



Rete dei Comunisti International Bulletin

February 2021

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ANSWER: There is nothing new under the sun,

it has been decades, since the 1990s, that there is a continuous work of ideological demolition of the communist experience in a whole series of variants

From the repentants of the PCI and the revolution, some like Veltroni telling us they were never communists, to the most reactionary who find tones such as 'communists eat babies'. It must be said, however, that this insistence on anti-communism in all its guises reveals a weakness of the ruling classes, which are giving us the advantage of giving communist propaganda an increasingly stale flavour, because the historical phase of the 'collapse of communism' is now behind us, and the compulsion to always repeat the same mantra stems from the fear that this 'spectre' will materialise again.

First of all, the fear of reproducing contradictions that the dominant ideology had considered outdated because history was over, the fear of seeing countries and forces that refer to communism demonstrate a solidity and resilience that they did not believe in and the fear, finally, of losing the hegemony of the subordinate classes even in imperialist countries where the economic, social and civilisation crises are showing the limits of the present social order. The point is that ***even the slightest subjective and antagonistic expression of the contradictions that are appearing in the new century risks undermining a balance that is made ever more precarious.*** In some ways, the recent Trump affair and the incidents in Washington show the pervasiveness of such contradictions that break up political power structures within US capitalism.

So an assessment of the birth of the PCI can only be made on the basis of a historical and dynamic judgement that also concerns the present.

Communism is not a state of mind and communists are not found in nature but are the product of historical necessities that are never static and that manifest themselves within the different phases of a mode of production

The Bolshevik revolution and the birth of the PCI took place in an objectively revolutionary context where a 'young' subjectivity was able to play a historical role in overcoming capitalism in some parts of the world and in proletarian organisation in others, in spite of the rhetoric of a D'Alema who claims that the PCI has always been reformist.

The PCI performed that function very well at that moment in history, which found a turning point with the end of the Second World War, the division of the world into opposing camps and an economic recovery in the capitalist West. This changed the condition and line of the

party that was expressed in that context and generated the deviations that were possible in that context. It must be said that in different ways this did not only happen to the PCI but affected the entire world communist movement.

QUESTION: Going back to the choice of Livorno '21 there is a time span - substantially the first five years of the Party's life, from its foundation to the Lyon Congress (1926) - which encompasses the terms of a bitter but wide-ranging political battle between different options within the new-born Party, which will prefigure the future identity of this formation which will immediately suffer clandestinity, exile and, after almost 20 years of fascist regime, will represent the main fulcrum of the Resistance. Do you think that the questions posed at the time of that internal clash are still theoretical lessons valid for today and, above all, useful for the reconstruction/re-qualification of a modern organised communist subjective?

ANSWER: Obviously not and yes, at the same time, in the sense that an in-depth and specific work of theoretical, historical and political analysis must be done to understand what is still valid. In reality, ***a non-dialectical reading, that is, of absolute truths, does not work because the underlying historical movement must be distinguished from the forms that this takes in the evolution of societies and in the dynamics of capitalism.***

In other words, the high points of Marxist and communist thought, from economic analysis to class analysis and imperialist competition, can all be found in today's reality; what changes is the way in which these basic characteristics are expressed, which is given by the material changes that society produces in its temporal evolution. The productive forces change and become richer, the social forces change their form and condition in production, the weight of states changes, cultural visions and much more.

Therefore, there is no single answer to the question, but it is a matter of placing oneself within a continuous process of analysis and choices to verify the analyses produced that also require a relationship and an interweaving with the materiality of the organised subjectivities that are placed in the perspective of overcoming the current mode of production.

QUESTION: To interpret the history of the Communist Party (from 1921, to Togliatti's 'new party', to that of Longo/Berlinguer/Natta until its dissolution, in 1991, with Achille Occhetto's secretariat) as a unicum is a mistake from every point of view. It is undeniable, however, that from the end of the Second World War onwards a political course began that - slowly but ceaselessly - revised the theoretical body, the acts and actions of the party up to the choice of assuming functions of governance at all costs consistently with the full identification with capitalist compatibilities.

In a theoretical work of the Rete dei Comunisti "Class Consciousness and Organisation" in the paragraph "Party and Organisation" a "Schema Hypothesis" is proposed that refuses to take sides (many decades later) with this or that position of the communist movement but advances a ***plan of analysis based on the historical phases of the MPC, the***

structural transformations of the class and the relationship between class composition and consciousness. An approach - therefore - heretical and unprecedented that tries to place the function of communists today on a more advanced level and, possibly, more appropriate to the challenges of our contemporary times. At what point is the reflection of the Rete dei Comunisti on this issue?

ANSWER: I do not know if it is 'heretical' but the theoretical/political elaboration of the Rete dei Comunisti is certainly in discontinuity with the political culture of the communists in our country whether they come from the PCI or from the other formations, also revolutionary, that have animated the militant scene. To understand what to do today we must have clear not only the vision of the specific moment we are going through but also how this is the product of previous phases and also the potential that this implicitly contains.

We have written several texts on this aspect, placing the current condition within a historical dynamic that contemplates the development of the productive forces, the different phases of crisis, the continuous transformations of the class composition and the evolution of international contradictions in relation to the valorisation of capital, and many other ***aspects that seem to have no connection with direct political action but which instead are the deep causes that cannot be separated from the action of the communist forces.***

This aspect has been completely eliminated from communist thought since the 1980s and has been replaced by political and electoralism, which in this new general condition has immediately fallen on the heads of those who practised them, bringing them, and unfortunately also bringing with them a glorious history, into the current insignificance with which we are familiar.

QUESTION: A non-formal remembrance of Livorno '21 and far from any form of tired and ineffective reductionism is the cut that we are trying to give to the varied discussions on this Centenary.

We have repeatedly pointed out that if communists really want to play a role that is useful to their reasons - historical and immediate - they must try to perform an avant-garde function in every field of the structure and superstructure

In these years, the path of theoretical and programmatic definition and organised construction of the Rete dei Comunisti - based on its own strengths and aware of its limits - has stimulated and promised discussions and in-depth analysis on the gap between the reasons and the strength of the communists, on the new strategic phase of capital, on the current conjuncture of inter/imperialist competition, on the novelty represented by the continent/China, on the characteristics of Italian capitalism and the North/South dichotomy and on various other issues related to the analysis and perspective of the historical course

we are going through. All this while continuing to make our militant contribution to the political, social and trade union struggles to which we are constantly committed. In short - as you know - the Rete dei Comunisti while not proclaiming itself as yet another "reconstituted communist party" tries to contribute with a serious and experienced contribution to the communist battle in our country and in Europe. What do you want to add to this premise - of method and substance - in relation to this anniversary that runs the serious risk of being dulled in a converging scissor between toxic narratives and nostalgic amarcords?

ANSWER: *The Rete dei Comunisti has always defined itself as a communist organisation, and not as a party, because it is aware of its subjective limits as a communist force and its objective limits as a force that acts within an imperialist pole* that is one of the major competitors in the world. Rarely have we committed ourselves to making the historical anniversaries a founding point of our identity, even if we fully recognise ourselves in them, and we have preferred to project the analysis forward in the new conditions that were gradually emerging in Italy, Europe and the whole world.

The hundred years of the PCI, in its evolutions, cannot be valued on 21 January and then be put into analytical oblivion. In this sense, I believe that the Rete dei Comunisti must use the whole year 2021 to build a public event of theoretical and political nature in which we take the opportunity of the centenary to make a thorough and organised reflection on what was the communist movement of the twentieth century starting from the fundamental historical experience of the PCI in all its contradictions.



Covid's dead scream vengeance!

Sergio Cararo, [Contropiano.org](https://contropiano.org)

It becomes difficult to dismiss as normal the fact that more than 80,000 people have died from Covid in recent months. And it is also difficult to get used to the hundreds of deaths that every day give us back in an unbearably aseptic way the daily bulletins.

It's like if every day a small town - or two or three condominiums of a big city - disappeared.
We can afford everything except to accept this situation as inevitable.

The number of deaths and contagions is also high in other European capitalist countries or in the USA. It is a fact, but certainly not a consolation. In other countries with other social systems, it is not only this macabre accounting that is different, it is above all the spirit with which the pandemic has been faced and is being faced that is making the difference.

Instead, to this unacceptable accounting would have wanted us to get used to those who claimed to have to "live with the virus" relying on "herd immunity" - even when there were no vaccines - but omitting the dark side of this approach: the natural selection in which the weakest perish and the strongest survive. But this is what we are approaching with long steps, while continuing to deny it.

Sometimes, the pandemic has been improperly described as a war against an "invisible enemy". But in a war, as is well known, all moral rules are thrown out and everything is subject to the state of necessity.

This is why it is less and less surprising that the logic of war doctors - to save those who have a chance of survival and let die those who have less or little chance of survival - eventually becomes the norm and not the exception

And not because of the perfidy of doctors, but because it is the context that increasingly pushes for the achievement of a threshold of normality that has raised the bar of cynicism and selection on living beings even higher.

Then there is the social data, that is connected to the medical one in many ways. Keeping restrictive and precautionary measures high affects economic activities, because of closures and limitations, because of the resources that should be allocated to public health, and because of the depressive effects on people that discourage consumption and social activities.

Finally, on this aspect, impacts the difference between pandemic and syndemic that many still insist on denying or removing: ***contagions are more extensive and lethal in poorer social sectors than in others, in working-class neighbourhoods rather than in others.***

Here and there we learn that some rich and famous people, or even people not from proletarian conditions, have been infected, but in the death count there are none, except in very exceptional cases.

So even the virus, while being an objective problem, has its own class dimension, both in terms of the people who are most violently affected, and the solutions adopted to deal with it. Facing repeated quarantines in large houses, with a garden, with many services (e.g. connection or computer) is one thing; facing them in small houses, without balconies, in the absence or scarcity of services, is quite another. Being forced to use public transport to get around or go to work is one thing, being able to rely on your own transport is another. In essence, we have never been, and we are not "in the same boat."

After almost a year since the first symptoms of the pandemic (the WHO announced it already on January 5, 2020), where are we stand on this inevitable complexity of an unforeseen and unpredictable pandemic?

- There are now ***too many dead and infected people compared to what could be considered a physiological price of a pandemic*** for advanced countries in the capitalist world;

- The time wasted and the things not done by the authorities in terms of public health facilities, recruitment of the necessary employees and public transport, during the months of the respite between the first and the second wave, have made the second one more lethal than the previous one;

- The half-measures adopted in the last months of 2020 produced great economic damage, poor results in terms of pandemic containment and complete disorientation of society on the challenges to be faced. The credibility gained by the government in the first wave was completely dissipated in the second one. But if the government has its responsibilities, a sword even sharper should fall on the presidents of the Regions and on those who, in 2001, wanted to change the Title V of our Constitution, thus giving greater powers to the Regions, causing a serious disaster at the time of the emergency on the national scale;

- The "salvific" character of vaccines will still have to deal with a long period before being effective. So, the authorities tell us that we will have to "live with the virus" - and its health, economic, psychological and social consequences - for months and months yet. ***The only social activity allowed is the one linked to the production process*** (for those who have a job), everything else is denied, even within the walls of the home. Moreover, the data that just in these days have been shown by all the political and health authorities, confirm that the situation often appears out of control and at continuous risk of collapse of hospital facilities, despite the auspicious surname of the Minister of Health (in the Italian language, "Speranza" means "hope"). In short, the sad and ferocious doctrine of "produce, consume, die" seems to be the only horizon that is made available to society;

Finally, and certainly not for importance, an entire political class made up of ministers, undersecretaries, Regional presidents, parliamentarians, in an infernal context like this, has given proof – indeed, confirmation - of its ineptitude

We work so that, as soon as possible, a part of this political class goes under process for the choices made in recent months. And not only in the courts, but also in the squares.

We owe it to the more than eighty thousand deaths that have already occurred, but we also owe it to millions of people who live and inhabit this country.



**16 GENNAIO 2021
H. 15.00**

**LA CINA
NEL MONDO
MULTIPOLARE**
FORUM DELLA RETE DEI COMUNISTI

DIRETTA FACEBOOK SU  RETE DEI COMUNISTI


Rete dei Comunisti

China in the multipolar world

Document convening the RdC forum

About seventy years after the birth of the People's Republic, we think it is urgent to discuss the role that the Asian country plays in the scenario of a "new type of cold war" that is emerging on the horizon, and to develop a wide-ranging reflection on the trajectory of the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics as it has actually been realized. With the triumph of the Chinese Red Army in the civil war against the Kuomintang, **in 1949 the country definitively exited the feudal period and rejected the restrictions that for more than a century the various imperialisms had placed on its sovereignty**, projecting its people in the direction of a transition to socialism - at that time and for about a decade alongside the Soviet Union - still not concluded.

After having been one of the favourite morsels of imperialist appetites and a semi-feudal country with a despotic political system, even if formally democratic, **China began a period of transition that was absolutely non-linear and not devoid of significant political turmoil as a result of both the class struggle and the international context**. In fact, the CCP's course of action was immediately threatened by events and processes that forced it to make unplanned choices. Today, China has

assumed, at various levels, a leading role on the international chessboard, in a context in which the balance had already changed before the pandemic emergency. China is the main commercial partner for 130 Countries and Regions, it has started a strategic partnership with Russia and is about to start one with Iran, it is one of the "big shots" of the most extensive free trade agreements of all times - the RCEP - from which the United States is excluded.

It is a point of reference at many levels for a series of countries that wish to emancipate themselves from what has been called "the underdevelopment of development", thus coming into conflict with the traditional sphere of influence of both North America and Europe in Latin America and Africa

At the same time, China's role in the international community, and especially in some contexts - such as Africa - remains "problematic", given the impact that the massive investments made by the People's Republic and the heavy use of its workforce in situ have on many countries. While the entire Western world seems to come out with broken bones from the pandemic test and a "second wave" is affecting the EU countries - with the United States and its allies (Brazil and India in primis) that have never seen the glimmer of an effective containment of the virus - China seems to be on the way to recovery, but in a changed economic context and deeply marked by the vulnerabilities of the "economy-world" emerged during these months. A context that will certainly change its profile up to now in the era of neo-liberal globalization. **China has been a conscious co-protagonist of this past phase, assuming the role of world factory**, after the decisions, from Deng and onwards, of controlled introduction of the capitalist mode of production and opening up to the world market: low Chinese wages in an internationalized production chain have been fundamental in lowering production costs for western multinationals. Moreover, the expansion of the domestic market for the middle and upper classes who had most enjoyed the benefits inherent in China's inclusion in the world economic cycle opened new outlets for the products of chronically stagnant Western economies.

China seemed up to a certain point to be a loyal ally of Washington, at least since its entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001. **After the 2007-2008 crisis, in some ways, the country was a lifeline with its anti-cyclical policies based mostly on public capital investment in infrastructure for a struggling world economy.** The articulation of the ambitious project of the "New Silk Road" - aimed at projecting its power in the world - in order to find an outlet for its surplus of goods and especially of capital, however, has caused agitation in the other major geo-political players for the consequences that its realization could bring. These choices were only the last phase of long-term strategic options - gradually rectified over time also due to social conflicts and internal power struggles - which have allowed China - thanks to the transfer of technological capabilities and intensive exploitation of its workforce - to develop a modern and integrated industrial system. China has gone from being a country of the "integrated periphery" to a subordinate role to one of the major world players, which brings it today objectively in

contrast - willingly or not - with the two major imperialist poles, the US and the European Union.

It has transformed itself from a "crutch" to a competitor and then a true antagonist of both North American capital and that of the European Union

In any case, the social consequences of the process of capitalist accumulation initiated in the 1990s, which have partially dismantled what were the acquisitions of the Revolution and its following developments, cannot be removed. The contradictions produced by this "turning point" have produced, at different times and on different fields, effective reactions on the part of the social body - one thinks of the struggles against the privatization of agricultural land and those of the factory workers who worked for Western multinationals - and developed some significant contemporary distortions: social polarization, corruption within the Party and the Army, the ecological crisis and, not least, a certain "depoliticization" of the subordinate classes due to the permeability to individualistic and consumerist values.

Today, the Asian country faces a series of challenges for world hegemony, not only completing the gap that distanced it from the United States and the European Union, but directly contending, in some fields, the strong points through which these two blocs had historically established themselves.

The successes it can boast are the result of the choices of the Chinese Communist Party, which have planned a model of development in which the strategic sectors are increasingly in the hands of the public and a social organization in which the "intermediate bodies" have not evaporated as they have in the West, an ethnically homogeneous and relatively cohesive society with a partial inversion - in recent years - of what seemed to be the orientation consolidated by Deng's reforms after Mao's death. The trade agreements with the United States, signed in early 2020, seemed in part to resurrect, after two and a half years of trade war, a fruitful mutual accord, in a context in which, however, there remained many unresolved frictions between the two super powers, as was evident from the NATO Security Conference in Munich. Trump's statements about the "Chinese Virus" were the contingent and necessary gesticulation of the North American President to legitimize a resumption of the all-out hostility that still lingers, and not just a way to divert attention from his administration's disastrous handling of the pandemic.

As far as the response of the People's Republic is concerned, what seems to be asserting itself today is ***the protection of its sovereignty as an inspiring principle that guides an assertive and intransigent diplomacy towards foreign interference*** on issues that the country considers vital and that does not discount anyone. Long gone are the days of the "unanswered " bombing of the Chinese embassy in Serbia during NATO's war of aggression in the late 1990s! This "tougher" attitude finds a mass consensus and - together with the effectiveness in fighting the virus and its social consequences - is a considerable source of legitimacy of the current leadership, whatever

the Western "commentators" may say. ***This clash with the West, regardless of the subjective will of the actors involved, is a necessary consequence of the contradictions generated by the adoption of the capitalist mode of production by China***, which now finds itself deeply integrated within a system that has been in a systemic crisis for years, which cyclically manifests itself in different forms, but which depends on a tragic inability to adequately valorize capital. Contradictions that do not allow for loopholes and cannot be resolved with only partial adjustments to the path taken after Mao's death.

*This has created a crossroads in front of which **the CCP must choose whether the prospect is that of a policy of a world power tout court**, chronicling the most obvious distortions produced internally and assuming the role of one of the poles of inter-imperialistic competition, **or that of proceeding** - or rather resuming at a more advanced level, given the current development of productive forces in China - **on a socialist path that seeks to positively resolve the contradictions produced so far, moving away from a social model irreparably in crisis***

If this were the case, it would become an essential reference point for the rest of the world, including the Western subordinate classes, orphaned - for now - of a credible alternative system able to fight on equal terms against U.S. and European imperialism.

For this reason, as Rete dei Comunisti, we want to propose a wide confrontation, starting with a forum on the various aspects of the axis of reasoning that we have tried to outline in these few lines, in order to offer adequate interpretations and develop a consequent positioning that characterizes the politics of communists in our country.

For the full video of the forum, click on the image



LA CINA
nel mondo
MULTIPOLARE

FORUM DELLA RETE DEI COMUNISTI
16 GENNAIO 2021 | H. 15.00

Introduzione: **G. MARCHETTI** (RDC)

R. SASSI (saggista)

F. PICCIONI (Redazione Contropiano)

P. RIZZI (dottorando in sociologia economica)

C. POLLIO (ricercatrice in economia applicata)

L. VASAPOLLO (professore all'università Sapienza di Roma)

F. MACHEDA (docente in economia politica)

G. CREMASCHI (portavoce nazionale di Potere al Popolo)

G. CASACCHIA (già professore all'orientale di napoli)

Conclusioni: **L. PICCININI** (RDC)

DIRETTA FACEBOOK SU  **RETE DEI COMUNISTI**



Rete dei Comunisti

Index and schedule of interventions

Introduction: Giacomo Marchetti (RdC)

Speakers:

Roberto Sassi (essayist): "Mao's line".

Francesco Piccioni (Contropiano Editorial Staff): "China. The knot of Socialism, from the conquest of power to the construction of society".

Paolo Rizzi (PhD student in economic sociology): "The workers' conflict in China".

Chiara Pollio (researcher in applied economics): "Industrial policies and long-term development in China".

Luciano Vasapollo (professor at the Sapienza University of Rome): "Trade relations and the role of Renmimbi".

Francesco Macheda (professor of political economy): "China's exit from peripheral status: a success story?"

Giorgio Cremaschi (national spokesperson for Potere al Popolo): "The differences between comrade Togliatti and us".

Giorgio Casacchia (lecturer at L'Orientale University in Naples): "Linguistic Imperialism and Chinese Resilience".

Conclusions: Lorenzo Piccinini (RdC)

L'Aria Che Tira

STUDENTI PROTESTANO AL MINISTERO DELL'ISTRUZIONE



Wind never stops blowing, whole oceans to conquer

Rete nazionale Noi Restiamo

Noi Restiamo is a national organization of students and young workers

We report the appeal for a national assembly to build the Communist youth organization in Italy.

A communist youth perspective against the civilisation crisis of capitalism

Seven years ago in Bologna, behind the barricades of the housing occupation in Via Irnerio 13, we began our journey with a clear keyword: We remain. A declaration of intent in open opposition to the process of forced emigration imposed on our generation.

What was described as a free individual choice, the fairytale of the Erasmus generation, was in reality a real drain of labour, both skilled and unskilled. Young people became the victims of the macro-regional reorganisation of the

labour market, accelerated by the economic crisis of 2008 which has been necessary for the European Union to compete in a scenario of less and less latent confrontation between imperialist macro-blocs or wannabe ones.

Today, exploiting the impetus of the pandemic crisis, the European Union is trying to seize the opportunity to relaunch the process of building its own imperialist pole.

This "qualitative leap" will result in a general worsening of the living conditions of large portions of the subordinate classes both within its borders (with particular ferocity in the peripheral countries) and outside (in the areas on which the EU projects its expansionist interests)

But the systemic crisis that is gripping the capitalist mode of production, in our continent as well as in the rest of the advanced capitalist countries, is revealing with the most cruel consequences the historical limits of a social model whose only prospect of development is based on the regression of the material, social and cultural condition of the whole of Humanity. This regressive character will affect the younger generations with increasing violence, mortgaging their future and further highlighting the contradiction between the expectations we are raised with and a reality of precariousness and misery.

The much-vaunted magnificent fortunes of capitalism are a lie, especially to the detriment of the younger generations oppressed by a model of development that is lethal to the environment, in which technological progress and digitalisation are not instruments for emancipation but rather make workers increasingly superfluous and subject to blackmail. **A model in which education is moulded around labour market dogmas and is increasingly polarised between a first-class education for the elite and a second-class education for everyone else.**

We are forced to live in a rotting society in which social unrest is either repressed with the truncheon or directed downwards in the war between the poor, spreading classist, racist, sexist and xenophobic ideologies. Besides, **competition elevated to an absolute value has produced fragmentation, shifting responsibility for the failure of a system onto individuals and developing individualistic logics that have now dug deep into a crisis of civilisation** that emerged forcefully in the most dramatic moments of the pandemic, thus demonstrating the barbarity into which we have fallen.

The contradictions that are emerging within the current dominant development model are systemic, and a systemic response is needed. We feel the historical necessity of breaking with the present social order and building an alternative general perspective, which for us young people **can be none other than the Communist one.**

Conscious of our non-self-sufficiency, we have worked from the beginning in the perspective of strengthening a class movement in our country. The close relationship with the Rete dei Comunisti, the support to the struggles of high-school students, the direct participation into the courageous social, trade union and political experimentations that coherently carry out projects of rupture from the political and cultural subalternity of the class enemy.

We believe, indeed, that there can be no room for a project of radical change in this society without ***one founding prerogative: the concrete independence from the variegated crowd of leftist realities. which has the left that has since long assumed the function of the hard core of the dominant ideology***, embodying and becoming the author (in government buildings as well as in the streets) of the imperialist project of the European Union, masking its role with operations of support for the front of progressive battles and civil rights, not to mention the evergreen call for single front anti-fascists.

In this direction, we appeal to all those who share this need with us to take a step forward together.

This is the time to build a communist youth organisation able to meet the historical challenges we face, not out of nostalgia but with a straight and steady look to the future

We know that no one will give us anything for free and that the power relations in this phase are to be reconstructed. ***We believe, however, that the solution is not to wait for perfect conditions but, instead, to roll up our sleeves and build an organised subjectivity capable of fully entering the historical process*** in a way that is not passive but protagonist. With such determination, we make ourselves available to initiate a shared process of constitution of the communist youth organisation for the redemption of a betrayed generation.



vento che non smette di soffiare

OCEANI INTERI DA CONQUISTARE

Una prospettiva giovanile comunista
contro la crisi di civiltà del capitalismo

ACCADDEMIA Rebelde

*Formazione politica, conoscenza storica,
controffensiva culturale.
Un filo rosso tra passato e presente,
verso il nuovo assalto al cielo!*

"Accademia Rebelde" is born, an instrument of struggle for the cultural hegemony of communists

Rete dei Comunisti Roma

"What distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax".

Karl Marx

Rete dei Comunisti has always given a central role to theoretical research. We want to add, to our analysis of the relationship between objective conditions and subjective capacity of action and transformation of reality, a new instrument to the training - and on the field of the battle - for cultural hegemony, opening a space inside "Casa della Pace" in Rome dedicated to this purpose.

Marx's opening quote, taken from Das Kapital, is enough to give the right **importance to a permanent training centre for a communist organization**. Providing

militants with a solid structure of thought that allows them to face the challenges imposed by the construction of a coherently revolutionary subjectivity, in a non-revolutionary phase, is certainly a fundamental duty to resist against the temptations of the dominant thought that push to the abandonment of any hypothesis of transformation of the world.

Launching this project today, at the height of the pandemic, has an additional meaning. The virus placed the clash between different economic and social models back at the centre, destroying all the totems that wanted the current system to be the only one possible. The reaction that socialist or planned societies have been able to give to the pandemic crisis has instead shown how a different world is possible, as well as necessary.

It is not only the socio-economic base of advanced capitalist countries that is in crisis, but also the whole superstructure and the values on which the current development model is based. We can see a crisis of adversary's hegemony, which must become an opportunity for us to develop an ideological and cultural battle

Years of propaganda have aimed to destroy any historical continuity between the last century's revolutionary experiences and the new generations. The eclecticism, dogmatism and movementism of the "here and now" of a large part of the left, including a part of the communists, have slowly disarmed the militants of a capacity to hold both ideological and cultural, **transforming the strength of a thought capable of changing the course of history in a series of empty formulas**, good only to transform the ideological struggle in a history mythologizing and in an alienation of communist thought from the historical development of the class movement.

So, we are opening "Accademia Rebelde" with two intentions. The first one is to create a stable training environment, where especially the new generation of communist militants can increase their cultural background and collectively refine their thinking. The second is to equip ourselves with a tool that must intersect with a wider cultural activity, which ideologically fights the enemy and deprives it of increasingly large portions of the new generations and conscious workers.

Therefore, political training and cultural activity can become a fundamental part of Rete dei Comunisti's whole project

As we said, the priority referents of the work of "Accademia Rebelde" will be the younger generations, students and young precarious workers, which are those who are living and will live the effects of neo-liberal policies and contradictions caused by the capitalist mode of production, and who **were born in the moment of maximum expression of**

"presentism", ahistorical by definition, caused by the general ideological breakthrough perpetrated by the dominant thought.

But the acceleration and politicization of the conflict that we are seeing make it ever more necessary to have a general level of reflection and political training, even for those conscious workers and social activists engaged in union and social struggles. The decades of backwardness of the labor movement have largely disarmed also the social and union vanguards of categories and ideological and cultural points of reference required not to lose the compass, especially in a particularly complex phase, but potentially extremely interesting as the one we are living.

We start with this project with the intention of being a red line between past and present. To the attempt to demonize the revolutionary experiences that preceded us, we respond with a cycle of historical training on OUR revolutions



New workers' condition, struggles in logistics and trade union organization

Interview with Roberto Montanari (USB Logistics)

On Saturday 19 December, a crowded national assembly of workers delegates in the logistics sector was held in Rome, where the situation of the sector was outlined and the challenges that the union will have to face, or is already facing. As Rete dei Comunisti we interviewed Roberto Montanari of USB Logistics who opened the assembly.

- Q: In your opening remarks ***you summarised the transformational processes of what you rightly called "a segment of the value chain"***.

Can you summarise the overall reconfiguration of the sector?

- A: The capitalist restructuring that has taken place since the 1980s and is still ongoing has affected the mode of production, the processes of accumulation and those of domination. There are three aspects that govern the search for maximum profit today:

fragmentation, speeding up time, and power in the conflict and over class. In addition to lowering labour costs by locating them in places where there is less protection from trade unions, productive relocations also have the result of segmenting the social actors of production, making it difficult to recompose them and thus undermining their conflictual power. The segments of the value chain that remain at the heart of the empires (essentially the movement of goods through the various stages and their distribution) are asked to substantially homologate to the models implemented in the delocalisations to which all possible measures are applied to break conscience and antagonistic practices.

The perverse system of public contracting, the precarisation of the labour market, the Salvini decrees, illegal recruitment of labour and other similar measures serve to make the rotation cycle of capital competitive, fast and well controlled. The legislation on contracting out already embodies the vision of a stratification in which there are A series workers – those employed by the buyer (the actual owner) – who are in charge of the core business and B series workers (employees of service providers, the 'contractors') who are in charge of related activities. In both cases, different contractual conditions are constantly applied, always downwards in the case of contractors (poorer CCNL, less allowances, less incentives, less benefits); if they have the legal form of a co-operative, it is certain that sick leave will not be paid in the amounts due by the employer. In this way an initial form of savings is achieved. **But contracts are also the shelter behind which clients can hide, leaving service providers to do the dirty work** of undeclared wages, the outright theft of holidays, severance pay and wages, the most brutal authoritarianism, and the precariousness inherent in fixed-term contracts or the fears linked to contract changes.

In the pandemic context, logistics is refining its strategies for a further leap forward to implement "last mile" distribution, that of home delivery, the result of the explosion of online commerce, with innovation in the distribution of fresh food and pharmaceutical products. Major investments are planned both in structures (20% more warehouses to be built this year) and in equipment: sorters - which sort products according to their destination - and intelligent roller conveyors that read package barcodes, self-propelled vehicles and arms without drivers, and apps to control handling and individuals. Costs that will be amortised by the demand for an exponential increase in individual productivity, as in the case of Amazon, which is agreeing with concerted unions to increase the working hours of drivers for the same wage.

- Q: USB is increasingly characterising itself as a trade union subject with a wide range of instruments of struggle that go from the street to the courtroom.

It has succeeded, in a difficult context, in declining the forms of conflict, circumventing even those limitations that seemed to undermine its action.

Among the union's proposals there are some that take on an exquisitely political significance and that indicate that the issue of logistics goes far beyond the individual victorious disputes that the USB has conducted so far.

I am referring to state planning to give a public profile back to some of its strategic supply chains, or the legislative proposal to be drawn up to abolish the contract system

What are the reasons that prompted the union to make this kind of 'leap' in its overall proposal?

- A: The practices of struggle have represented a field of true joint research, analysis and reflection that have valorised workers' creativity because they are the result of autonomous choices of the workers based on the awareness of what is at stake in every single conflict and of the knowledge of the production processes, of the nerves to be hit. **The change of pace concerns the shift of the baricenter of force**; while before we reasoned more on the effectiveness of external contributions to the warehouses (the garrisons at the gates of supportive comrades who came from other realities), now we focus on internal relations of force: an entire department, an entire process, the entire warehouse that stops.

These are practices that bypass or limit the damage of repression and that are in any case combined with the solidarity of production chains, families, comrades and comrades of the movement and are synergistically supported by the offensive of the excellent, really excellent, legal sector of USB. This is a pool of labor lawyers, criminal lawyers, civil lawyers who are working on a draft law on contracts that will stuck them to some pivots able to make them less convenient to the bosses in their plans for cost savings and maximization of precariousness.

Let's be clear: USB remains firm in the strategic objective of overcoming the system of contracts, but acts a "strong reformism" in the logic of accumulation of forces for that result

The same 'strong reformist' logic lies behind the idea of a planned economy, a need that the pandemic crisis has clearly highlighted. Liberalist and privatising policies have been brought to their knees by the Covid, and those countries that have practised them have been highly effective in combating contagion. **There is a need for a renewed public commitment to the economy in order to sustainably produce socially useful goods**; the public must return to reinvesting in health, knowledge, transport and services (from housing to citizenship rights) in order to escape the disasters that epidemics, climate change, environmental crises and the bulimia for profit create. In this sense, the logistics segment is fundamental for planning policies that are not subject to speculation.

Thinking about the nationalisation of logistics chains handling food and pharmaceutical products is not an ideological delusion

Let us look at what is happening with the distribution of vaccines. Beyond the problem of intellectual property, there is the issue that controlling handling and distribution represents the power to ensure fairness and universality in access to a good or its opposite: discrimination for the sake of profit.

In the Italian port system we then see the fragility of liberalist policies. Public money is used to build ports with infrastructures for large container ships, as in Trieste, and once they have been unloaded there, the Austrian railways come and take them (by road) to their country. The added value that the Italian state puts into that port benefits both the public and private systems on the other side of the Alps. I repeat, this is not ideology, but nationalising port logistics is a good way of investing the country's resources.

- Q: During the struggles in logistics in recent years, there have been many episodes of confrontation, even harsh ones. Assaults against trade unionists and striking workers, police charges and arrests, court cases. And deaths. Like Abd Elsalam Ahmed Eldanf, Usb trade unionist crushed by a truck on 16 September 2016 during a garrison at Glis in Piacenza. He was 53 years old and had five children.

The union paid a hard price in terms of repression regarding the actions taken: from imprisonment to denunciations to forced repatriations of immigrant workers. In a climate of overall authoritarian torsion in the dark Italy of the 21st century, do you think that the proposal for an amnesty for political and social crimes could help to widen the ever narrower margins of trade union-political action that the elites would like to impose and reverse the criminalisation of social conflict that we are going through?

- A: I am absolutely in favour of it, and in the spirit of the debate that led the Constitution writers to enshrine the right to strike. It is true that it was a mediation solution between socialist and liberal thinking, which left the regulation of the right to the laws (which are still lacking) and not to the Constitution alone, but it sanctioned a principle: ***the workers in the conflict with the bosses are the weak party that must be defended*** and in fact the right to strike is foreseen for them and not for the employers (the blockades are indeed prohibited). We must rebuild the vision that those who fight for their rights, for the good of a community, do not commit a crime. Those who are weaker must be put in a position to contend with equal means. I block a road, I occupy a house, I stop a work that is devastating for the environment because you, the owner, block my possibility to feed a family, to have a roof over my head, to have breathable air. Who commits the worst action?

- Q: The confederal unionism project of the Unione Sindacale di Base is attracting more and more portions of the logistics sector from the CGIL. The latest and most important 'defections' were the joining of the USB at the end of October by the Collettivo Autonomo dei

Lavoratori Portuali of Genoa - a historic militant experience in Italy's largest port - and that of the Lazio logistics workers in the following months.

It is clear that workers in the sector are increasingly facing a triple enemy: bosses, contractors and corrupt unions

What do you think are the reasons for them not only to cut the link with the CGIL but to move towards USB?

- A: It must be said that in Italy **the political and social forces that have been the reference point for the working-class and popular movement have undergone a monstrous mutation**, worse than anywhere else on the planet, and this has produced the devastating results we are witnessing and which are slowly becoming apparent. In the systemic crisis, capital grinds bodies and consciences in order to stay afloat, but ends up upsetting even the “ants” in their own small way.

And so USB comes into play, in the extreme difficulties of the times, but it comes out.

I believe that USB stands out for some of its characteristics:

1. **it is a fighting and class union**, it focuses on policies in favour of the workers not the economy of the bosses,
2. it is democratic, decisions are taken collectively,
3. **it is confederal, uniting the differently oppressed**,
4. it is competent, it makes various knowledge and experience available to those who fight,
5. it is honest, it practices "todo para todos, nada para nosotros",
6. **it is within the FSM, it is a worldwide trade union that connects the different segments of the value chain.**

- Q: The various figures of workers who make up the logistics chain have become paradigmatic with regard to the overall condition of the exploited, also because of the increasingly significant numerical portion that they have assumed in the new class composition.

They constitute neither more nor less the laboratory for the forms of exploitation of the future for the whole class

How can the struggles of the logistics sector be concretely intertwined with those of other parts of the union such as the Social Federation, or those of workers in the agribusiness sector?

- A: We have partly seen the lines of connection: the fight against precariousness, the overcoming of the contract system, public intervention in the economy, the defence of democracy are unifying grounds, ***just as the 'value chain' is unifying, representing a framework in which production, handling and distribution are included***. In other words, the struggle of a nurse or a bus driver finds in the porter who is a user of those services a safe ally, just as the precarious musician or the museum guide have in common with the driver the struggle for a stable and justly paid job. Similarly, the demands of the tomato picker and the supermarket cashier should be put together and strikes organised on the same day for both.

However, one area that we need to test is the link between working conditions in logistics and cities. To make it clear: transportation activities have a strong impact on the territory, both from the urban point of view, with the sealing of millions of square metres of land, and from the environmental point of view, with very high emissions of particulate matter and fine dust. We need to build a pact that translates environmentalism into a social sense. A driver who has to travel more slowly with small vehicles in urban centres is a driver who has fewer loads to deliver, who drives more slowly, for the same wage, and who pollutes less. It is an example, but we should think about it.

- Q: The initiative that the USB is carrying out in the logistics sector is both the result of intense organisational activity within the ranks of workers and of a precise analysis to which the organisation has dedicated itself together with the Centre for the Study of Economic and Social Transformations (CESTES).

This interweaving of direct union action and investigation seems to be the added value that the union offers its militants in order to understand a world in continuous transformation

What weight does training have in those 'heavy jobs' - as you yourself have defined the challenges facing union delegates and activists in this phase?

- A: It is a fundamental question that of the training in a new class segment, which has the characteristic of being composed almost predominantly of the migrant proletariat and which has entered a sector in which there was no "expert" class stratum capable of directing and carrying out political pedagogy.

However, I remain of the opinion that the real work to be done is the formation of class consciousness, of the awareness of one's own historical role

You need to know contracts, workers' statutes, security decrees, but much more ***to embody the values of social justice and equality, which are what make you perceive yourself as a delegate or an honest, serious, generous activist.***

In this sense, I remain attached to a fundamental principle of laborist thought: ***consciousness is determined by conflict, and it is in struggle that it is valorised.*** In this however there are no training courses, there is a problem of subjectivity, this is the great work that we have to do in this country, and not only for delegates.

For the full video of the assembly, click on the image



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