

# MAOISM — WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

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# I.

## PREFACE

The noble, sublime, and sincere spirits of the revolution recognize and respect above all theoretical barriers, the historical solidarity of their efforts and their works. It belongs to the narrow-minded, without horizons and without wings, to the dogmatic mentalities that seek to petrify and stagnate life in a strict formula, the privilege of incomprehension and sectarian egoism.

— *José Carlos Mariátegui*

As part of the ideological struggle inside the revolutionary movement, we publish a critique of an article written by Communist Construction (KA). This critique, as well as the article subject to it, should be understood as part of the struggle to unify the revolutionaries in Germany on a solid and crystal-clear ideological basis.

As staunch champions of dialectical materialism, we uphold that political parties, organizations, and groups are expressions of the objective reality of class struggle. The communists are the expression of the class struggle of the proletariat. That the communists in formation today are advancing ahead in the struggle for the reconstitution of the glorious Communist Party of Germany (KPD) is not an expression of chance or due to the personal abilities of some genius, but in its essence reflects the clamor of the class for its vanguard. The main contradiction in Germany is the one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and the leaderless proletariat cannot organize its struggle and is helpless without its general staff. Hence, the main need of the class struggle of the proletariat is the reconstitution of its Party. Accordingly, the main task for everyone who wants to serve the interests of the proletariat is to struggle for this cause.

Alongside the proletariat, there exist classes and strata of classes that stand in relative opposition to finance capital and



have different kinds of contradictions with it. One of these is the petty-bourgeoisie. This wavering class also generates its different forms of political expressions. One of these is the almost countless number of artisan circles of the “radical left.” These circles sometimes raise the need to “reconstruct the KPD.” With all their differences, these circles generally put forward a concept of “constructing the Party from below” and center on the need for “unity” of as many circles as possible in different forms of “alliances.” What they all have in common is that they reject the need for constructing the Party “from the top.” Therefore, they all clash with the fundamental principles confirmed in the theory and practice of the international proletariat, established by Lenin, over and over again.

These circles do not constitute, as such, an enemy of the proletariat in the current moment of the development of the class struggle in this country, and it is possible and necessary to unite with many of them in particular struggles. However, their ideological opportunism, and not rarely blunt

revisionism, must be combated with fierce ideological struggle accompanied by practical actions that hammer home the truth of the proletariat. Since in almost all of these circles there are sincere elements who really want to serve the class, in some cases even a clear majority, it would be a big mistake for the communists in formation to declare “all-out war” on them. Such an approach would currently only lead to isolation and further fragmentation of the revolutionary movement. Politics in command and the correct handling of the contradictions among the people are what is needed. Today we do not have the Party, and even when we do have it, it is only with the victorious development of the class struggle in its highest form that it becomes the recognized vanguard. This demands having a correct understanding of the front.

The front is one of the three instruments of the revolution (the Party and the revolutionary army being the two others). The front must be under the absolute hegemony of the proletariat, even more so given that it is both the leading and

the main class of our socialist revolution. The construction of the front demands the Party; without the reconstituted KPD and the revolutionary army under its absolute leadership, we cannot build the front that is needed for the victorious development of the socialist revolution. The Party constructs the front; it does not construct itself.

The front is a class front, and its purpose is to unite all the classes and strata possible under the leadership of the proletariat, through its Communist Party, for the socialist revolution — that is, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat through the armed revolution, which means through People's War. This is the strategic perspective to bear in mind. The front is not an "alliance"; it is a tool of revolution mastered by the Party. Since we currently do not have the reconstituted KPD, we still have a long way to go until we have such a front as an organic reality. But still, the struggle for constructing the three instruments is a process that must take place simultaneously, in the midst of the class struggle and the two-line struggle.

Hence, in a moment in which the main necessity of the proletariat is the reconstitution of the Party, the front politics of the communists in formation must strive to develop the work in this regard so it serves the reconstitution. Today, this very much requires the need to handle the Leninist formula of “Unite, differentiate, and lead,” which must be understood as: unite on the basis of fundamental principles and joint decisions; differentiate clearly what are points of unity and what are not and what are the issues of the two-line struggle; and lead in the way Lenin taught in “A Letter to a Comrade”: “not by virtue of having the power, of course, but by virtue of authority, energy, greater experience, greater versatility, and greater talent” — as always starting from our basic tactic of struggle (with advantage, reason, and limit).

This must be done, currently, with the objective of generating a favorable political space or environment for the struggle for the reconstitution of the Party. Fulfilling our duties to the class and the revolution, we of course must develop our struggles on many

issues — whether it be the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist and proletarian feminist struggles or the economic struggle and the struggle for vindications in general — but they all must be channeled to serve the struggle for the reconstitution of the Party in its current period and the tasks set. It is in this context that we must view the statement of the KA that the Maoists are a “valuable alliance partner.”

It is true that still the main Maoist forces in Germany are not the ones struggling for the reconstitution of the KPD. The main Maoist forces in this country are still the Parties from Turkey. The TKP/ML,<sup>1</sup> the MKP of Turkey and Northern Kurdistan,<sup>2</sup> and others are still more present in the revolutionary movement than anyone else who claims Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to be their guiding ideology. To ignore this fact would be simply ridiculous.

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<sup>1</sup>Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist. — *PFP*

<sup>2</sup>Maoist Communist Party of Turkey and Northern Kurdistan.  
— *PFP*

So when speaking about “alliances with Maoists” in the German panorama, it naturally means in the first instance in this country the “alliances” with the parties from Turkey. But the KA is not primarily an anti-imperialist organization; rather, it is an organization that has as its proclaimed objective to “reconstruct the KPD” and therefore they are in a way “colleagues” in the same business as we. So let us not play stupid.

There can be no “alliance for the reconstitution” of the KPD; such an “alliance” corresponds to the anti-Leninist criteria of the petty-bourgeois circles. The two-line struggle among those who, in one way or another, claim to be working for the reconstitution of the Party must center on its ideological foundations, because that determines its character. Which standpoint, conception, and method is to be followed to guarantee that the Party corresponds to the development of the theory and practice of the international proletariat and the needs of the World Proletarian Revolution — this is the core question.

The main positive aspect of the article by the KA is that it raises ideological issues of decisive importance. The main negative aspect is that by doing so, they mix things up, confuse positions, and instead of a clear-cut criticism of the position of the Maoists who struggle for the reconstitution of the KPD — positions that the colleagues know very well and which are not a secret to anyone in the revolutionary movement — try to pick “weak flanks” by claiming that there are “many kinds of Maoism.” This method is not useful for the debate; there is one relevant Maoist force in Germany struggling for the reconstitution of the KPD, and nowadays, let’s say any fool knows that.

According to our understanding, it is good and necessary to work together with forces like the KA inside our general concept of the framework for the front in the current period. Tactical alliances are important and should be struggled for with this type of force. Even if our ideological contradiction with them is antagonistic, we should treat it with non-antagonistic means, centering on promoting a comradely and