as the leading force, destroys the border-line between maximum and minimum program; that is to say, **it places collectivism on the order of the day.**” ⁴⁰⁹

The identity of the positions of UOC (MLM) with Trotskyism is very strong and cannot be “negated” with the vague statement that *Trotskyism does not consist in negation the stages of the revolution*. Of course, it is a much more harmful thing, but his negation is the most fundamental thing in his rotten theories of petty-bourgeois revolutionarism with a radical appearance and right-wing anti-proletarian content. The UOC (MLM), by abandoning the contributions and developments of Maoism for the revolution in semi-colonial countries, depart from Avakianist smuggling and ends up in the Trotskyist mire. Behind such a vaunted anti-dogmatic vision, they reach anti-scientific formulations such as the supposed *progressive tendency of imperialism* and end up defending the deceitful Trotskyist “*Permanent Revolution*” in semi-colonial countries.

The second ideological foundation of the UOC (MLM)'s false political propositions, therefore, is Trotskyism. **For the UOC (MLM) the new democratic revolution would be true in the past, but false for the present; while the “permanent revolution” would have been false in the past but true in the present.**

The UOC (MLM) should, indeed, eradicate this late Trotskyism and truly embrace Maoism. But, in our opinion, this will not be a simple task, as the Trotskyist roots of their analyzes are very deep. Their convergence with this type of opportunism ranges from their political analysis of imperialism and semi-colonial countries, openly departing from Avakianism to end up into Trotskyism, until their economic analysis of the social formations of oppressed countries when they rely, in a covert way, on the so-called “*Marxist Theory of Dependence*”. The MTD was formulated in the 1960s/70s, by Latin American Trotskyist academics linked to ECLAC.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ Leon Trotsky, Results and Prospects, digital version, 2000, p. 116, our translation and emphasis.

The main exponent of this theory was the Brazilian Ruy Mauro Marini, who for many years was a professor in Chile and Mexico.

This supposed “*Marxist Theory of Dependence*” was an attempt by Latin American Trotskyism to economically substantiate Trotsky’s also supposed theory of “*Permanent Revolution*”. Based on the revisionist positions of Khrushchev and his fallacious and infamous “*Secret Speech*”, this quagmire of lies and counter-revolutionary resentments thrown at the heroic and glorious experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR and at the contributions of comrade Stalin, Trotskyism experienced a resurgence at the international level in the late 1950s. After the Cuban Revolution, in 1959 and, mainly after the announcement by decree, in 1962, made by Castro, that the revolution had transformed into a socialist one, Latin American Trotskyism sought to update the Trotskyist “*Permanent Revolution*” defending the revisionist thesis that for oppressed countries the immediately socialist revolution would solve democratic tasks, without the need for a new democratic revolution. Exactly contrary to the historical experience of proletarian revolutions in oppressed countries, an experience in which was the new democratic revolution that advanced socialist tasks, by confiscating latifundium and big local and foreign capital, as Chairman Mao well demonstrated, in *On New Democracy* and other works of his.

To economically substantiate this ideological-political position, Marini and his consorts formulated a false theory of dependence that aims to nullify the importance of the national-democratic tasks of the proletarian revolution in semi-colonial countries. Falsifying Marxism, Marini seeks to reduce the contradictions of semi-colonial countries exclusively to that which opposes the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and to summarize the oppression of imperialism solely to the super-exploitation of the proletariat, bypassing the mechanisms of suppression and appropriation of ground rent from primary production produced and exported by oppressed countries. Furthermore, Marini denies the existence and political importance of the middle bourgeoisie (national bourgeoisie) in the revolutionary process in these countries. As already seen in this document, the positions of the UOC (MLM) fully coincide with these formulations of the *Trotskyist theory of dependence*. Let us now move on, albeit briefly, to a direct comparison between the economic formulations of the UOC (MLM) and those of Marini.

Both the UOC (MLM) and the Trotskyist Marini conceive imperialism as a *world mode production* in which different economies would be “*chained*” or “*integrated*” in the same and single process. Both the UOC (MLM) and *MTD* theorists conclude that the result of this chain is that the native bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries become “*partners*” of the imperialist exploitation regime, even achieving the same rate of profit as financial capital. The enormous inequality of labor productivity in imperialist countries in relation to dependent countries, that is, the high mechanization and application of cutting-edge technologies in the productive processes of the former and the low industrialization of the latter; from the higher organic composition of imperialist capital and the lower organic composition of local monopoly capital, both conclude that there would be a mechanism to “*compensate*” for this enormous difference in productivity, which would be the super-exploitation of labor in oppressed countries. This super-exploitation would have to be exclusive to the semi-colonial bourgeoisie, because if it also existed in

advanced countries, there could not be a similar compensation mechanism. Let's see how Marini formulates the question:

"Let us remind, to avoid mistakes, that the fall in the rate of profit in the dependent countries, as a counterpart to the increase of its organic composition, **it is compensated through the procedures of the super-exploitation of labor**, despite the peculiar circumstances they favor in the agrarian and mining economies, the high profitability of the variable capital." ⁴¹⁰

Likewise, for the leadership of the UOC (MLM) the supposed compensation that would allow the semi-colonial bourgeoisie to achieve the same rate of profit as financial capital is presented as follows:

"The cheapening of the elements that make up constant capital, i.e., the depreciation of existing capital or the sustaining of production without the renewal of machinery and plant, manifested itself especially in the "import substitution", directed by the imperialists at the oppressed countries until the 1970s in the transfer of "obsolete" machines in the imperialist countries to the oppressed countries, **where** super-exploitation compensated for the average profit share of capital for the local bourgeoisie." ⁴¹¹

The exclusivity of the super-exploitation of labor, supposedly belonging to the bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries, as a compensation mechanism is presented as follows by Marini:

"(...) for the development of an industry, this bourgeoisie depends on a technology whose creation is privative of these monopolies. Therefore, there is no alternative left to offer them a society in their **own process of production**, justifying that the coercive retention of wage level of the working class contributes to generate an extraordinary possibility of profit." ⁴¹²

And even more explicitly by the leadership of the UOC (MLM):

"The reduction of wages below their value, i.e., below the value of labor power, **has its own name** in the oppressed countries: super-exploitation." ⁴¹³

No! The reduction of wages below their value, identified by Marx, is called super-exploitation of the proletariat in both imperialist and semi-colonial countries. The origin of this mechanism did not originate in oppressed countries, on the contrary, it emerged together with the industry itself in the most capitalist country of its time: England.

⁴¹⁰ Ruy Mauro Marini, *Dialectics of Dependence*, Popular Era Series, 1981, p. 91, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹¹ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹² Ruy Mauro Marini, *Dialectics of capitalist development in Brazil*, Vozes, 2000, p. 98, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹³ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

Both Marini and the UOC (MLM) distort the content of the super-exploitation of work, as if this alone could compensate for the brutal difference in productivity existing in imperialist countries and semi-colonial countries. Falsifying the law discovered by Marx of the *tendency of the rate of profit to fall*, they assert a supposed advantage of the super-exploitation of labor over mechanization, since according to them, super-exploitation would allow the mass of surplus value produced to be increased without the “danger” of reducing the rate of profit. However, as Marx demonstrates in detail in *Capital*, when two competing capitalists produce under different conditions of machinery, the one that produces under the best conditions will obtain an extraordinary surplus value, as it produces commodities in less working time than is socially necessary. The super-exploitation of labor can reduce this difference, but never compensate for it, Marx exemplifies the issue as follows:

“An English manager of a cotton factory in Oldenburg [Russia], declares that the working time there lasted from 5.30a.m. to 8p.m., Saturdays included, and that the workpeople there, when under English overlookers, did not supply during this time quite so much product as the English in 10 hours, but under German overlookers much less. Wages are much lower than in England, in many cases 50%, but the number of hands in proportion to the machinery was much greater, in certain departments in the proportion of 5:3 (...) Mr. Redgrave gives very full details as to the Russian cotton factories. The data were given him by an English manager until recently employed there (...). On this Russian soil, so fruitful of all infamies, the old horrors of the early days of English factories are in full swing. The managers are, of course, English, as the native Russian capitalist is of no use in factory business. **Despite all overwork**, continued day and night, **despite the most shameful underpayment** of the workpeople, Russian manufacture manages to vegetate only by prohibition of foreign competition.”⁴¹⁴

Although the working day in Russia is 14h30, including Saturday, which adds up to a total of **87 hours** per week; while in England the working day was 10 hours and weekly **60 hours**. Despite the salary in Russia being 50% lower than in England; despite the possible intensity being high, as the Russian factory was commanded by English directors; despite all this, Russian commodities were only able to compete with the English because their import was prohibited. This practical example from Marx completely overturns the theory of Marini and the UOC (MLM) that the super-exploitation of work can compensate for the difference in productivity and thus provide an extraordinary surplus value for the “dependent bourgeoisie”.

By completely falsifying the foundations of Marxist political economy, both Marini and the UOC (MLM) seek to present the super-exploitation of labor as a magical mechanism that would make it possible to compensate for the difference in productivity and increase the mass of surplus value and the profit rate of the comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie of semi-colonial countries in competition with the bourgeoisie of imperialist countries:

⁴¹⁴ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Book 1, our emphasis.

“(...) the three mechanisms identified—the intensification of work, the extension of the working day, and the expropriation of part of the labor necessary for the worker to replenish his labor power—give rise to a mode of production based exclusively on the greater exploitation of the worker, and not on the development of his productive capacity. (...) **this makes it possible to lower the value composition of capital**, which, combined with intensifying the degree of labor exploitation, **causes the rates of surplus value and of profit to rise simultaneously.**” ⁴¹⁵

And his UOC (MLM) disciples:

“The considerable disproportion of variable capital to total capital causes the wage to fall below the **average level and thus** increases both the mass of surplus value and the rate of profit.” ⁴¹⁶

The extraordinary surplus value obtained by the bourgeoisie of “underdeveloped” countries, thanks to the “secret” of the super-exploitation of the proletariat, would allow the local bourgeoisie to achieve the same rate of profit, the same rate of capital accumulation, and would thus allow these bourgeoisies become exporters of capital, configuring what Marini calls sub-imperialism:

“What was put forward was the **imperialist expansion of Brazil**, in Latin America, which **actually corresponds to a sub-imperialism** or an indirect extension of North-American imperialism (let us not forget that a center of such an imperialism of this kind would be a Brazilian economy integrated to a North-American one)” ⁴¹⁷

For the leadership of the UOC (MLM), the bourgeoisie of the “*oppressed capitalist countries*”:

“(...) [reached] a **great accumulation of capital by making it excessive there as well**” One cannot “evade its real monopoly character and **imperialist aspirations.**” ⁴¹⁸

By adopting the *Trotskyist theory of dependence*, the UOC (MLM) conclude that the super-exploitation of the proletariat in oppressed countries, a real phenomenon, would enable the semi-colonial bourgeoisie to obtain a profit rate equal to that of finance capital, to the point of becoming an exporter of excessive capital and, thus, sub-imperialist. Both Marini and the UOC (MLM) summarize imperialist oppression to the super-exploitation of labor, thus ignoring the other factors of the *maximum profit* of financial capital: the suppression of ground rent and the restriction of the profit of the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. They simplify the complex picture of reality to a single contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, denying the

⁴¹⁵ Ruy Mauro Marini, *Dialectics of capitalist development in Brazil*, Vozes, 2000, p. 98, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹⁶ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹⁷ Ruy Mauro Marini, *Dialectics of capitalist development in Brazil*, Vozes, 2000, p. 98, our translation and emphasis.

⁴¹⁸ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

revolutionary role of the peasantry in particular and the petty bourgeoisie in general, as well as the vacillating character of the national bourgeoisie and national oppression:

“Imperialism has broken national borders and has **pit class against class in the world arena.**” ⁴¹⁹

And:

“Nowadays, finance capital’s yoke over the labor of society is the heaviest and vilest. The king of imperialist capital has expanded to the confines of the world, razing whole peoples and carrying the cause of its existence with him: survival and development: the **super-exploitation of the proletariat.**” ⁴²⁰

The cause of the existence of finance capital is not only explained by the super-exploitation of the proletariat, but also by the suppression of ground rent in oppressed nations, by the plundering of their natural wealth. To elude this is to deny the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism, it is to summarize the world's fundamental contradictions into a single one: *class against class*, very much to the liking of Trotskyism. Or as Marini puts it: “*the basis of dependency is the super-exploitation of labor*”. This is one foundation but not the only one. What's more, it is not exclusive to the bourgeoisie of oppressed countries; on the contrary, the permanent super-exploitation of the proletariat in oppressed nations, as demonstrated by Lenin, is the source that will supply the *maximum profit* of finance capital. This prevents the lackey bourgeoisie of the semi-colonies from taking advantage of this condition to the same extent. This super-exploitation, therefore, does not allow for the **compensation** of the profit rate theorized by Marini and repeated by the UOC (MLM). It is part of the privileges of finance capital given its imperialist nature and condition.

There are so many similarities between the UOC (MLM) and Marini's analyzes that it is impossible to believe that they are just a fortuitous coincidence. In this way, we can conclude that the *Trotskyist theory of dependence* is a third ideological foundation of the false political conceptions of the UOC (MLM). In addition to these convergences, the UOC (MLM) is even closer to other revisionist variants. In their criticism of the International Line of our Party and the ICL, the UOC (mlm) repeatedly accuses us of “*third worldist*” deviations. With this they mean that we are supporters of Teng Siao-ping's rotten “three worlds” theory. Our Party defended and defends the position that was present in the *Bases for Discussion*, but which is not present in the *Political Declaration and the Principles*, that is, that what was formulated by Chairman Mao that “*three worlds delineate*” is correct and that this approach is opposite to the forgery of the traitor Teng Siao-ping.

As everyone knows, in the 1950s and 1960s, Chairman Mao presented this thesis in which he drew attention to the contradictions within the imperialist camp, between imperialist superpowers and imperialist powers. Chairman Mao's thesis pointed to the delineation of the

⁴¹⁹ UOC (MLM), Revista Contradicción Nº 1, *apud* nº 8, 1990, our translation and emphasis.

⁴²⁰ UOC (MLM), *Programa para la revolución en la Colombia*, Fourth Edição, 2015, our translation and emphasis.

following three worlds: imperialist superpowers (first world), imperialist powers (second world) and socialist countries and oppressed countries (third world). Teng Siao-ping falsifies this formulation and presents in 1974 and 1977 his rotten “three worlds theory”, an international revisionist line that aimed to sabotage the world revolution and demoralize Maoism. In his fateful speech at the UN in April 1974, Teng Siao-ping publicly presented his rotten theory for the first time:

“Judging from the changes in international relations, the world today actually consists of three parts, or three worlds, that are both interconnected and in contradiction to one another. The United States and the Soviet Union make up the First World. The developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other regions make up the Third World. **The developed countries between the two make up the Second World.** (...) At the same time, all **these developed countries are in varying degrees controlled**, threatened or bullied by the one superpower or the other. (...) In varying degrees, all these countries [from the Second World] have the desire of shaking off superpower enslavement or control and safeguarding their national independence and the integrity of their sovereignty.” ⁴²¹

In other words, for the renegade Teng there would be imperialist countries (first world), developed but oppressed countries (second world) and developing countries (third world). The UOC (MLM), as we have seen, analyzes that the world is divided into imperialist countries, oppressed capitalist countries and semi-feudal countries; although they cry out against *third worldism*, they end up converging with the same categories of Teng's rotten “three worlds” theory. Like him, they conclude about the existence of a “second world” composed of countries with developed capitalism, although oppressed by imperialism. Or as they formulate in their criticism of our Party and the ICL:

“(...) it is possible that there are countries which are **neither imperialist nor semi-feudal and semi-colonial**, but which are **relatively backward capitalist countries.**” ⁴²²

This possibility raised by the UOC (mlm), however unusual it may be coming from a political organization that defines itself as Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, is nothing new, it was already presented in 1974 by the rotten revisionist Teng Siao-ping. This convergence with Tengism, therefore, constitutes the fourth ideological foundation of the false political positions of the UOC (MLM).

Finally, in relation to the philosophical issue, addressed in the first part of this document, it is necessary to consider the emphasis that the UOC (MLM) gives to the law *of negation of the negation*. Going as far as concluding that the fact that this law was supposedly discarded by Stalin and Chairman Mao would be one of the causes of capitalist restoration in the USSR and China. As we highlighted in the first part of this document, the UOC (MLM) in their formulations on *the negation of the negation* at no point demarcates the difference between the meaning of

⁴²¹ Teng Siao-ping, Speech by Chairman of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, Teng Hsiao-ping, at Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly, *Foreign Languages Press Peking*, 1974.

⁴²² UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, n 6, 2023, our emphasis

Marx's use from the conciliatory position of Proudhon and Prachanda and the false interpretations of Dühring and Avakian. We have shown how, for Marx, the *negation of the negation* occurs as a complete suppression of private property over the means of production and not as a combination of social property and private property. That is, the process of permanent revolution until communism aims to put an end to the interdependence between social production and capitalist property, aims at the division of this unity of opposites into two, the development of the new aspect into a new contradiction and the historical disappearance of the old aspect. The UOC (MLM), by not demarcating this distinction between the *negation of the negation* in Marx and between revisionists, comes closer to the philosophical conception supported by the renegade Prachanda who takes the *negation of the negation* as the process in which *two combine into one*.

By abandoning Maoism, by reducing this powerful sword of the international proletariat, to past or future teachings, with no validity in the present, the UOC (MLM) ends up in terribly bad company: Avakian, Trotsky, Marini, Teng and Prachanda. By applying Maoism nominally and formally violating its fundamental theories and without revealing all its revolutionary content, it is not possible to combat revisionism consequently. The UOC (MLM), by not applying the revolutionary content of Maoism to the current and concrete analysis of concrete contradictions in the world and in its own country, ends up harboring in the foundations of its formulations old revisionist theses defeated long ago in the ICM. Among these erroneous conceptions, the most serious and deep-rooted in their formulations are the Avakianist and Trotskyist ones, as well as the economic foundation of the false Marxist theory of dependence, which seeks precisely to substantiate a supposed validity of the Trotskyist "*Permanent Evolution*" in Latin America and in the semi-colonial countries as a whole.

2- Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the Democratic Revolution

The problem of the relationship between the leadership of the proletariat in the revolution for socialism and the democratic revolution is not a new question for the international proletariat and the ICM. On the contrary, it was present since the founding of its scientific ideology with Marxism and remains valid, in an updated and developed manner in the epoch of imperialism. In the course of the process of development of the ideology of the proletariat, this question was the subject of important two-line struggles. Just as it is today again in the camp of Maoism.

In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels establish that: "***the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.***"⁴²³ In the evaluation of the defeat of the democratic revolution of 1848, Marx analyzes the difference between the petty-bourgeois position and the proletarian position, during the course of the German revolution, concluding that: "While *the democratic petty bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible (...) it is our interest*

⁴²³ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, our emphasis

and our task to make the *revolution permanent, until (...) the proletariat has conquered state power.*" ⁴²⁴

This permanent revolution formulated by Marx has nothing in common with the Trotskyist mirage of never-realized revolutions in paper that predicts the abandonment of democratic tasks, on the one hand, and parliamentary cretinism, on the other. ⁴²⁵ Marx and Engels continued, throughout their lives, defending the need to defend bourgeois democratic flags in the struggle against semi-feudality in Germany, even when these flags were abandoned by the bourgeoisie. Engels highlights this in the 1870s:

"It is therefore in the interests of the workers to support the bourgeoisie in its struggle against all reactionary elements, *as long as it remains true to itself*. Every gain which the bourgeoisie extracts from reaction, eventually benefits the working class, if that condition is fulfilled. (...) But what if the bourgeoisie is untrue to itself and betrays its own class interests, together with the principles these imply? Then there are two paths left to the workers! Either **to drive the bourgeoisie on against its will and compel it** as far as possible to extend the suffrage, to grant freedom of the press, association and assembly and thereby to create an arena for the proletariat in which it can move freely and organize. This is what the English workers have done since the Reform Bill of 1832 and the French workers since the July Revolution of 1830 (...) Or alternatively, the workers might withdraw entirely from the bourgeois movement and leave the bourgeoisie to its fate. This was what happened in England, France and Germany after the failure of the European workers' movement from 1848 to 1850. (...) It cannot happen when the working class is in a healthy condition, for it would be the equivalent of **total political abdication.**" ⁴²⁶

In 1891, Engels, in his *Critique of the Erfurt Program*, also criticized German social democracy for not upholding the democratic demand for the Republic in Germany in opposition to the Prussian monarchy. The relationship, therefore, between the proletarian revolution and the democratic revolution, upheld in 1848, remained an important issue for Marxism throughout the 19th century. In the first stage of the ideology of the international proletariat, the most important two-line struggle around this relationship took place against the Lassallian petty-bourgeois socialist positions. Lassalle worked closely with Marx and Engels during the 1848 revolution and remained close to Marxism until the end of the 1850s. In the early 1860s, he

⁴²⁴ Karl Marx, Address of the Central Authority to the League, *CW*, v10, pp 281, *our emphasis*.

⁴²⁵ "The central slogan of the Stalinists for India, as well as for China, still remains *the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants*. (...) By this course of historical development, the 'democratic dictatorship' has become not only an empty fiction but a treacherous trap for the proletariat. (...) Giving the revolution an abstract democratic character and permitting it to pursue the dictatorship of the proletariat only after some sort of a mystical or mystifying 'democratic dictatorship' is established, our strategists at the same time reject the central political slogan of every revolutionary democratic movement, which is precisely the slogan of the Constituent Assembly. (...) **The Constituent Assembly, where the representatives of the whole people formally draw the balance with the past and the classes actually draw the balance with each other, is the natural and inevitable combination of the democratic tasks of the revolution** not only in the consciousness of the awakening masses of the peasantry but also in the consciousness of the working class itself. (...) saturates the slogan of the Constituent Assembly (...) with a particularly deep revolutionary democratic content." (Trotsky, *The Revolution in India*, *our emphasis*)

⁴²⁶ Friedrich Engels, The Prussian Military Question and the German Workers' Party, *our emphasis*

began to openly defend opportunist positions and shortly before his death in 1863, founded the General Association of German Workers. The struggle against Lassallism had great importance in the development of the specific line of revolution in Germany and is at the center of the polemics of Marx with the social democratic leadership formulated in his brilliant work *Critique of the Gotha Program*.

Lassalle was a right-wing opportunist, who sought to cover up the content of his position with left-wing phraseology. In this way, he advocated a pure social revolution, advocating that the proletariat should abstain from the democratic struggle of the bourgeoisie against the feudal forces dominant in the kingdom of Prussia. The right-wing essence of this position is made clear in the question of the ways for unifying Germany. Marx and Engels argued that unification should occur through a democratic revolution, supported by the proletariat, that crushed feudal reaction and monarchy. Lassalle, in turn, supported the reactionary path of German unification, defending the Prussian monarchy in a dynastic war against Austria. In the episode of the Austro-French-Italian war, Lassalle argued that the “*Prussian mission*” would be to support Napoleon III in the destruction of Austria:

“Independently of how one conceives the form of this unity, if we think of it as a German republic, or as a German empire, or, finally, as a rigid federation of independent states—all of these questions can remain open at the moment. Anyways, all these parties, if they have the intelligence to understand each other, must work together on the essential condition for each one of these cases? **The annihilation of Austria.** (...) Napoleon is about to fulfill this preparatory work for the constitution of the German unity.”⁴²⁷

The Marxist position on the issue, supported by Engels in *Po and Rhine*, aimed to convert the attack by the French Empire into a national revolutionary war that would lead to German unification on democratic and republican bases. Lassalle hid his right-wing position with left-wing phraseology, saying that in addition to the proletariat, the rest of the German population would be a “*reactionary mass*”, and that the national question would be resolved by a dynastic war without the participation of the working class. Engels describes this Lassallian dogma as follows: “(...) *they adopt the high-sounding but historically false Lassallean dictum: in relation to the working class all other classes are only one reactionary mass.*”⁴²⁸

Thus, like Trotskyism, Lassallism had a right-wing essence covered by left-wing verbiage. Years later, Lassalle's secret agreements with Bismarck were discovered, clearly revealing that behind the discourse of abstaining from political and national issues, there was essentially the position that saw a *progressive tendency* in the feudal aristocracy and the absolutist monarchy. In secret correspondence to Bismarck, Lassalle wrote that:

“[The workers] would be inclined, despite the republican convictions, (...) **to see in the crown a natural bearer of a social dictatorship as opposed to the egotism of the**

⁴²⁷ Ferdinand Lassalle, *The Italian War and the Mission of Prussia*, Collected Speeches and Writings, Vol. 1, our translation and emphasis.

⁴²⁸ Friedrich Engels, *Letter to August Bebel*, March 18-28, 1875, Collected Works, Vol. 45, p. 61 (our translation and emphasis).

bourgeois society, under the condition the crown (...) decides to truly walk the revolutionary and national path, and **to convert itself, from a monarchy of privileged layers, into a social and revolutionary monarchy.**" ⁴²⁹

Lassalle's positions caused significant damage to the German proletariat. The lack of understanding the relationship between the proletarian revolution and the democratic revolution, widespread in Germany, seriously influenced the errors of the Spartacist left in the German Revolution of 1919. Franz Mehring, one of the exponents of the Spartacist League, for example, assessed that the position of Lassalle regarding the national question was correct. Mehring assesses this issue as follows in 1918: "*Once the possibility of a bourgeois revolution had been excluded, Lassalle correctly realized that German unification, as far as it was possible, could only be the result of dynastic commotions.*" ⁴³⁰

This assessment by Mehring was not restricted to just a historical assessment of the German revolution. It was full of positive considerations about Lasallianism, particularly the convergence with the assessment of the existence of a *reactionary mass*. This position, for example, influenced the erroneous line of the Spartacist League on the question of nationalities and the peasant question, on which they opposed the self-determination of nations and the agrarian revolution as a path to nationalize the land. These two questions, in turn, were masterfully resolved by Lenin, precisely because he knew how to draw on the ideological source of Marx and Engels and completely demarcate with Lassalle. Trotsky, on the contrary, expressed his deep admiration for this petty-bourgeois socialist:

"From the experience of the Hungarian and German revolutions Lassalle drew the conclusion that from now on revolutions could only find support in the class struggle of the proletariat." ⁴³¹

In the second stage of the ideology of the international proletariat, particularly in the course of the three Russian revolutions: 1905, February and October 1917, Lenin established a great leap in this matter. He showed how the Russian revolution, as a democratic revolution, would be carried out not with the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, but against this bourgeoisie. However, not falling into the Lasallian tale of pure social revolution, he upholds the need to raise the democratic flags of the end of monarchical absolutism, agrarian revolution and self-determination of the peoples as a necessary stage for the socialist revolution. With the entry into the political arena of the peasantry, in the Revolution of 1905, he masterfully establishes the need for the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants". He defends, moreover, that the proletariat, supported by its own armed force, should dispute the leadership of the democratic revolution, composing the revolutionary government and aiming to bring the democratic revolution to the end in order to advance towards socialism.

⁴²⁹ Ferdinand Lassalle, Letter to Otto von Bismarck, June 1863 to Fedossiev and others, In Karl Marx – Biografia, Editora Avante, 1983, our translation and emphasis.

⁴³⁰ Franz Mehring, *Karl Marx – The History of his life*, Editora Routledge, versão digital, ps. 857, our translation and emphasis.

⁴³¹ Leon Trotsky, Results and Prospects, digital version, 2000, p. 72, our translation and emphasis.

The February 1917 revolution was the realization of this brilliant Bolshevik line. The monarchy was overthrown, the Soviets of workers, soldiers and peasants were established, but, still with a lot of weight from the Menshevik positions, did not seize Power, on the contrary, they started to support a provisional government hegemonized by the liberal bourgeoisie in composition with monarchical elements. Lenin then showed that one should not participate in this provisional government; but, rather, advance towards the Socialist Revolution with the conquest of all Power to the Soviets. And this is what happened, in October, with the Great Socialist Revolution, the Party seized Power in the insurrection of Petrograd and handed it over to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. For the first time in history, in a complete way, the dictatorship of the proletariat initiated.

The Trotskyist theory contrary to the democratic stage in the Russian revolution was formulated in 1905, borrowing the formulations of another opportunist, Parvus. With the triumph of the Socialist Revolution in October, Trotsky will seek to falsify history, denying the importance of the February democratic revolution and shamelessly claiming that in October his rotten *theory of permanent revolution* was confirmed. In his attempt to deform Leninism, Trotsky says that Lenin belatedly realized the correctness of his theory and that before April 1917, Bolshevik tactics were identical to Menshevik tactics:

“Here it is suitable to remember that **the official social democratic program was still at that time common to the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks**, that the practical tasks of the democratic revolution looked the same on paper to both parties” ⁴³²

And then:

“According to Lenin, their joint uprising against the old society must, if victorious, lead to the establishment of the ‘democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry’: This formula is now repeated in the Communist International as a sort of supra-historical dogma, with no attempt to analyze the living historical experiences of the last quarter-century as though we had not been witnesses and participants in the Revolution of 1905, the February Revolution of 1917, and finally the October Revolution. Such a historical analysis, however, is all the more necessary because **never in history has there been a regime of the ‘democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry’**: In 1905, it was a question with Lenin of a strategical hypothesis still to be verified by the actual course of the class struggle.” ⁴³³

Blatant forgery! The Bolshevik line was victorious, because the February revolution was fulfilled as a democratic revolution. If it weren't, there wouldn't be enough forces to overthrow the monarchy; Furthermore, it took all the experience of 1917 to make the socialist revolution possible, which would have been defeated if it had been immediate. The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasants did exist, but it was not realized in the

⁴³² Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. I, Federal Senate Editions, 2017, p. 343, our translation and emphasis.

⁴³³ Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution*, Preface. Kairós Bookstore, 1985, p. 20, our translation and emphasis.

provisional government, as predicted in the theses of 1905, but in the Soviets since February. However, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries refused to recognize it and preferred, in their indifference, to support the bourgeoisie and English imperialism, strengthening the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government. And the struggle in this body of Power, the Soviets, was decisive, as the battle was fought there to achieve a solid alliance between proletarians and peasants (and soldiers, who were poor peasants in their vast majority). An alliance that began with the peasantry in general and throughout the course of the socialist revolution relied centrally on the poor peasantry. This is demonstrated by the precious assessment of the two revolutions of 1917, made by the great Lenin:

“First, with the ‘whole’ of the peasants against the monarchy, against the landowners, against medievalism (and to that extent the revolution remains bourgeois, bourgeois-democratic). Then, with the poor peasants, with the semi-proletarians, with all the exploited, against capitalism, including the rural rich, the kulaks, the profiteers, and to that extent the revolution becomes a socialist one. **To attempt to raise an artificial Chinese Wall between the first and second**, to separate them by anything else than the degree of preparedness of the proletariat and the degree of its unity with the poor peasants, **means to distort Marxism dreadfully**, to vulgarize it, to substitute liberalism in its place.” ⁴³⁴

Leninism established the relationship between the democratic revolution and the socialist revolution on a new level, demonstrating the need and possibility of transforming the first into the second, not through the artificial negation of the stages of this process, but through its implementation in facts. Lenin summarizes the issue this way:

“**The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one**, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country. (...) Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution.” ⁴³⁵

And also:

“**But in order to consolidate the achievements of the bourgeois-democratic revolution for the peoples of Russia, we were obliged to go farther; and we did go farther.** We solved the problems of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in passing, as a ‘by-product’ of our main and genuinely proletarian-revolutionary, socialist activities. (...) We said—and

⁴³⁴ V. I. Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, OC, Progress Publishers Moscow, Vol. 37, p. 322, our translation and emphasis.

⁴³⁵ V. I. Lenin, *On the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the October Revolution*, OC, Progress Publishers Moscow, Vol. 44, p. 150, our translation and emphasis.

proved it by deeds—that bourgeois-democratic reforms are a by-product of the proletarian, i.e., of the socialist revolution.”⁴³⁶

As the great Stalin concludes:

*“(...) the idea of **the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution**, propounded by Lenin as long ago as 1905, is one of the forms of the embodiment of Marx's theory of permanent revolution.”*⁴³⁷

In the third stage of development of Marxism, Maoism, the question acquires its classical and higher form. Chairman Mao establishes that the transformation of the democratic revolution into a socialist revolution corresponds to the uninterrupted passage from the new democratic stage to the socialist stage of the revolution in semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries. He shows how in the course of the democratic revolution, socialist tasks are already being carried out, notably the confiscation of big local and foreign capital (imperialism), its nationalization in the hands of the new revolutionary state, that is, the complete socialization of the means of production controlled by imperialism and by the local big bourgeoisie. Furthermore, he formulates that in the course of the new democratic revolution a new form of dictatorship emerges, the *joint dictatorship of the revolutionary classes*, a transitional form indispensable for the proletarian revolution in semi-colonial countries, and, with the conquest of Power throughout the country, the democratic stage is concluded transforming the class nature of the State into a dictatorship of the proletariat:

“However, for a certain historical period, this form [dictatorship of the proletariat] is not suitable for the **revolutions in the colonial and semi-colonial countries**. During this period, therefore, a third form of state must be adopted in the revolutions of all colonial and semi-colonial countries, namely, the new-democratic republic. This form suits a certain historical period and is therefore **transitional; nevertheless, it is a form which is necessary and cannot be dispensed with**”.⁴³⁸

Note that it is Chairman Mao who establishes the universality of the new democratic revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries; and not in such semi-feudal countries as the UOC (MLM) falsifies, while reviving the Trotskyist “*Permanent Revolution*” with a “Maoist” stamp. This universality is neither the work of Chairman Gonzalo, nor the “dogmatism” of the ICL, it is the purest Maoism. Once again, in the history of the ICM, the question of the relationship between the proletarian revolution and the democratic revolution is placed on the agenda, now dividing the camps with those who, denying the fundamental theory of Maoism, claim to call themselves Maoists. In this sense, we consider the observations on this issue raised by the CPI(Maoist) in their greetings to the formation of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal to be very correct:

⁴³⁶ V. I. Lenin, On the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the October Revolution, OC, Progress Publishers Moscow, Vol. 44, p. 153, our translation and emphasis.

⁴³⁷ J. V. Stalin, Concerning Questions of Leninism. Our translation and bolding.

⁴³⁸ Chairman Mao, On New Democracy, OE, Beijing Foreign Languages Press, Volume II, p. 365, our translation and emphasis.

“Our party believes that only by fulfilling the New Democratic tasks in relentless struggle in the path of Protracted People’s War against imperialism, comprador bureaucratic capitalism and feudalism in the base and superstructure, it can successfully **advance in the direction of achieving new democracy and genuine people’s democracy in semi-colonial, semi-feudal systems in like Nepal and India.**” ⁴³⁹

We consider this statement made by the CPI(Maoist) to be very correct, as it addresses the central political issue in the current two-line struggle in the ICM: the problem of the validity of the new democratic revolution. The ideological foundation of this question is the recognition that the theory of the New Democratic Revolution, which departed from the Leninist theses of the revolution in colonial/semi-colonial countries, constitutes one of the main developments of Marxism achieved by Chairman Mao in the course of the Chinese Revolution. This problem, therefore, is related to the question of the *definition of Maoism*, of what is the universal content of Chairman Mao's contributions, of whether the new democratic revolution is a specificity for the Chinese Revolution or whether it is a fundamental universal contribution of Maoism. for the revolution of semi-colonial countries, which are the vast majority of countries in the world and whose populations correspond to the overwhelming majority of the popular masses on Earth.

In their criticism of the UMIC⁴⁴⁰ process, to which there is already a response from the ICL ⁴⁴¹ itself, the CPI(Maoist), when dealing with the development of the ideology of the international proletariat, highlights that: “*Mao Zedong Thought (...) was established as a new and higher stage in the development of proletarian ideology at the time of the Ninth Congress of the CCP*” ⁴⁴² then they highlight that it was Chairman Gonzalo “*the first to formulate Maoism as the third, new and higher stage of Marxism*”. We agree with the CPI(Maoist) that the Ninth Congress of the CPC had great historical importance for the establishment of Maoism. In this Congress, the left consolidates the achievements reached during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the reestablishment at a higher level of the definition adopted in the VII Congress of 1945, in which it was defined that the CPC was guided by “*Marxism-Leninism and the ideas of Mao Zedong*”. This definition had been revoked by the right in 1956, at the VIII Party Congress.

The definitions of the IX Congress, highlighted by the CPI(Maoist), for example, advance in several issues such as the establishment of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as the principal contradiction, at the internal level, of socialist construction; the defense of the GPCR, the need for a two-line struggle for the development and forging of the communist party. However, it does not highlight, for example, as is explicit in Chairman Mao, in *On New Democracy*, the universality of the new democratic revolution for semi-colonial countries. Therefore, the *definition of Maoism* made by Chairman Gonzalo, in 1988, during the People's War in Peru, is not restricted to naming the development of the ideology as a new

⁴³⁹ CPI (Maoist), Supporting the Formation of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Nepal, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁴⁰ United Maoist International Conference a series of intentional events held in the lead up to the ICL where debates were held on what the Points of Unity of the ICL should be.

⁴⁴¹ ICL, Our assessment of “The CPI (Maoist) position on the formation of the International Communist League (ICL), 2023.

⁴⁴² CPI (Maoist), The Stand of the CPI (Maoist) on the formation of the ICL, our translation and emphasis.

stage. Chairman Gonzalo's main contribution to the ICM was the definition of the content of this new, third and higher stage that is Maoism.

This is a profound ideological question from which important political errors can result. As is made clear in the formulations of the UOC (MLM), which proclaims, for example, that Maoism is a third stage, but which is against the universality of the New Democratic Revolution for semi-colonial countries. The *definition of Maoism*, established by Chairman Gonzalo, leaves no room for deviations like this, as he establishes that Maoism is a leap in the three component parts of Marxism, as a unit, because Chairman Mao established the law of contradiction as the sole fundamental in Marxist philosophy; in political economy, he gave great development to socialist construction and laid the foundations for the theory of bureaucratic capitalism; and in scientific socialism he resolved the question of the New Democratic Revolution, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and established the theory of Protracted People's War.

The delimitation of the universal aspect, in each of the stages of the ideology of the international proletariat, is not a simple matter. Highlighting universality in the theoretical and practical work of Marx, Lenin and Chairman Mao corresponds precisely to the respective **Definition** of what Marxism, Leninism and Maoism are. The definition of each of these stages in the formulation and development of the ideology of the international proletariat corresponded precisely to the clear delimitation of its universality, as well as to the complete exposition of each of them as a doctrine. The *Definition*, therefore, encompasses a synthesis, but is not reduced to it.

In the current two-line struggle in the ICM, departing from the formulations on *Mao Tse-tung thought* made at the IX Congress of the CPC seems insufficient to us. After all, to say, as the UOC (MLM) does, that the new democratic revolution is not valid for all semi-colonial countries is to relegate Maoism to the experience of the Chinese Revolution, it is to reduce it, therefore, to the condition of a guiding thought and not a new stage in ideology. This is what the UOC (MLM) does, for example, when they compare the 1980 and 1984 RIM Declarations:

“[in the Declaration of 1980] it was already accepted that in some dependent countries, capitalism had achieved a good development and they were no longer semi-feudal (...). In the ‘RIM Declaration’ (1984), **there is a revert in regards of the previous point of view to generalize:** ‘*Still in the predominantly capitalist oppressed countries (...) it is still necessary in general that revolution goes through an anti-imperialist democratic stage before being able to initiate the socialist revolution.*’

This way there was a revert, as the concrete analysis of the concrete situation, the living soul of Marxism, is replaced by mechanicism, that **aims to bring the conditions of 1938 China to current conditions, as if capitalism had stopped, as if time had frozen.**” ⁴⁴³

For the UOC (MLM), strictly speaking, the new democratic revolution was only valid in China in the 1930s. Today, it would only be valid in so-called “semi-feudal countries”, which no

⁴⁴³ UOC (mlm), Contradição Magazine, No. 4, our translation and emphasis.

one knows exactly what they would be. For Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, since the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* to the latest works of Chairman Mao, the relationship between the proletarian revolution and the democratic revolution has always been a matter of paramount importance. The new democratic revolution uninterrupted toward socialism is an inseparable part of the world proletarian revolution. Denying the validity of the new democratic revolution is falling into the rottenest revisionism.

3- Chairman Gonzalo generalizes and develops the Maoist theory of bureaucratic capitalism

By defining Maoism as a *new, third and higher stage of Marxism*, Chairman Gonzalo bases the universality of the New Democratic Revolution, for all colonial and semi-colonial countries in the world, on the generalization and development of the Maoist theory of bureaucratic capitalism. The defense of the Maoist theory of bureaucratic capitalism was made quite adequately by the PCC-FR, in 2022, in the important document *Answer to the Statement of the Communist Workers' Union (UOC) on the Proposal of the Coordinating Committee for the Unified Maoist International Conference (UMIC)*. As this is an essential issue to defend the validity of the New Democratic Revolution, as an indispensable part of the World Proletarian Revolution, today, we will address, albeit quickly, this decisive contribution by Chairman Gonzalo to the ideology of the international proletariat.

Taking Maoism as a unit, Chairman Gonzalo synthesizes and applies the theory of bureaucratic capitalism formulated by Chairman Mao to the Peruvian reality, developing it in numerous aspects and generalizing it to the conditions of all oppressed countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Bureaucratic capitalism is part of the world imperialist system and the formulation of its theory by Chairman Mao and its robust development by Chairman Gonzalo is a continuation of the theory of imperialism by Lenin and of *Capital* by Marx and Engels.

Bureaucratic capitalism is defined by Chairman Gonzalo as “*capitalism that imperialism engenders in backward countries, tied to feudality that is obsolete and subjected to imperialism that is the last phase of capitalism, which do not serve the majority but the imperialists, the big bourgeoisie and the landowners*” and, departing from Chairman Mao, summarizes its basic features:

“1) Bureaucratic capitalism is capitalism that imperialism engenders in the backward countries, which includes the capital of big landowners, the big bankers and magnates of the big bourgeoisie; 2) exert exploitation over the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie and restricts middle bourgeoisie; 3) it goes through a process in which bureaucratic capitalism combines with state power and materializes state, comprador and feudal, monopoly capitalism, which results in the first moment it develops as big non-state monopoly capital and in a second moment, when combined with state power, develops into state monopoly capitalism; 4) it ripens the conditions for the democratic revolution to reach the apex of its development; and 5) confiscating bureaucratic

capitalism is key to carry out the democratic revolution and decisive to pass towards socialist revolution.”⁴⁴⁴

Therefore, bureaucratic capitalism is diametrically opposed to national conformation, preventing the liberation of the productive forces, exploiting the working classes of the city and countryside and the petty bourgeoisie, restricting the middle bourgeoisie and oppressing the entire people and carrying out the subjugation of the nation, serving imperialism to control the economic process, whether in colonial or semi-colonial countries; and, tied to latifundium, it maintains the obsolete forms of semi-feudal, feudal and even other more backward exploitation relations, which are perpetuated in society through the evolution of its forms, whether through state and non-state, associative or non-associative or forms mixed from these. This unravels all the revisionist, Castroist, Guevarist, Trotskyist and other theses of “*dependent capitalism*”, which support imperialist domination and the evolution of feudal forms to either change the character of the revolution in the dominated countries by predicating “socialist revolution now”, or leave aside their revolutionary phraseology and openly defend capitulation and pacifist reformism to integrate with the old State under the title of “cold accumulation for the socialist revolution”. In fact, trafficking in the interests of the popular masses, riding on their movement through opportunist organizations, electoralism and parliamentary cretinism, in the conquest of “profitable places” in the structure of the old State.

In the study of Peruvian society and its economic-social formation, Chairman Gonzalo based the three moments of the process of bureaucratic capitalism in which it 1) begins and develops, 2) deepens and 3) enters into a general crisis; a process whose course takes place in cycles with gradients of “*temporary recoveries, but each new cycle starts from a lower point than the previous one*”.

Chairman Gonzalo put forward that the big bourgeoisie is divided into two fractions, the comprador bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie: the first is older and intermediate in the export-import processes, develops mainly in the banking and commercial sectors and expresses itself as private capital; The bureaucratic fraction appears when monopoly capital merges with the state, which is its main lever, and is concentrated mainly in industrial sectors. Such differentiation is key, as it arms the proletariat against the siren tale of the opportunist “fronts” that advocates being at the tail of one or another fraction of the big bourgeoisie in their relationship of contend and collusion for the management of the old state.

Studying the process and conditions in which bureaucratic capitalism finds itself is a decisive task to define the character of the revolution in oppressed countries as a new democratic revolution uninterrupted toward socialism, whose content is agrarian, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist and the targets are the three mountains that oppress the people and the nation: imperialism, feudality and bureaucratic capitalism. Such characteristics correspond to the fundamental contradictions that arise in these societies: the contradiction between nation and imperialism; contradiction between the people and bureaucratic capitalism, as a broader

⁴⁴⁴ PCP, Line of the Democratic Revolution, 1988.

expression of the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in oppressed countries; and the masses-feudality contradiction, as an expression of the contradiction between the mainly poor peasantry and the landlord system. The first and last ones may become principal depending on the phases of the revolution and modify their expressions in its course, but, in general, it is the masses-feudality contradiction that is principal when there is no military invasion by a superpower or imperialist power, being resolved through of the agrarian revolution and, when due to its progress there is an imperialist military invasion, the nation-imperialism contradiction takes principality, the resolution of which occurs through the national liberation or anti-imperialist revolution, as a national war of liberation. The second contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, which manifests itself as the contradiction between the people and bureaucratic capitalism, in turn, changes and becomes principal in the uninterrupted transition of the revolution from a triumphant new democracy with the destruction of all semi-feudality and national liberation toward the socialist revolution, guaranteed by the confiscation of all bureaucratic capital and the destruction of bureaucratic capitalism.

By taking up the study of bureaucratic capitalism, Chairman Gonzalo teaches us to pay close attention not only to the economic base, but also to the ideological, political, legal and cultural superstructure; sees semi-feudality in its complete expression throughout society, from its base in the concentration and monopoly of land ownership, in which servile and semi-servile relations arise, even in gamonalism, which expresses the hegemony of big semi-feudal property in politics and mechanism of the State, a factor against which the agrarian revolution is spearheaded; Furthermore, he draws attention to the political aspect of bureaucratic capitalism, which is already born rotten and sick and as it perpetuates itself, the objective conditions for the development and triumph of the revolution mature.

The generalization and development of the theory of bureaucratic capitalism is, therefore, a great contribution of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo; corresponds to a development of the Marxist political economy that is indispensable for the foundation for the validity of the New Democratic Revolution in all colonial and semi-colonial countries in the world today. In this document, when studying the functioning of the ground rent of peasants and of colonial and semi-colonial countries, in the imperialist phase of capitalist development, we are only adding some economic elements to this great contribution established by Chairman Gonzalo.

4- Two camps delineate, the dividing line is the validity of the New Democratic Revolution for the vast majority of countries and the vast majority of the Earth's population

The two-line struggle that began last year around the *Bases for Discussion*, published by the then CUMIC, in preparation for the Unified Maoist International Conference-UMIC, as a product of a long process of struggles and efforts to overcome the dispersion of forces in the ICM and for its unity, has mobilized the Maoist Parties and Organizations in a frank and direct debate, indispensable to impulse the ongoing process, in a way that had not been seen for a long time. Initially, the disagreements centered on philosophical issues and around the contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo. Holding the UMIC corresponded to the continuity of

this two-line struggle between the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and Organizations that founded the ICL and its result, the *Political Declaration and the Principles* and, as for the organizational matter, the constitution of a Leading Committee, the International Conference as sovereign body and the Council of Representatives composed of the member Parties and Organizations. The continuity of the two-line struggle after the founding of the ICL, particularly with the document of the UOC (MLM), published in January 2023, and the two issues of the *Two-Line Struggle* magazine, published by this organization and the PCm Italy, served to clarify that the divergence with the ICL presented in them are not directly related to the issue of Chairman Gonzalo's contributions, but rather around fundamental theories of Maoism itself, particularly the issue of the validity of the New Democratic Revolution, the importance of the peasantry in the World Proletariat Revolution, the necessary relationship between imperialism and semi-feudality and the weight of the contradiction between oppressed nations and imperialism.

We already knew the position of the UOC (mlm) of denying the underlying semi-feudality in semi-colonial countries and its denial of the validity of the new democratic revolution in the world today. However, as a result of the development of the two-line struggle in the ICM, with the publication of the *Two-Line Struggle* magazine, 2nd issue, we became aware that this position is also shared by PCm Italy, which in its criticism of the ICL states:

“A dogmatic approach about the “semi-feudal” characteristic of all oppressed countries exists, while some comrades of some of these countries reject this dogmatic approach, on the basis of their own revolutionary experience and analysis (think for example of the Colombian comrades of the UOC MLM; in other countries such as Tunisia, Iran and Nepal, some comrades are moving towards this direction).” ⁴⁴⁵

According to PCm Italy, there is no semi-feudality in Colombia, Tunisia, Iran or Nepal. In other words, for them, semi-feudality does not exist in any country in the world! They conclude this in the name of anti-dogmatism. However, they simply repeat, with the same words, Bob Avakian's theses presented at the 1980 Conference, let's see:

“While a concrete analysis must be made in each country and **mechanical tendencies must be avoided with regard to this, it is a general principle that the degree of importance of work in the countryside in building the revolutionary movement is closely linked with the relative size of the peasant population and **the extent to which there are pre-capitalist relations in the countryside.**”** ⁴⁴⁶

The same cackling of ignorants about the peasant question, of people who have never set foot outside the big cities and are saying that there is no longer semi-feudality in semi-colonial countries. Avakian orphans who join the rats of the ROL, RandC ⁴⁴⁷ of Peru, who repeat the same argument saying that there is no longer semi-feudality in the Andes and that therefore

⁴⁴⁵ PCm I, *Two Line Struggle*, No. 2, our emphasis.

⁴⁴⁶ PCR (USA) and PCR (Chile), *Fundamental principles for the unity of Marxist-Leninists and for the line of the ICM*, our translation and emphasis.

⁴⁴⁷ Right Opportunist Line, Revisionist and Capitulationist

the revolution there would immediately be socialist. Just like the capitulators of the TKP-ML and MKP, who reject the peasantry as the main force of the new democratic revolution in Turkey, as a justification for the abandonment and betrayal of the People's War.

The editors of *Two-Line Struggle* magazine inherit the worst that existed in the RIM, both in relation to the Avakianist-Trotskyist content of their position, and the methods of relations between parties and organizations. On the one hand, they censor a huge part of the CPI(Maoist) document, blatantly cut 6 pages out of 15 and call it "*a small mistake*". And they cut out precisely the sections in which the CPI(Maoist) defends the weight of the contradiction between the oppressed nation/people and imperialism, and the encirclement of the city from the countryside in the Protracted People's War. On the other hand, they do not publish the dozens of pages of the UOC (MLM) article, in which it is suggested that the revolution in India, the Philippines and Brazil would be immediately socialist. They do not publish the excerpts in which they argue that capitalism is developing in the countryside of these countries and sweeping away semi-feudality:

"In brief, the capitalist production in agriculture is mainly carried out for exchange and using wage labor. Whichever are the backward form of exploitation or ground rent, they can only slow down the capitalist transformation in agriculture, but they cannot stop it. **Lenin has clearly shown this in the case of Russia and this can also be seen in the context of other countries today, as it is the case in India or Brazil.**" ⁴⁴⁸

The UOC (MLM) transplants Lenin's analyzes on the development of capitalism in the Russian countryside, made during the time of *free competition* capitalism, to India and Brazil during the epoch of imperialism; to conclude that both there and here, capitalist relations of production would sweep away semi-feudal relations. What must be swept away is the UOC (MLM)'s nonsense Trotskyist thesis of the *progressive tendency of imperialism*. As for semi-feudality in the countryside in India and Brazil, only the Protracted People's War can sweep away their relations. And this is our commitment and concrete practice.

The current two-line struggle in the ICM, which began in 2022, around the holding of the UMIC and the founding of the ICL, clearly drew the line between Maoism and revisionism (in its old and current modalities). Maoists clearly and forcefully maintain that the principal contradiction in the world today is that which oppose oppressed nations and peoples against imperialism. The heroic Palestinian National Resistance, the enormous support expressed by broad masses around the world, fully confirm this truth defended by the Maoists. The only way to resolve this contradiction is the New Democratic Revolution, uninterrupted toward socialism, through the People's War led by genuine Communist Parties. Therefore, the recognition of the validity of the New Democratic Revolution for all colonial and semi-colonial countries in the world constitutes a clear line of demarcation between Maoism and revisionism. To deny this truth is to fall into the vilest revisionism, it is to abandon the revolutionary path in oppressed countries.

⁴⁴⁸ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

Communists around the world, in addition to recognizing this validity, must assume that the New Democratic Revolution is the main force of the World Proletarian Revolution, because it encompasses the majority of countries and the overwhelming majority of the world's popular masses. The International Communist Movement encompasses two major currents: the international proletarian movement and the national liberation movement, the first being the leadership and the second the base. Contrary to what Avakianism and other revisionists defend, the international proletarian movement is not only present in imperialist countries, but in all countries in the world. We are in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution, and the Communist Parties in each country constitute the vanguard detachment of the proletariat whose main objective is the conquest of political Power through the Socialist Revolution in the imperialist countries and the New Democratic Revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The leadership of the international proletarian movement over the national liberation movement is realized in each oppressed country solely through the New Democratic Revolution through the Protracted People's War. The further the New Democratic Revolutions advance in oppressed countries, the better the conditions will be for the advancement of Socialist Revolutions in imperialist countries.

Upholding and defending the validity of the New Democratic Revolution and mainly applying it through concrete revolutionary practice is a decisive demarcation line between Maoism and revisionism. The leadership of the UOC (MLM) has been openly opposing this issue for years and without rectifying this serious revisionist deviation they will not overcome their isolation from the masses. It will only be left for them to drown down into the swamp of electoralism, reformist and economic practices. So much so, that this year the leadership of the UOC (mlm) abandoned the boycott of the electoral farce and tried to justify this right-wing position for their activists:

These same considerations are the ones that this year led us to the decision of not making the Anti-Election Policy (...) Voting or not voting at this moment, voting on candidate X or candidate Y, or blank as some propose have no importance.”⁴⁴⁹

Defending that the electoral boycott is unimportant, that from the point of view of the politicization of the masses, it makes no difference to vote or boycott the elections, seem to us only preparing the ground to move from an economicist practice to an electoral practice. After all, this is the inevitable result of the abandonment of Maoism and the denial of the validity of the New Democratic Revolution in countries oppressed by imperialism.

Finally, we would like to respond to the low attacks by the UOC (MLM) leadership on the Communist Party of Brazil -P.C.B.

The UOC (MLM) in their criticisms of our Party and the ICL accuse us of being “leftist” and sectarian. However, the general line defended by them maintains that the revolution in most

⁴⁴⁹ UOC (MLM), *Las elecciones de octubre y la actuación política*, in www.revolucionobrera.com, 20 de outubro de 2023, our translation and emphasis.

semi-colonial countries, the so-called “*oppressed capitalist countries*”, would immediately be socialist. For the revolution in their country, they advocate an agrarian program that predicts the “*collectivization*” of peasant lands. They argue that there is no need for a national revolutionary stage in the people's war in semi-colonial countries. In practice, they deny the universal validity of the New Democratic Revolution for all semi-colonial countries. Ultimately, they essentially assume several Trotskyist conclusions and are we the “leftists”?

In the two-line struggle that began last year (2022) with the publication of the *Bases for Discussion*, three Colombian organizations took part in the debates: the Proletarian Power Partisan Organization M-L-M, the Communist Party of Colombia-Red Fraction and the UOC (MLM). All of these Parties and Organizations, to different extents, criticized in some aspects certain propositions contained in the *Bases for Discussion*, criticisms that were countered by other Parties and Organizations, due to some aspects of the positions of critics of the *Bases for Discussion*. Of the three organizations in Colombia, only UOC (MLM) refused to participate in the UMIC. Both PPOPMLM and PCC-FR took part in the UMIC and actively participated in the two-line struggle in the Conference sessions. The UOC (MLM) was the only organization in Colombia that abandoned the two-line struggle in its first phase, and are the Parties and Organizations that founded the ICL the sectarian?

The UOC (MLM)'s accusations about “leftism” and sectarianism on the part of the founders of the ICL simply do not stand tall. However, throwing unfounded accusations seems to be becoming a specialty of the leadership of the UOC (MLM). At the end of their long document criticizing the P.C.B. and the founders of the ICL, they launch the following attack against our Party:

“By the way, the second aspect of the incorrect method of the comrades [sectarianism], we had already known about it at a large meeting in Brazil in 2016, to which we were formally invited, but before the presentation of our *Proposal for the Formulation of a General Line for the ICM*, **the leaders of the event** incited the treatment of ‘death to revisionism!’ (In parentheses, if the position ‘Gonzalo Thought’, pretends to ‘kill’ revisionism, it means that it has not assimilated the a-b-c of the teachings and practices of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to fight it).

Despite the **grotesque and humiliating treatment received in Brazil** - except for the workers' comrades whose hospitality was exemplary and internationalist - **we did not denounce it publicly**, (...) hoping for some reconsideration from the hosts, who years later spoke with comrades from another organization about a self-criticism, which we never received directly; (...) Parodying the words of Engels, we have the tough hide to withstand the stings of our own comrades in struggle; neither in Brazil 2016, nor now, are we intimidated by their grievances.”⁴⁵⁰

And this repulsive attack was, regrettably, supported by leaders of the Committee for the Construction of the Maoist Communist Party of Galicia, to the extent that, in their position on

⁴⁵⁰ UOC (MLM), *Revista Negação da Negação*, nº6, 2023, our translation and emphasis.

the founding of the ICL, they make a point of referring to this low attack by the UOC (MLM) to our party, including doing so in a generic and vague way, as can be seen:

“If in all the international contacts we have had within the ICM, all the organizations have always treated us with great courtesy and comradeship, the same has not happened to UOC (mlm), being **subjected to an** unfair treatment for an organization that dedicates efforts to contribute to the strengthening of the ICM.” ⁴⁵¹

The UOC (MLM) wants to play the victim in the low objective of disqualifying the P.C.B., failing to tell the truth by stating that they were treated in a “*grotesque and humiliating*” way by the P.C.B. in Brazil and, even with cheap demagoguery that “*except for the workers' comrades whose hospitality was exemplary and internationalist*”. What meaning would such an event have if it was the P.C.B. who invited the UOC (MLM), as evidenced by its own words in the document we are now referring to. They also lie when they state that they did not publicly denounce said treatment – which for the P.C.B. would not be and is not, in itself, any problem –, because they not only did so, but also stated that we would have presented a “self-criticism” to another organization of Colombia, without mentioning which one, about this alleged attack. To the leadership of the PCC-FR, who in correspondence informed the P.C.B. that they had received such an accusation from the UOC (MLM), and to whom we responded that, in all the facts that occurred in the events of 2016 in Brazil, the leadership of the P.C.B. did not have any information of such an occurrence and that they considered such an accusation absurd. The leadership of the UOC (MLM) did not even present us with any criticism about this alleged attack; Neither their delegation present at the events in Brazil nor subsequently did their leadership did so by correspondence.

In fact, we only knew about this supposed attack through the aforementioned correspondence from the PCC-FR to our Party, and then through a document published on the UOC (MLM) web portal that criticized the joint declaration celebrating the bicentenary of the birth of the great Karl Marx, in 2018, which the P.C.B. signed; and in the document that is the subject of our present assessment. Our party would never demean the ideological-political struggle, just as we would never hold a public controversy over something so low. Also, our party did not make any self-criticism about this, because we do not treat any organization, no matter how great our differences, in a “*grotesque and humiliating*” way. We now see, with the persistence of the leadership of the UOC (mlm) in this treacherous attack on the P.C.B., that their methods also include the subjectivism of playing with words and in a deceitful way. Who do you intend to deceive? To the ICM or your own bases?

In 2016, shortly after the aforementioned event, the UOC (MLM)'s public assessment of the activity was opposite:

“The celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was, in addition to well organized, a revolutionary and internationalist event. (...) Also,

⁴⁵¹ Committee for the Construction of the Maoist Communist Party of Galicia, Statement on UMIC and ICL, January 2023, our translation and emphasis.

the presence of children, youth and women was noticeable – the majority Afro-descendants – who developed amid the struggle with great revolutionary conviction. There were also experienced agitators who provided livelihood to the event. The revolutionary convictions, the state of spirit of the ones present, the firmness of the cadres

that are continuing the revolutionary process in Brazil, makes it possible to trust that imperialist capitalism will not last much longer in its process of agony because the forces which will bury it are ripe. (...) For the communists in Colombia, it was an honor to participate in the event.”⁴⁵²

The UOC (MLM), on the same activity, makes two antagonistic public assessments, in 2016, extolling its holding; in 2018, in the same press organization they say that they were “*treated like dogs*”, attacks that they repeat in their 2023 document. Which of the two assessments expresses what actually happened and what is the true position of the leadership of the UOC (MLM)?

Such insistence on the part of the leadership of the UOC (mlm) to repeat lies forces us to clarify the facts. Their delegation was in Brazil, invited like all the others, to participate in the three scheduled activities: a Seminar on Bureaucratic Capitalism, a closed-door meeting only of delegations from M-L-M Parties and Organizations, to debate the meaning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (of a single day, lasting 12 hours) and a mass political-cultural act. In all of them, their delegation was given the same intervention time as all other Parties and Organizations present. As the UOC (MLM) itself state in their attack on our Party, their delegation was able to speak freely with the militants of the revolutionary movement and its mass bases present at the two semi-open events. In which, without any restrictions, they distributed photocopies of their *Proposal for the Formulation of a General Line for the ICM*. What is “*grotesque and humiliating*” about that? Did the UOC (MLM) delegation lack decent accommodation? Were you not provided with adequate food? Were you not allowed to speak at the events? Were you denied treatment equal to that given to other guests? No, absolutely none of this happened!

What the leadership of the UOC (MLM) does not report is that, when their delegation was called to form the table for the political-cultural event, they did not present themselves or even deign to give any explanation. Was it because of discomfort at having seen in the debates at previous events that the majority of Parties and Organizations present were defenders of the contributions of Chairman Gonzalo to the World Proletarian Revolution or because they were offended by the harshness of the clashes over bureaucratic capitalism? The leadership of the UOC (mlm) launches all sorts of epithets seeking to discredit the Maoist Parties and Organizations that defend the contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo. Would it be the case, then, that the leadership of the UOC (MLM) is very “fierce” when it comes to making their criticisms and is too sensitive when it comes to receiving them?

⁴⁵² UOC (MLM), *Revolución Obrera*, nº 458, 2016, our translation and emphasis.

Let's see, of all the moments of those events, the only one from which we could deduce a possible cause for the allegations of *"grotesque and humiliating"* treatment by our Party to the UOC (MLM) delegation, however absurd this interpretation may be, was in the context of the debates on bureaucratic capitalism, the fact that many of the participants echoed the slogan of "death to revisionism". If the leadership of the UOC (MLM) understood this as an *"offense"* directed at their organization, when in the context of harsh debates on Bureaucratic Capitalism, the blows were frontal and relentless against revisionism and all opportunism, we can only say that it served as a cap to their head, it is a problem of the delegation and leadership of the UOC (MLM), this is a slogan raised in any activity of Maoist revolutionaries. The leadership of the P.C.B. is the one who states that understanding this slogan as aimed toward your Organization is a very defensive attitude for those who point out against so many Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties, including those who sustain the people's war in a harsh struggle, and accuse, as do the Avakianists and Trotskyists, of being dogmatic, who do not depart from the concrete analysis of the current concrete situation, that is, who violate the very soul of Marxism, due to defending the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war in oppressed countries. If it is not the case that they put on the cap on their heads, we add to what was said by Engels and cited in your 2023 document, the teaching of Chairman Mao, who at a conference of cadres of the CPC (1962), as if foreseeing the radicalization that would come from the class struggle in the party between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between Marxists and the capitalist roaders, between left and right, he called on them to "thicken their scalps" to prepare themselves to go through the storms. Because, contrary to what is said, your hide is still very delicate.

A leader of the CCCPM from Galicia was present at this activity and we were very surprised by the support he gave to the attacks of the UOC (MLM), acting in a dubious manner without openly criticizing the P.C.B. In the two-line struggle, centrism serves to spread the confusion generated by the right and to nourish it. We demand from the CCCPM of Galicia a clear position, saying whether or not the accusation of the UOC (MLM) against our Party is true, without any tergiversation, whether or not they were treated in a *"grotesque and humiliating"* way by our Party when they were in Brazil. The comrades of the CCCPM of Galicia were treated in a proletarian way when they were in Brazil just like it has been with others, and they reciprocated in the same way when a delegation of Brazilian revolutionaries was in Galicia. Communists must contribute in raising the level of the two-line struggle and as witness to the supposed *"unfair treatment"* to the UOC (MLM), they must help to clarify the issue and not nourish lies.

To conclude, we address the glorious ICM, the heroic Communist Party of Peru – PCP and Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist – TKP/ML, founders of the ICL, aiming at the shining people's wars led by their Parties, we have worked hard to promote the proletarian internationalism and for developing the revolution in our country. In the obligation and responsibility imposed on us by the contingencies of the polemic, we found ourselves obliged to write at length about subjects that are known to all Marxists-Leninists-Maoists, aiming to elevate the ideological struggle to the level of a two-line struggle. We also address the heroic CPI(Maoist) and CPP, torches of the world proletarian revolution, we salute the public positions of the fraternal parties and we publicly reaffirm our decision to impulse the old relations

between our Parties, relations that, unfortunately, were interrupted by contingencies of the revolutionary class struggle and for no other reasons, aiming to take further steps towards completely overcoming the dispersion in the ICM and for its solid unity. Particularly, to the CPI(Maoist) and the CPP, as stated in their assessments of the ICL and their criticisms of the *Political Declaration and the Principles*, the P.C.B. reaffirms its commitment to continue debates and clarifications with the CPI(Maoist) in a *“in a bilateral, direct and organized manner”*.

We also address the other Parties and Organizations participating and supporting the ICL. In this document we sought to correspond to the extremely high level of the discussions and two-line struggles held at the Unified Maoist International Conference. We salute all of you for the intense campaigns and the resolute and tireless revolutionary work carried out during the course of this year, driven by the vigorous struggle for the future reconstitution of the immortal Communist International.

Finally, we address the leadership of UOC (MLM), we believe in the two-line struggle, in criticism-self-criticism-transformation. We sought to respond here, from a theoretical and ideological point of view, to the erroneous positions taken by your organization, we seriously study your documents and seek to extract important lessons from them. We hope that the present two-line struggle will contribute to the rectification of these errors, to impulsing the reconstitution of the Communist Party of Colombia, to the development of the revolution in this important country in Latin America. The destiny of the people of our countries is inevitably intertwined in the struggle against the common enemy, imperialism, principally Yankee. The bloodthirsty hordes of this colossus with feet of clay, sooner than later, will be buried between the Amazon rainforest and the Andes Mountain range and the North American people will bury it forever and ever. We are certain that under the leadership of their respective Communist Parties, the Colombian and Brazilian proletariat and peasantry will unite in this common task, in the service of the World Proletarian Revolution!

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Down with revisionism and all kinds of opportunism!

Long live the invincible People's War!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

Long live the World Proletarian Revolution!

Long live the 130 years from the birth of Chairman Mao Zedong!

Long live the International Communist League!

Central Committee - Communist Party of Brazil – P.C.B.