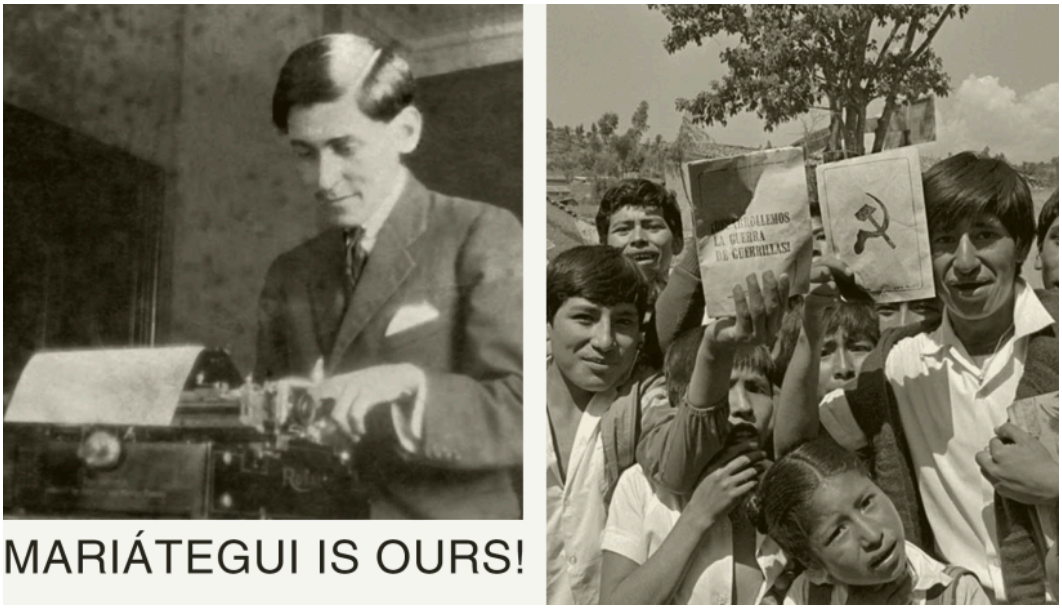
Mariátegui is Ours![1]

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The need to continue reclaiming the teachings and thought of Jose Carlos Mariátegui

"In synthesis, Mariátegui was a Marxist-Leninist. Beyond that, in Mariátegui, the founder of the Party, we find theses similar to those that Chairman Mao has made universal. Thus, as I see it, today Mariátegui would be a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist. This is not speculation, it is simply the product of understanding the life and work of José Carlos Mariátegui."- Chairman Gonzalo, Interview, 1988

Jacobin magazine recently published an interview with Michael Löwy on the topic of Jose Carlos Mariátegui — true to their tendency the interview attempts to remove Mariátegui from his time and place while weakening the content of his thought and completely avoiding his actual legacy. They situate him neatly next to the favorite of the Eurocommunists Antonio Gramsci. These maneuvers are within a long history of counter-revolutionary agitation and deserve address.

Dishonest theorists will almost consistently try to gut the greatest revolutionary leaders of their merit, this has been done time and again and is part of how counter-revolution operates through co-option. Lenin addressed this occurrence speaking of revolutionaries:

[1] https://struggle-sessions.com/2018/12/21/203/

"After their death, attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonize them, so to say, and to hallow their *names* to a certain extent for the 'consolation' of the oppressed classes and with the object of duping the latter, while at the same time robbing the revolutionary theory of its *substance*, blunting its revolutionary edge and vulgarizing it." -Lenin, the State and Revolution

This phenomena exposed by Lenin takes place in all ages, and all countries and most revolutionary leaders face this to some degree, from the hollowing of Marx and Engels by the second international which Lenin was speaking of, to the vulgarization of Mao as nothing but a national hero by the Chinese revisionists, to the utterly de-fanged Mariátegui of the Jacobin imagination. Lenin's insights offer Communists a clear directive to combat such appropriations and expose them for what they are—counter-revolutionary attempts to sell a flaccid revolt which in no way challenges the ruling class ideas but instead redresses them into a red nightgown.

It is likewise impossible to evaluate Lenin without Leninism, that is to say without evaluation of the post-Lenin developments of Marxism-Leninism and its remarkable impact on the world. Lenin is greater than Lenin and is better understood through not only his life but the life which his work has taken posthumously. The same applies to Mariátegui; that is what concerns us here.

It is a fad in academic pseudo-Marxism to latch onto certain great thinkers and pretend that their ideas simply remained in minds and debate societies, without examining how the ideas took life in popular movements and most importantly in revolutionary movements. You cannot honestly evaluate Mariátegui and the Communist Party of Peru which he founded without grasping the reconstitution of the Party and leadership and guiding thought of Chairman Gonzalo which built upon the teachings and thought of Mariátegui and advanced them, making these teachings a reality.

In a 1968 document from the Communist Party of Peru (PCP from here on) the Party might as well have been responding directly to the Jacobin distorters:

> "After having tried to bury him in silence, much has been written about Mariátegui. Of course, we also see Mariátegui as very highly spoken of, so as to mystify him, to systematically try to twist him, to try to 'better' him with senseless pedantry. It has been said in the first place about Mariátegui that he was not a convicted and confessed Marxist and whose thought was not sustained by Marxism-Leninism."

Truly understanding the applications of the universal to the specific the Party stated;

> "Mariátegui was not a mere repeater, who simply knew four or five formulas, but he is much more, something more profound, more Marxist. He takes Marxism-Leninism and introduces and fuses it with our reality, he gets it into our country, incarnates it in our soil, and upon incarnating it, introducing it, penetrating it in our country with Marxism-Leninism, he Illuminates us with a thought which is still current."

The Jacobin article further frames Mariátegui as sympathetic to Trotsky, tracing this back to a 1923 article he wrote on Trotsky's views on culture. Deviating from Mariátegui's greatest insights, the Jacobin interview ignores his 1929 article on Trotsky's exile which frames Stalin and his majority as the people who can apply Marxism most effective to Russia's reality. Mariátegui views Trotskites as only useful in presenting criticism which challenges the theoretical impulse of the Communist movement.

Consistent with his position to Peruvianize Peru, Mariátegui asserted that:

"The Russian revolution is in a period of national organization. It is not a matter, at the moment, of establishing socialism internationally, but of realizing it in a nation that, while a nation of 130 million inhabitants that overflows onto two continents, does not yet constitute a geographical and historical unit. It is logical that in this stage, the Russian revolution is represented by men who more deeply sense its national character and problems.

"Stalin, a pure Slav, is one of these men. He belongs to a phalanx of revolutionaries who always remained rooted in the Russian soil, while Trotsky, Radek, and Rakovsky belong to a phalanx that passed the larger part of their lives in exile." –Mariátegui on the Exile of Trotsky, 1929

Understanding intuitively the role of two-line struggle and the absolute necessity to apply the universal to the particular Mariátegui illuminated:

> "The Bolshevik Party, therefore, neither is nor can be a peaceful and unanimous school. Lenin imposed his creative leadership until shortly before his death, but not even with this extraordinary leader's immense and unique authority were violent debates unusual inside the party. Lenin gained his authority with his own strength; he later maintained it through the superiority and perspicacity of his thought. His points of view always prevailed because they best corresponded to reality. Many times, though, they had to defeat the resistance of his own lieutenants of the Bolshevik old guard."

Now when it comes to Trotsky, Mariátegui main stance was that the former was unable to accomplish the application of Marxism to the particulars of Russia, holding consistent to his views on making revolution in his own country he stated that:

> "…events have not proven Trotskyism correct from the point of view of its ability to replace Stalin in power with a greater objective capacity to realize the Marxist program."

And: "Trotskyism tastes of a theoretical radicalism that has not been condensed into concrete and precise formulas. On this terrain, Stalin and the majority, along with having the responsibility for administration, have a more real sense of the possibilities."

While Jacobin attempts (poorly) to highlight Mariátegui as a remarkable thinker, they systematically overlook his actual organizing, which included founding of the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers, writing both their program and their constitution. He not only theorized the need to reach the indigenous peasantry but made the first practical steps to accomplish this. Most importantly he founded the Communist Party of Peru to provide leadership to the proletariat and the people of that nation.

The trend of trying to boast of a hollowed out Mariátegui is nothing new and others have done this more thoroughly than Jacobin. In fact for decades the Communist Party of Peru had gotten off track and lost the essence of Mariátegui.

"On the development of the Party and its lessons, we can understand its history by dividing it into three parts which correspond to the three periods of contemporary Peruvian society. The first period, the first part, is the Founding of the Party, in which we were fortunate to have José Carlos Mariátegui, a thoroughgoing Marxist-Leninist. But, inevitably, Mariátegui was opposed, negated, his line was abandoned and the constitutional congress that he left as a pending task was never held. The so-called Constitutional Congress that was held approved, as we know, the so-called line of "national unity," which was totally opposed to Mariátegui's theories. In this way the Party fell headlong into opportunism, suffering from the influence of Browderism, which Del Prado was linked up with, and later, modern revisionism. This whole process takes us to the second period, that of the Reconstitution of the Party. This is, in sum, a struggle against revisionism. It is a period that we can clearly see beginning to unfold with a certain intensity in the beginning of the '60s. This process leads the members of the Party to unite against the revisionist leadership and, as I have said before, to expel them in the 4th Conference of January 1964. The process of reconstitution continues to unfold in the Party until 1978-1979, when it ends and a third period begins, the

period of leading the People's War, which is the one we are living in now."- Chairman Gonzalo, Interview, 1988

Jacobin magazine, and others of their type fail to understand the basic principle that with the application of the universal to the specific emerges a guiding thought. This application was what Jose Carlos Mariátegui lived and died for; his thought constituted the Party and through its study and further application combined with the universal Maoism, a new guiding thought emerged in the form of Gonzalo Thought which would lead the People's War to new and astounding heights throughout the 1980s and 90s and which continues to this day. These facts must be ignored by those who fancy only intellectual musings and shun direct class struggle and the basics of Marxism.

Understanding Mariátegui as a proto-Maoist allows one to understand how and why revolution developed the way it did in Peru. Mariátegui, like Mao, did not neatly adhere to the popular front; Mariátegui held the position of an untheorized mass line approach to Communist leadership. His work on the questions of fascism and women were unmatched and laid the basis for the most advanced analysis on these topics which of no surprise were to be developed by the very Party that Mariátegui founded.

By sheer negation of historical materialism the interviewee claims that Mariátegui is nothing but how he is interpreted as if individual interpretation supersedes all historical fact, evidence and context. This maneuver is essential to their interests.

In their line of questioning, Jacobin parrots falsehood to distort Mariátegui by claiming that:

> "The question of Mariátegui's orthodoxy or heterodoxy seems to be relevant at least in terms of understanding his reception. Marginalized by the Third International, he was later rediscovered by the Latin American New Left in the 1970s, and more recently, commemorated by South America's Pink Tide."

Let us then revisit the programs and writings of the Party which Mariátegui led and founded for an example of the way history contradicts with fancy:

"The Communists of the Party adhere to the Third International and agree to work to obtain that same adhesion from the groups which form the Party. The ideology we adopt is revolutionary and militant Marxism, a doctrine we accept in all its aspects: philosophical, political and social-economical. The methods we endorse are those of orthodox revolutionary socialism. We not only reject, but fight by all means and in all its forms the methods and tendencies of social-democracy of the Second International."(From a document edited and presented by Mariátegui to the Central

Committee of the PCP dated March 1, 1930 and approved on March 4 of the sameth year)

Understanding the above only sharpens the fact that those butchers of Marxism such as "the Pink Tide" and the likes of Jacobin only seek to peddle a false Mariátegui while avoiding and opposing our Mariátegui.

The interviewee goes on to state a fact that we must fully agree with:

> "His emphasis on the Indo-American roots of communism, expressed throughout his writings, can also be applied to the struggles of African Americans."

This application has never been attempted by anyone but Maoists who grasp the need to apply the general to the specific, and in the event that the Black Nation were to grasp the essential truths of Mariátegui's teachings, rags like Jacobin would tremble at the results.

When asked directly about those forces in Latin America which follow Marategui's path the interviewee deliberately–and since we are to assume he knows anything at all about Peru and its recent history we must say "deliberately"–ignores the fact that the PCP even exists, that it has always upheld the path of Mariátegui, which even earned it the bourgeois slander of being called the "Shining Path". The Jacobin interview says:

> "Of course, there have been great Peruvian thinkers such as Aníbal Quijano and Alberto Flores Galindo who followed his example. Then you have indigenous political leaders, such as Hugo Blanco, who have been influenced by Mariátegui's thought. More recently, one can find examples of his impact in figures such as Hugo Chavez or in peasant movements such as the MST that you mention. But I think the present-day revolutionary movement that best embodies Mariátegui's general vision — and not necessarily because they follow his writings — can be found in the Zapatista experience in Chiapas."

While ignoring the PCP the interviewee claims that the Zapatistas are true followers of Mariátegui! Never mind about Mariátegui's adherence to the theories of the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolutionary violence and the vanguard party.

The interview talks positively of Mariátegui's writings on the power of the myth and his use of religious symbolism, while again they ignore its practical application to the conditions of Peru.

While discussing Mariátegui and the power of the myth it is important to realize that the PCP under Chairman Gonzalo embodied this power and made it a reality.

The indigenous peasants of Peru would refer to the Chairman as "Puka Inti" which in Quechua means Red Sun, relying on Incan myth. Many would even mythologize Gonzalo to the likes of shapeshifters which frustrated the Spanish oppressors. It must be recalled that the PCP taught the peasantry about imperialism using the term Pishtaco which describes a mythic being which would sustain itself off draining human fat. For these instances as well as Gonzalo's faith in the revolutionary masses the PCP was branded a metaphysical millenarian cult by those who would simultaneously praise Mariátegui as a great thinker. Mao summed up the mindset of those like Jacobin when he talked of the emperor who would adorn his palace with dragons but fled at the sight of a real dragon.

It is indeed true that the teachings and thought of Jose Carlos Mariátegui must be revisited and applied to concrete reality, we must further stress that they must be evaluated through the lens of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism and in doing so, they must be trained and unleashed upon the distorters of Marxism, including the distorters Jacobin magazine and Michael Löwy.