

“We’re talking about a sea change in human history, the first attempts in modern history to build societies free from exploitation and oppression. Specifically, we’re talking about the short-lived Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian revolution of 1917-1956, and the Chinese revolution of 1949-1976. These were titanic risings of the modern-day ‘slaves’ of society against their ‘masters.’ They aimed to bring about a community of humanity, a society based on the principle of ‘from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs,’ and one where there are no more divisions among people in which some rule over and oppress others, robbing them not only of the means to a decent life but also of knowledge and a means for really understanding, and acting to change, the world.

Never have there been such radical and far-reaching transformations in how society is organized, in how economies are run, in culture and education, in how people relate to each other, and in how people think and feel as there were in these revolutions. Against incredible odds and obstacles, and in what amounts to a nanosecond of human history, these revolutions accomplished amazing things—and they changed the course of human history. Never before had the myth of an unchanging human nature—in which people are ‘naturally’ self-seeking, and some people just ‘naturally’ dominate others—been so decisively exploded. For those few decades, a better world seemed on the verge of birth. For the first time the long dark night of humanity—where society is divided into exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed—this was broken through, and a whole new form of society began to be forged.”

—Raymond Lotta, from the interview in the special issue of *Revolution: You Don’t Know What You Think You “Know” About... The Communist Revolution and the Real Path to Emancipation: Its History and Our Future*

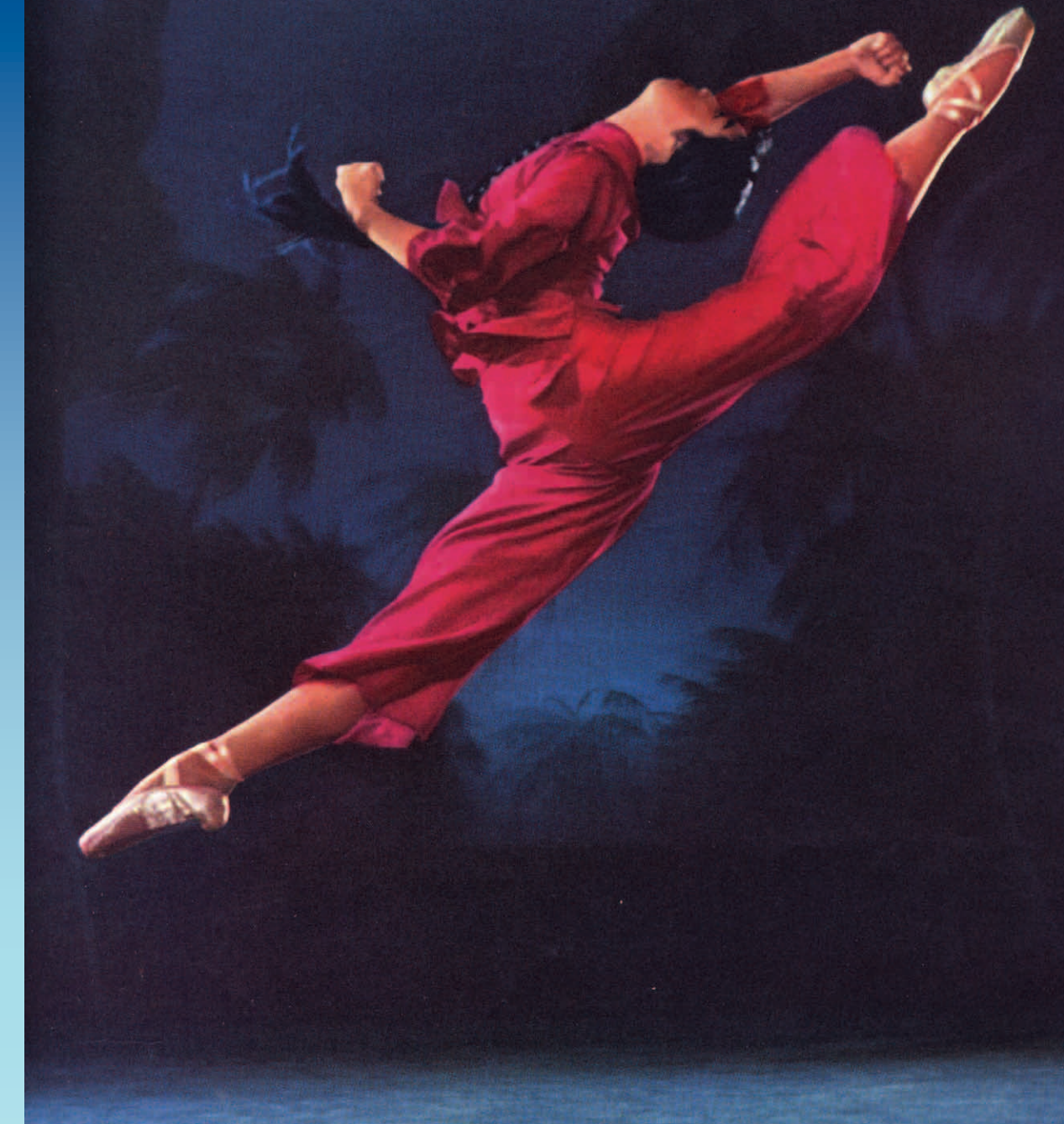
The Soviet and Chinese revolutions accomplished amazing things—and changed the course of human history



China, 1971. Barefoot doctor brings medical care to the countryside.



Shanghai, China, 1967. Revolutionary literature is distributed during the January Storm.



Above: Scene from the Chinese film “Red Detachment of Women” made in 1970.



Soviet Union, 1930. Young women, members of the communist youth group Komsomol, volunteer to work in the mines.



Soviet Union, 1930. In a campaign to overcome illiteracy among peasants the government sent millions of books, newspapers and magazines to the countryside.