

H: 1917-1925 AD

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In producing his thesis on imperialism, Lenin charted the way for a fundamental change in the strategy and tactics of World Revolution. The Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia little more than a year later enabled this change to be brought about. As a result, Asia became a key factor in the revised Communist plan, with anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism and liberation of the colonies as the battle-cries, and with racial hatred given pride of place even over class hatred as the main emotion to be whipped up into blind, un-reasoning fury.

The colonies and semi-colonies—China being the most important of the latter—were viewed as the Achilles heel of the capitalist system, and it seemed that if the indigenous peoples of those territories could be goaded into revolt and helped to liberate themselves from their Western overlords, the whole capitalist system would suffer a mortal blow and collapse. 'Liberation of the colonies and of all oppressed peoples' has therefore been one of the main slogans of world Communism ever since.

While Lenin's original idea was that championship of Asiatic nationalism could be used as a means for helping on the cause of World Revolution, he quickly developed this into the assertion that 'the victory of the World Revolution was impossible without a revolutionary alliance, a revolutionary bloc, between the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies' [7]. Not only, therefore, was Asia to be regarded as a useful adjunct to the cause of World Revolution; it was to play an essential part in it. Just how important and how essential this part was considered to be was aptly crystallized in Zinoviev's aphorism of 1925 when, at a session of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, he declared: 'There is no doubt that the road to World Revolution lies through the East rather than through the West.'