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On Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng's View on Contradiction

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We Must Not Evade and Cover Up the Essence of Difference

Having read Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng's "Unified Whole and Separate Reflections" (carried in the Kuang-ming Jih-pao, November 7, 1963), I feel rather amazed. In my article "A Brief Discussion on the Spirit of the Times," I lay stress on criticizing Mr. Chou's super-class theory of "convergence" which transcends classes and formally put forward my view on the spirit of the times. The article written by Mr. Chou in reply makes no mention whatever of his theory of "convergence," but pulls over to talk about "unified whole and separate reflections," in the endeavor to bring up another issue to mend the loophole. In regard to my point of argument, apart from fabricating such funny "reasons" as "looking one-sidedly toward the thought of the landlords for the motive force of progress" and "it was an unfortunate fact that there had been different classes in history" to disavow it, he cannot advance any serious repudiation. This method of evading the contradiction, mixing one issue with another and turning around to talk about another thing is definitely not an earnest attitude in academic research.

For example, one of the focal points I discuss with Mr. Chou is what is after all the spirit of the times. Is the spirit of the times after all "a convergence" of different kinds of class consciousness? There is a fundamental difference between Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng and me on this issue. However, Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng has covertly turned "the spirit of the times" into "the spirit of this era," that is the "different kinds" of thought of "this era." So he broadens the subject by saying: "Apart from the revolutionary spirit, there are also all kinds non-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary spirits." He then says: "If China has only one kind of spirit of one class today, what is the object of the revolution? A revolution without an object is like shooting an arrow without a target." ..It can only be said that this method is seldom seen in academic discussion.

How can a person who knows both "historical materialism" and "dialectics" covertly replace the concept of "the spirit of the times" with the different kinds of spirits of "this era" under the gaze of the public? Even a primary schoolboy knows that some concepts can only be interpreted in terms of their meaning, that "the paper tiger" cannot be interpreted as "a tiger made of paper," and that the so-called "Free World" cannot be interpreted as "a free world." Likewise, "the spirit of the times" also cannot fundamentally be interpreted as the different kinds of "spirits" of "this era." If the meaning of a concept is vulgarly analyzed in this way, all scientific inquiries will come to nought. Although the use of this vulgar method can create something out of nothing and stick such funny labels as "disavowal of the object of revolution" and "there is only one class and one kind of spirit in China today" on the opposite side, yet it has after all not the least strength, and can only expose the emptiness of one's own theory.

Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng also holds that my analysis of "new creation" coincides with his view. He says although he has not discussed the point that my "new creation" and "originality" bear distinctly different class contents, yet my viewpoint still coincides with his. He says: "It is true that I have not talked about this, but is it not just as good for Mr. Yao to talk more on what I have not talked about?" I have participated in quite a number of debates but never before have I come across of any one who makes use so funny a method in self-defense. My viewpoint clearly contradicts that of Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng. He covers up the class contradiction, while I expose the class contradiction. He stands for new creation above class, and affirms all new creations in an abstract manner, while I advocate new creation with the class viewpoint, affirm "the revolutionary, progressive new creations," but oppose "new creations which are reactionary and consider what is rotten as marvellous." How comes it that I am in agreement with him? What I have said is obviously in conflict with or opposed by Mr. Chou. How can it be asserted that my viewpoint is "identical" with that of Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng? It is of no avail for Mr. Chou to impose "the realm of difference" on me.

There are more than 20 such arguments in the whole article, and I do not propose to point them out one by one. Since Mr. Chou obstinately wants to divert the discussion toward "the unified whole" and the different aspects of philosophy, art and history, we are determined to meet the challenge. In conjunction with giving an answer, this article is prepared to look further into Mr. Chou's view on contradiction to see what is his set of theories dealing with contradiction.

What Sort of Thing Is the "Unified Whole" Based on "Convergence"
According to Mr. Chou

Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng is doing his utmost to depict his own theory of "convergence" as a dialectical unity. He also describes his view on the spirit of the times as in conformity with the law of the unity of opposites. In order to cover up his own theory of the reconciliation of contradictions, he really does a lot of talking that seems to lay emphasis on struggle this time. However, what is true cannot be described as false, and what is false also cannot be described as true. The desire to employ the theory of "convergence" in the guise of Marxist dialectics is of no avail.

What is the unity of opposites according to dialectics? This is clearly explained in "On Contradiction:" "All contradictory things are interconnected; not only do they coexist in a single entity in given conditions, but in other given conditions, they also transform themselves into each other. This is the full meaning of the identity of opposites." (Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. I, Page 318.) This is also the full meaning of identity or unity referred in dialectics.

What is Mr. Chou's theory of "convergence?" His article tells us that this is the "convergence" of the different antithetic ideas of different classes to form a "whole." "Separate reflections are the parts, while the unified whole is the whole. The whole is made up a great number of complex parts, and these parts are opposed to and struggle against each other. Hence, such a whole is not any empty thing above class. To put it the other way round, the antithesis and struggle of the parts within the whole go on without rest at all times, and hence they can only be separately reflected, but cannot replace each other."

Mr. Chou thinks that by making such a change, he can immediately turn his theory of "convergence" into dialectics. However, provided the two passages quoted in the above are read side by side, it can be seen at once that Mr. Chou's "unified whole" or "whole" is distinctly different from the entity based upon the unity of opposites in dialectics.

There are at least three points of difference:

First, the "entity" referred to in Marxist dialectics means to say that the two aspects of a contradiction exclude and struggle against each other, but are also interconnected and presuppose the existence of each other under given conditions, and hence they form an entity that develops according to laws. Therefore, dialectics calls for the analysis of the interrelationship of the two aspects of a contradiction, sees the quality and tendency of development of this entity and its two aspects of the contradiction, and fully arouses all revolutionary, positive factors to impel the revolutionary transformation of things. However, what Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng describes as the "unified whole" fundamentally does not refer to this objective dialectical relationship of the two aspects of a contradiction. It calls for the indiscriminate "convergence" of diverse "non-revolutionary and counterrevolutionary" ideas to form a "whole," and the "convergence" of the diverse ideas of this era to form an abstract "spirit of the times." What is this if it is not to reconcile the different kinds of ideas and make a potchpotch of them? Such a "unified whole" is genuinely "an empty thing above class," and is fundamentally different from the "entity" described in the law of the unity of opposites.

Second, Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng describes the inter-relationship of the different aspects of a contradiction as the quantitative relationship between the "whole" and "a great number of parts," that is the sum total of the various parts is equal to the whole. He asks aggressively: "Is not the People's Republic of China a unified whole? But up to the moment, it incorporates not only different classes and different kinds of consciousness, and there exist in effect different classes, different nationalities and different languages." Of course, who does not know that the whole can be divided into various parts and the various part can form the whole? It takes but a minimum knowledge of formal logic to know this. How can this take the place of the unity of opposites in dialectics? Even the analysis of the dialectical relationship of the parts and the whole in such an entity calls for the analysis of the mutual dependence, mutual exclusion and mutual transformation of the two aspects, and the analysis of the principal aspect and the non-principal aspects among them. It is not so effortless as to have some things "incorporated."

As Mr. Chou sees it, the People's Republic of China can be shown to be a dialectical "unified whole" merely by demonstrating that it represents the "convergence" of many "races" and classes. But this serves precisely to reveal that he has completely forsaken dialectics. The unity of opposites in dialectics refers not merely to the number of parts incorporated in the whole. This can be worked out by simple addition and subtraction. People all know that the unity of opposites in dialectics seeks to expose the inner contradiction inherent in an object. Any single whole can not only be divided into many parts, but can also and must be divided into two parts. Lenin said: "The splitting of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts... is the essence (one of 'essentials,' one of the principal, if not the principal, characteristics or features) of dialectics." ("On the Question of Dialectics," Collected Works of Lenin, Vol. XXXVII, Page 407.) The People's Republic of China is really a "unified whole," but the "unified whole" formed through "converging" the "different classes" is merely a static, unchanged, and metaphysical "unified whole." The unity of opposites in dialectics requires us to see that there are diverse contradictions of different nature among the different classes of the People's Republic of China, but among the diverse contradictions, the principal contradiction is the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and the existence and development of this contradiction determine and influence the existence and development of other kinds of contradictions. We can and must use the method of class analysis to divide this single whole into two, with the proletariat and the broad masses of the revolutionary people who make up more than 90 per cent of the population on the one side (this is the principal

aspect of the contradiction, and the dictatorship of the proletariat determines the nature of the People's Republic of China), and the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes on the other side, and study on the basis of class relationship the interdependence, struggle and transformation of these two aspects in the single whole. This is also true of a nation. The nationalities relationships form a profile of the class relationships of the People's Republic of China, and different nationalities form the unity of the nationalities relationships. Because this profile is seen, we not only can make use of the method of class analysis to study the inner contradictions of the different nationalities; but also can use it to analyze the position of the nationalities relationships in the whole class relationship and the relationship between the Han nationality and the minority nationalities. It is stipulated in our nationalities policy that it is necessary to oppose the two tendencies toward pan-Hanism and local nationalism. This reflects the dialectical law of the unity of opposites in such an entity as nationalities relationship and is in conformity with the dialectical division of one into two. If, like Mr. Chou, the "unified whole" is simply looked upon as the sum total of different nationalities, then all nationalities policies can be abolished. How can the metaphysical "unified whole" which is obviously nothing more than a quantitative change be disguised as the dialectical unity of opposites? In passing, I may as well mention that it is also a mistake for Mr. Chou to use "races" in place of nationalities.

Third, what is more important is that the unity of opposites in dialectics not only acknowledges the interdependence and mutual struggle of the two aspects of a contradiction, but also emphasizes the mutual transformation of the two aspects under given conditions. The article "On Contradiction" says that "it is not enough" to acknowledge the coexistence of the two aspects in an entity. It adds: "The matter does not end with their dependence on each other for their existence; what is more important is their transformation into each other." (Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. I, page 316.) The acknowledgement of transformation is the acknowledgement of the revolution, the acknowledgement of the leap, the acknowledgement of qualitative change, the acknowledgement of the inevitable replacement of rotten things by new-born things, and the acknowledgement of the inevitable conquest of the reactionary classes by the revolutionary class. In "On Contradiction," the analysis of an abundance of data demonstrates the following truth: "The suppression of the old by the new is a general, eternal and inviolable law of the universe. The transformation of one thing into another, through leaps of different forms in accordance with its essence and external conditions -- this is the process of the new superseding the old. In each thing there is contradiction between its new and its old aspects, and this gives rise to a series of struggles with many twists and turns. As a result of these struggles, the new aspect changes from being minor to being major and rises to predominance, while the old aspect changes from being major to being minor and gradually dies out." (Ibid. page 311.) Through the struggle of opposites, the new-born things triumph, and continuously push forward the development of history from one stage to another. This is the process of world transformation of the proletariat and the revolutionary people. All rotten and declining forces and all metaphysicians are forbidden to talk about revolutionary transformation. They reject the qualitative leap brought about by the victory of the new-born things.

Mr. Chou's theory of "the unified whole," however, abolishes precisely the "more important" relationship. He reconciles the different classes and their class consciousness in "the unified whole," and like avoiding the place that hurts, makes no mention at all of the transformation of contradictions, the struggle to bring about revolutionary transformation, and the difference between the new-born forces and the decadent forces. It is precisely for the purpose of showing himself as the defender of the "unity of opposites" that when he talks about "struggle," he only says that the opposites "are interconnected, interdependent for existence and struggle against and condition each other" "at all times and endlessly," but he never mention anything about transformation, the leap and qualitative change. Thus, Mr. Chou has deprived the law of the unity of opposites of its revolutionary soul.

Is this a mere coincidence? No, for Mr. Chou's theory of reconciliation of contradictions inevitably leads to this conclusion. Essentially speaking, Mr. Chou hopes with all his heart that there is "the realm of no difference." But once he comes into contact with society full of contradictions, he also feels that the rejection of contradiction is really not justified. Thus, he can only admit the existence of contradiction, but according to his description, the contradictory things are forever equally divided in "the whole" and forever interdependent, but do not contribute to the changes of the two aspects of the contradiction within the entity, the destruction of old things, the victory of new things, the solution of the old contradiction to make way for a new contradiction, and the disappearance of the old entity to make way for a new entity. This thing which assumes the name of "dialectics" but is eclecticism in essence is a philosophy which can also be accepted by the conservative forces when they are unfavorably placed.

For the down-fallen classes and strata in society, the disavowal of revolutionary transformation is often used as a shield or tool to realize reactionary transformation. Mr. Chou's theory of "convergence" which rejects transformation, the leap and qualitative change is objectively suitable for guarding against the extinction of rotten old things.

Judging by the three points mentioned in the above, Mr. Chou's theory of the "unified whole" abrogates in effect the revolutionary soul of the unity of opposites in dialectics. This "iron-clad fact cannot be denied."

Coming to this stage, we can talk about the question of the spirit of the times. Times move forward in contradiction and struggle. They are not static and immobile. The different classes, political forces and social groups of an age always can propel or obstruct the forward movement of history, and be divided from one into two. The spirit of the times can only be the spirit that drives history forward. It is not a spirit which impedes the forward movement of history or pulls back history. Who drive the times forward? They are the revolutionary classes and the masses of that age. Therefore, it is always the aspect which represents the revolutionary, new-born things that gives expression to the spirit of the times, but not the aspect which represents the rotten, reactionary things. It is the spiritual force of the revolutionary classes of that age who seek to transform the world, but not the spiritual force of the reactionary classes who resist transformation. The spirit reflects the idea, desire or demand of those classes who are destined in the end to become the rulers of the age through struggles with many twists and turns, but not the idea, desire or demand of those classes who must finally leave the historical stage after a series of struggles with many twists and turns. This is the inevitable conclusion of dialectics based on acknowledging the transformation of contradictions and impelling the revolutionary transformation of contradictions.

What we usually call the "May 4 spirit" is the thoroughly revolutionary spirit against imperialism and feudalism. The imperialist and feudalist thought is, however, not counted as a part of the "May 4 spirit," for it is only the opposite washed by the "May 4 spirit." We often say that literature and art must give expression to the spirit of the times in the socialist era today. This is the thoroughly revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, the great spiritual feature of the revolutionary people in the practice of socialist revolution and socialist construction, the great spiritual feature of the revolutionary people in the struggle against imperialism and its lackeys, but not the different kinds of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie based on opposition to socialism and capitulation to imperialism.

Mr. Chou says this is not so. He pleads again and again: "What I call 'the spirit of the times prevailing throughout society' includes at all times two aspects of thought, namely, the thoughts of the slaves and the slave owners, the thoughts of the peasants and the feudal landlords, the thoughts of the workers under hire and the bourgeoisie, for one aspect of thought alone cannot form a struggle." He never mentions which of these two aspects "forming the struggle" represents the new-born things and which aspect represents the decadent things; which aspect will triumph and which aspect will withdraw from the historical stage after going through "the struggle." He only says that the "struggle" will go on immutably forever on an even keel without qualitative change.

His logic is that since the proletarian thought forms a "unified whole" with the bourgeoisie, the proletarian thought can never triumph over the bourgeois thought. With the spirit of the times interpreted in this way, does it not mean that the march of times cannot take place and that there can never be victory for "the promotion of proletarian ideas and the destruction of bourgeois ideas?"

Whether or not the spirit of the times is known on the basis of the viewpoint on class analysis is a thing bearing on the question of what things are praised or opposed by literature and art, and the question of the nature and contents of literature and art. The modern revisionists also talk in a big way that literature and art must express the spirit of the times. However, they reject the fundamental contradiction of the times, and describe the spirit of the times as a certain kind of abstract "human nature." Alternatively, they look upon all "contemporary things" or "the newly emerging characters, deeds and things" as the "spirit of the times," and do not find out through analysis whether such "contemporary things" or "new characters" are revolutionary, new-born things or rotten, declining things. By means of this method, they look upon all things which are opposed to socialism and inclined toward capitalism but are disguised to assume a modern look as the expression of the spirit of the times, and prettify and praise them. We must draw a clear line of demarcation from this kind of viewpoint in theory.

The obliteration of the dissimilar nature of the two aspects of a contradiction and the negation of the revolutionary transformation arising through struggle constitute the philosophical basis of Mr. Chou who holds that "the non-revolutionary and counter-revolutionary" ideas all "converge" to form the spirit of the times. In methodology this is sophistry. But the most brilliant sophistry cannot stand the test of the most common fact. With the exception of those who are mentally unsound, there will probably be no person who would give credit to the allegation that both the thought of Kennedy and the thought of Lei Feng express the "whole" spirit of the times, or that Marxism-Leninism, revisionism and fascism all "converge" to form the same spirit of the times.

The So-called "Realm of No Difference" Is Sheerly a Subjective Hypothesis

Concerning the "realm of no difference," a lot has been said by other comrades. But if this is linked with his theory of "convergence," we can see things even more clearly. This is because there is an inner-connection between these two views.

In Mr. Chou's theoretical system, all things -- history, literature and art, process of knowing, etc. -- have two stages of development. One stage is the realm with contradiction. He also admits that there can be struggle within the contradiction, but such "struggle" is only a sort of "convergence," and since there is no transformation, no qualitative leap, or triumph of new-born things over rotten things, it is essentially the reconciliation of contradictions. The other stage is his idea of "realm of no difference." At this stage, all contradictions have been "solved," and the "state of absoluteness" based on "the complete unity of subjectivity and objectivity and so on and so forth in one" "without any objective changes" has been attained. This state is the state of "tranquility," "a life of tranquility with neither problems nor contradictions, like an autumn river free from ripples."

Defending "the realm of no difference" philosophically, Mr. Chou has this to say: "Chairman Mao has also told us that opposites can be united, contradictions can be solved, and it is possible to have a state of relative rest...With opposites identified and contradictions solved, there can naturally be a state of relative rest." "The solution of contradiction means no difference. At that time, evolution does not stop, nor does life end." ("Commenting on Mr. Yu Hsing's Art Review")

Mr. Chou distorts the original idea of "On Contradiction," and mixes up such concepts as unity of opposites, relative rest, solution of contradiction and no difference as one and the same thing.

From the foregoing paragraph it can be seen what Mr. Chou calls "the unity of opposites" is only the convergence of contradictions. It rejects transformation and the leap. Here is a question: Since the principal aspect and the non-principal aspect of the contradiction do not transform into each other, how would the contradiction "be solved?" In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, how would the contradiction between the people and imperialism and its lackeys be "solved" without the proletariat and the revolutionary people overthrowing imperialism and feudalism by means of revolution. In the capitalist society, how would the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie be "solved" without the proletariat seizing political power and thoroughly destroying the bourgeoisie? In the socialist society, how would the contradiction between the two opposing world outlooks of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie be "solved" without the proletariat ideology going through a protracted struggle to overcome thoroughly the bourgeois ideology? Since there is not the leap from the old quality to the new quality, this kind of "solution" can only be a semblance, and the desire to create "the realm of no difference" from it is just a hollow illusion.

Second, "identity of opposites" and "solution of the contradiction" are different concepts. The identity of opposites is the identity of contradictions. It incorporates the condition for the two aspects of a contradiction to owe their existence to each other and the mutual transformation of the two aspects of contradictory things under given conditions. The "solution of the contradiction" refers only to the solution of the contradiction in the old entity through the qualitative change of a thing, but does not mean to say there is no contradiction in the new entity, much less to say there are no more contradictions. If we identify the "identity of opposites" with the "solution of the contradiction," and hold that the "identity of opposites" means no contradiction, we are using the method of "taking one of the points but ignoring the rest" to castigate dialectics.

Third, the solution of a certain concrete contradiction will never lead to the emergence of "the realm of no difference." A thing is developed as a contradictory process, and every process of development incorporates the specific ingredients of the unity of opposites. In this process of development, the embryos of those contradictions forming the opposites in the next process of development have developed. With the old contradiction solved, the old unity with its constituent opposites yields to a new unity with its constituent opposites, and a new contradiction and struggle are going on again within this thing, thus impelling the development of the new process. There is not a break without contradiction in between. "On Contradiction" tells us: "The old process ends and the new one begins. The new process contains new contradictions and begins its own history of the development of contradictions." (*Ibid.* page 295) No matter whether nature, human society, art creation or the process of knowing is concerned, it is always the history of the development of contradiction with one process following another process, and there is no "realm of no difference" in between.

Fourth, "relative rest" is even less identical to the "realm of no difference." Here, it is necessary to expose a typical case of how Mr. Chou distorts Chairman Mao's works. Mr. Chou quotes the following passage from "On Contradiction" to demonstrate the existence of the "realm of no difference:" "There are two states of motion in all things, that of relative rest and that of conspicuous change. . . . Things are constantly transforming themselves from the first into the second state of motion; the struggle of opposites goes on in both states but the contradiction is resolved through the second state." What is the sentence deleted by Mr. Chou? It is precisely the sentence which demonstrates that there is contradiction in the state of relative rest. This reads: "Both states are caused by the struggle between the two contradictory elements contained in a thing." (*Ibid.* pages 320-321) -- This is precisely a viewpoint opposite to the "realm of no difference!" The struggle of opposites is also incorporated in the state of relative rest, though this struggle changes more slowly quantitatively, and has not attained the stage of qualitative change. The task of a revolutionary is precisely to see the possibility and inevitability of the qualitative change of a thing at the stage of quantitative change, accumulate and organize strength, and actively bring about the advent of the revolutionary leap step by step, but not to wait passively for the advent of the qualitative change. The saying "thunderclaps are heard in a quiet place" precisely requires us to be good at detecting the revolutionary leap which is being brewed in a quiet environment. Likewise, in regard to the attack of revolutionary

things by reactionary things, or the development of a certain undesirable tendency, we are also required to see its harmful nature at the stage of relative rest, that is quantitative change, adopt measures, and not to be misled by what is called 'realm of no difference.' How can this state formed by contradictions at the stage of quantitative change be distorted to mean "the realm of no difference" free from contradictions?

Summing up the above, the "realm of no difference," as seen in the light of philosophy, is a purely subjective hypothesis. It abolishes the universality of contradiction, and cuts the continuity of the different stages of development. When it makes use of this subjective, hypothetical "realm" to analyze the phenomena of society, the phenomena of art and the phenomena of thinking, it give rise to a series of erroneous conclusions.

Mr. Chou Makes Use of the "Realm of No Difference" in Different Ways

In using the "realm of no difference" to analyze historical phenomena, Mr. Chou says: "Uninterrupted history is in fact formed by struggle in stages. In other words, it is a continuation of interruptions." ("History and Aesthetics") This "interruption" is not a gradual interruption arising from the leap, but is caused by the "realm of no difference" free from contradictions. There is no way for him to explain that since the development of history has made its way from "interruption" into the "realm of no difference," how is the "continuation" with the development of contradictions at the next stage possible? And how can a "realm boundary" without contradiction give rise to the "next stage" with contradiction? Does this not mean that it is necessary to attribute the "first driving force" to God like Newton? History does not develop in this way. In the course of resolving the principal contradiction at this "stage," it has conceived, produced and developed the contradiction which will form the principal contradiction at the next "stage." With the principal contradiction of this "stage" resolved, the secondary contradiction already in existence rises to form the principal contradiction of the next "stage." At each stage, the revolutionary classes and people must fight for the resolution of the principal contradiction at that stage, and at the same time make preparations for transition to the resolution of the contradiction of the next stage. There is not a gap without struggle and contradiction in between.

During the period of democratic revolution when the Chinese people fought against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie existed as one of the numerous contradictions. After the new democratic revolution triumphed throughout the country, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie rose to become the principal contradiction, and the revolution made its way from the period of democratic revolution into the period of socialist revolution. Because the proletariat must lead the revolutionary classes, after the victory of the democratic revolution, it went on to fight for the victory of the socialist revolution and construction and did not go through a "realm of no difference" in order to carry on the socialist revolution. After the victory of the democratic revolution, it was true that some people who wanted to follow the capitalist road had dreamt that "new democracy will stay for ever." They did not understand that even the political line of new democracy also called for the democratic dictatorship of the people founded on the leadership of the proletariat and the worker-peasant alliance, and thought that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie would co-exist for a long time, and that capitalism was free to inundate the country. However, the development of history has long ago destroyed this illusion.

Mr. Chou unfoundedly asserts: "What is called the march of history means that in the course of struggle, contradictions are resolved again and again, and the realm of no difference is approached again and again." ("The Historical Position of Art Creation") This violates the most elementary facts. The different stages of evolution from the proletarian society to the class society, and from the final stage of the class society through revolution to the realization of a new world of communism free from imperialism, capitalism and the system of exploitation all represent the qualitative

changes of social contradictions, but not the disappearance of contradictions. In the socialist society, classes and class struggle will exist for a long time. Even when classes are abolished in the communist society, there still exists the contradiction between the productive forces and production relations and between the superstructure and the foundation. This kind of contradiction will inevitably be reflected in man's recognition and mutual relationship and impel the development of society through the subjective activity of the advanced people. Contradiction is the motive force for the development of things, and there is not and there will never emerge the realm without contradiction and difference in society.

It is noteworthy that when Mr. Chou uses the approach of the historical outlook to the "realm of no difference" to analyze the realities before us. He holds that the resolution of contradiction can "finish the work in one battle," and after that we can sit back to enjoy things. He says: "We may say that we are going to fight hard for three years so that we may bring happiness to the next ten thousand generations, but we need not say that we are going to fight hard for three years so that our next ten thousand generations will fight hard. We may say that our predecessors planted trees to give shade to posterity, but we need not say that trees were planted by our predecessors so that trees may be planted by their successors." ("On Mr. Yu Hsing's Art Review") Nobody has ever said that "we are going to fight hard for three years so that our next ten thousand generations will fight hard." This is a sarcasm directed toward the revolutionary people. He means in substance to say that only the former stage calls for struggle, and one needs only to enjoy oneself at the latter stage. In other words, trees must be planted only at the former stage, and one needs only to cool oneself in the shade at the latter stage. Here, he makes the mistake of standing struggle against enjoyment and casting away the dialectical relationship between the two. As a matter of fact, the case is not like this. In the socialist society, any stage stands for the dialectical unity of struggle and enjoyment and the dialectical unity of planting trees and sitting in the shade. We now enjoy the fruit grown with a lot of blood of the martyrs and the fruit of happiness created with our own labor. This may be described as cooling oneself in the shade. Meanwhile, we must also toil diligently and carry on the revolution continuously to safeguard and develop this fruit of victory and create a better life for posterity. This also calls for the planting of trees. The next generation will enjoy the fruit of our hard struggle and cool themselves in the shade, but they must likewise carry on with the fight for the attainment of the communist ideals, and this again calls for the planting of trees. The self-conscious revolutionary fighters representing the advanced forces of any age are all conscious of their own historical duties and the historical contradictions before them. They go on to look upon the planting of trees as their highest pleasure, and never lie motionlessly under the trees just because their predecessors have planted the trees. If they do this, they will become the "down-fallen generation," and to be exact, they will form the representatives of the declining classes and strata who stand against the interests of the broad people, and become parasites living on unearned income. Nevertheless, even the "down-fallen generation" cannot find any "realm of no difference." Their ugly look marked by craziness and hopelessness only shows that they have completely lost confidence in realistic life, but has no way to prove the existence of Mr. Chou's "realm of no difference."

By mechanically standing "planting trees" against "cooling oneself in the shade," and "hard fighting" against "enjoyment," Mr. Chou's viewpoint will benumb people's hard-fighting spirit, and make their "descendants" care only for "enjoyment" but forget their own historical task in planting trees, and erroneously consider society laden with contradiction as having realized "the realm of no difference." This is very disadvantageous to the march of history.

Using "the realm of no difference" to analyze life, Mr. Chou looks upon "the oneness of subjectivity and objectivity" and "a life of tranquility without contradictions" as the highest ideals of life. However, there has never been such "a life of tranquility" in human society. The contradiction of exploitation and the exploited also existed between Robinson Crusoe and Saturday [sic, probably meaning Friday] on a deserted island, and the class boundary between the bourgeois "master" and his "servant" was quite distinct. Their life on the deserted island continuously encountered

the contradiction between the subjective and the objective, and the "oneness of subjectivity and objectivity" was never attained.

It is true that Mr. Chou has also denied in his article that he looks upon this "realm of no difference" as an eternal realm, and has defended himself again and again in this connection. However, Mr. Chou still envies and gives pursuit to this "realm of no difference." He holds that this realm will appear "for a while" at a certain stage, and considers art as a means to attain this realm. This is only like those who run fifty paces laughing at those who run a hundred paces. The contradiction between this kind of verbal denial and actual pursuit of "the realm of no difference" reflects precisely the contradiction between the objective fact and Mr. Chou's subjective illusion which can never be reconciled. This is the contradiction which all idealists have no way to resolve.

The pursuit of this kind of "life of tranquility" "without any change in the objectivity" is not a novel thing. In ancient China, some scholars wanted to lead the rustic life of a hermit or the life of monk in pursuit of a life "free from worries." However, they were after all unable to sever themselves from society, and no matter whether they were willing or not; they had to take part in social life as members of a class, and come into contact with this or that kind of contradiction with society. Although T'ao Yüan-ming shouted: "Go home to pick chrysanthemums under the eastern fence and leisurely feast your eyes on the southern mountains," yet he often uttered with a sigh: "Time waits for no man, and I can no longer gallop with my ambitions." He even vented his spleen by saying: "In celebration of his killing of Hsing Tien, Huang Ti danced with a battle-axe to show that he was always ferocious." It can be seen that T'ao Yüan-ming had failed to lead a life of tranquility based on the "realm of no difference." T'ao huayüan which was isolated from the world and enjoyed life by itself bears some resemblance to Mr. Chou's "realm of no difference" "without any changes." Unfortunately, the place was no more than an utopia on paper. Later, Wang Wei who was known for his landscape paintings could only sigh: "In the spring, there are peach flowers everywhere on the water, but the fairyland cannot be found. "With the march of the times, no one has ever led a life of tranquility "without any changes." Even the fairy tale about "seven days in the cave is as long as one thousand years in the world" also shows that even "in the cave" there are also changes, contradictions and development, and there is no absolute rest. Those who went in search of a life of no contradiction "free from any change in the objectivity" always took the opposite direction in the end. They were mentally filled with contradictions which could not be resolved, and so instead of giving pursuit to "the realm of no difference," they developed pessimism and nihilism in mentality and wrote numerous poems to air their sorrowfulness and hopelessness. There were quite a number of such persons. Their dreams of "a life of tranquility" always came to nought in the end.

The declining bourgeoisie of the contemporary West and their followers also envy very much the "life of tranquility" without a difference. They ravishly talk about the "life of tranquility" marked by the "indiscriminate co-existence" of the exploiters and the exploited in their works of art. They want the workers to cooperate closely with their bosses, the people to co-exist peacefully with imperialism and the amazons of the Red Army to fall in love with the counterrevolutionary officers on a deserted island of "tranquility." However, this kind of "realm of no difference" is a fraud from beginning to end. They precisely want to use this kind of deceptive propaganda about the "realm of no difference" to attain the object of perserving for ever the class "difference" between imperialism and the oppressed people, and between the exploiting classes and the exploited classes.

In short, such a life of absolute tranquility based upon "the realm of no difference" has never emerged in human life. The revolutionary fighters of the proletariat should never indulge themselves in the illusion of so-called "life of tranquility." They must soberly look contradictions in the face, analyze and expose the contradictions, plunge themselves into the fiery life of mass struggle, actively impel the resolution of contradictions, find subjective satisfaction in the practice of transforming the objective world, and find "a happy frame of mind," happiness and joy from the revolutionary struggle of the masses. The profound significance of Marx's

remark that happiness means struggle lies here. "There is unlimited pleasure in our struggle with nature, with land and with man!" This is the most vivid and militant slogan of the revolutionary life of the proletarian fighters.

Using "the realm of no difference" to analyze art creation, Mr. Chou describes works of art as pastime works for the easing of contradiction, for the abolition of struggle and for the enjoyment of man. He arbitrarily coins such "a theory of aesthetics of the fatherland:"

"The most outstanding theory of aesthetics of the fatherland is from rites to music. In modern terms, this means to say from a life of hard work to a life of ease, from tension to relaxation, from stern discipline to a happy mood, from the antithesis of contradictions to the unity of contradictions, from the struggle of opposites to the resolution of problems, from the realm of difference to the realm of absoluteness, from the realm of science to the realm of art. This theory can be implemented by threading it through all processes for the creation of works of art." ("A New Interpretation of Rites and Music")

These words of Mr. Chou distort dialectics relating to art creation in two respects.

First, speaking of the functions of works of art, art is the weapon of class struggle, and every class gives first place to the political and ideological functions of the works of art. The functions of politics and ideology seeks to resolve the political and ideological contradictions between classes, promote and publicize the ideas and sentiments of one's own class and oppose the ideas and sentiments of the hostile class. To be sure, art also involves the function of amusement and rest, but among most works, this function of amusement seeks to drive silently the function of ideological education deep into the hearts of the people. It is topsy-turvy indeed for one to describe the works of art which are created for resolving contradiction as having "resolved" the contradictions.

The promotion of the function of "music" by the feudal class has a strong political character. It serves to consolidate feudal order, publicize feudal rites and morality, and numb and weaken the people's spirit of resistance, but seeks in no way simply to promote "ease of mind" and "relaxation." A lot has been said about this in the music theories of ancient times. It is precisely because of this that the feudal classes in all ages, especially the feudal rulers who had just assumed power through the establishment of new dynasty, gave an important place to "orthodox music." We pay great attention to music today because in this great struggle to unite and educate the people and to hit at and wipe out the enemy, music plays an enormous role in inspiring struggle and arousing the revolutionary sentiments of the people, but not because we simply want "relaxation." At the time of the decline of the bourgeoisie and the feudal class, it is true that quite a lot of intoxicating decadent music has been produced for self-intoxication and the intoxication of the people to estrange them from the realistic contradictions. But this is a reflection of the fear of the bourgeoisie for and their evasion of the realistic struggle. It gives expression to the spiritual emptiness of the declining classes in the sharp class struggle, and is the outcome of their inability to reconcile and resolve the class contradictions before them. It is fundamentally not "the outcome of the resolution of a problem," or "the realm of absoluteness." This "aesthetic theory" of Mr. Chou does not hold water in the face of historical facts.

Second, speaking in terms of the process of art creation, the thinking of a writer is also the process of movement of opposites in logical thinking and thinking in terms of image, but not the process of "from the realm of no difference to the realm of absoluteness or from the realm of science to the realm of art." Without the movement of opposites in thinking, there is no generalization, concentration, typification, or idealization, and works of art will not appear. The thought of subject matter arising from an abundance of raw material derived through imbibing and analyzing the realistic life is a leap in the movement of opposites in thinking. Up to this stage, the contradiction has not disappeared, for what is the social effect of the works must be

examined again in the social practice of the masses. At that time, it is necessary to discover the contradiction of the ideological contents and forms of art in the works with the needs of the masses according to the reflection of the masses, to revise or amend same, or to accept the lesson for application in resolving the contradiction in the next process of creation. It is baseless to hold that once a work of art is "realized" or "implemented," there is no more contradiction between the subjective and the objective. As a matter of fact, any work will arouse different kinds of reaction among the masses. A revolutionary artist should pay great attention to the reaction of the workers, peasants and soldiers, and consider and sum up such reaction so as to make uninterrupted improvement in his own creation.

Mr. Chou Ku-ch'eng applies the theories of "the realm of no-difference" and "the realm of absoluteness" in analyzing the process of creation. This was demonstrated in an article back in 1957. The following statement is consistent with his recent articles:

"The process of creation should be a 'struggle' from the subjective to the objective, and should not be a process in which the subjective and the objective 'run parallel.' Before creation begins, the author has an intense subjective demand. When creation is in progress, there is sharp conflict and antagonism between the subjective and the objective. After successful creation, the subjective should have been expressed as the objective. When the subjective is expressed as the objective and the work is completed, the author should have triumphed in the struggle and liberated himself completely from the contradiction. If there is a so-called realm of absoluteness, the author should have entered the realm of absoluteness for a time at that time. If there is so-called absolute freedom, the author should have won absolute freedom for a time at that time." ("Existence of Beauty and Evolution.")

As Mr. Chou sees it, the process of creation is not the process of reflecting the objective social life of mankind through the movement of opposites in thinking in the mind of an artist, but the process of expressing the subjective as the objective through the violent 'struggle' of the subjective with the objective. This is a naked theory of creation of subjective idealism. We do not reject expression, for art always must express thought and feeling. But once the process of reflecting objective life in the subjective is cut away, the subjective is taken as the point of departure of "the process of creation," and the process of art creation is described as the expression of the subjective as the objective, then the sole origin of life and artistic life is obliterated, the need to go deep into life, to know the workers, peasants and soldiers well and to study the objective world is rejected, and the necessity of ideological remolding is completely negated. Historical experience tells us that the process of promoting creation is "the sharp conflict and antagonism between subjectivity and objectivity," the conquest of objectivity with the subjective will, and in practice will become self-expression, the distortion of objective reality with the fanatic subjective world of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie, and the distortion of the struggle of the revolutionary people and their heroic spiritual features with frantic "self-expansion," thus giving rise to works that come into sharp conflict with objective realities.

We are not unfamiliar with this theory and its practice of creation, and had thoroughly criticized it in 1955 to keep many people sober. Practice shows that we must proceed from the revolutionary practice of life and scientific knowledge, and from integrating the thoughts and feelings of the writers with those of the workers, peasants and soldiers before we can distinguish which of our "subjective" ideas can reflect the life of the workers, peasants and soldiers and their thoughts and feelings and what "subjective" ideas are the thoughts of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie and would distort the life of the workers, peasants and soldiers and their thoughts and feelings, and create works which reflect the great era of today.

Freedom is the understanding of the inevitability. Since works of self-expansion of this kind come into conflict with the law of inevitability of the development of society, how can there be "freedom" to speak of? And how can there be "absolute freedom" to speak of? In history, the shady works which were written under the guidance of the theories "the struggle of the subjective with the objective" and "the embrace of the objective by the subjective" have been opposed and exposed by the masses of the people because they come into sharp conflict with the revolutionary realities. Doesn't this show that in the socialist society those who insist on expressing the subjective ideas of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie in the objective cannot have the freedom of scientific significance?

Mr. Chou's "realm of absoluteness" based upon "the oneness of subjectivity and objectivity" and "the complete fusion as one" of egoism and the object is not a new creation of his. The bourgeois idealist philosophers of the West have long preached it. Arthur Schopenhauer suggested that aestheticism is "the identity of the subjective and the objective, the entry of the subject and the object, united as one, into "the realm of selflessness," the complete fusion of subjectivity and objectivity, and the inability to distinguish "which is I and which are things." In Henri Bergson's intuitionism and anti-rationalism, the "implanting" of the subjective into the "fusion" of the subjective and the objective is also considered as the highest realm or the "state of absoluteness."

Bergson holds that the scientific method can only "move circuitously at the periphery of the object" and "stay at the sphere of relativity," and only anti-rational intuition can "attain the sphere of absoluteness" and "enter into the object." This "sphere of absoluteness" is "to attribute an inner thing, that is the so-called mental state, to a thing in motion. At the same time, I also hint that I am fused with this state, and through imagination, implant myself into them." (Introduction to Metaphysics, page 1.) Is there not some resemblance between this and Mr. Chou's "from the realm of science to the realm of art," and "from the differential realm to the absolute realm?" Does not Mr. Chou also consider the purely sensory "absolute realm" as the highest realm, and hold that ratiom ("realm of science") is the lowest stage of cognitional activity? The difference lies only in that Bergson does not cover up his intuitionism of subjective idealism which calls for the "implanting" of one's own subjectivism into objectivism, while Mr. Chou refuses to admit straightforwardly that he is an idealist, and wants to disguise his viewpoint as "what Chairman Mao has taught us."

I cannot say that Mr. Chou is a Bergsonian. However, it is a fact that Mr. Chou's philosophical ideas are connected in a thousand and one ways with these bourgeois idealists on some important problems. This fact calls our attention to the fact that it is very necessary for our academic circle to criticize and expose further the diverse reactionary ideas of the bourgeoisie of the West.

Conclusion

The whole content of Mr. Chou's view on contradiction calls for the reconciliation and abolition of contradictions. When things are obviously in a changing state, Mr. Chou uses the theory of "convergence" to set the various contradictions and the two aspects of the contradiction side by side, reconcile them, and make the two aspects of a contradiction never give rise to a change through the overcoming of one aspect by another aspect. He rejects the transformation and leap of things at the stage of qualitative change, and rejects that the overcoming of decadent things by new-born things is the inevitable outcome of struggle within the contradiction. When things are in a state of relative rest, Mr. Chou uses the theory of "realm of no difference" to abolish contradiction. He rejects the contradiction and struggle of things at the stage of quantitative change and the universality of contradiction. He distorts "relative rest" as the disappearance of all contradictions, and attempts to stop absolutely the development of things. Although he also pays lip service to the "unity of opposites," yet he castigates in effect the revolutionary content of the law of the unity of opposites, and distorts the article "On Contradiction." When he uses this philosophical viewpoint

to analyze the phenomena of history, life and literature and art, he draws up a series of erroneous conclusions which run counter to the law of development of things and are in conflict with the militant tasks of the revolutionary class and revolutionary art.

Doesn't Mr. Chou want to "analyze facts?" However, he has, in fact, never seriously analyzed facts with a scientific attitude. Mr. Chou denounces me for practicing "abstract generalization." As he sees it, "facts" and "abstract generalization" are entirely opposite things. When he talks about "analysis of facts," he never means to say that a conclusion based upon inherent but not hypothetical laws should be drawn from the sum total of the facts analyzed. He just cuts out at random some so-called "facts" like "from a hard life to an easy life," "from tension to relaxation," "a sleeping infant," "a ball-playing child," etc., to make up his hypothesis of "realm of no difference." In answer to such a subjectivist attitude, it is enough for me to quote the following words from Lenin:

"If facts are grasped from the sum total of facts and the connection of facts, they are not only 'things stronger than eloquence,' but also things supported by conclusive evidence. If facts are not grasped from the sum total and connection of facts but are fragmentary and picked at random, then such facts can only be or are no better than play-games." ("Statistics and Sociology," Collected Works of Lenin, Vol. XXIII, page 279.)

Mr. Chou holds that the articles of other people "are problematical from beginning to end," while his own articles are correct "from beginning to end." However, truth cannot be proved with captious argument. All academic contention will be tested in the revolutionary practice of the masses, and whether a thing is true or false will be distinguished in the end. I want to give Mr. Chou some sincere advice: It is hoped that you will be able to have a better understanding of the realities of the revolutionary movement, creative art and literature and historical development of today, and give thought to what kind of world outlook has your own view on contradiction reflected. In this way, you will probably find from your own articles which you consider to be absolutely correct "from beginning to end" the contents which are worthy of criticism and must be criticized.

(Reproduced from Kuang-ming Jih-pao, May 10, 1964)