

A Contemporary Chinese View of Resolution of Contradictions

The following brief excerpt is taken from a textbook called Marxist Philosophy, edited by Zhu Guoding [朱国定], Shanghai: East China University of Science and Technology University Press, 2003, pp. 76-7. It outlines four different types of resolution of a dialectical contradiction. Particularly notable are type 1, stable coexistence of the two sides, and type 4, resolution by merging, which mean that in effect, this account sides with the followers of Yang Xianzhen in the controversy of the 1960s over "One divides into two" and "Two combine into one."

Thirdly, there is a variety of forms of resolution of contradictions. There is also a variety of different specific characteristics of a contradiction which determine its the form of resolution. Among the most basic forms of resolution, the main ones are:

(1) The mutual coexistence of both sides of a contradiction, developing together because of the preservation of the comparative stability of unity of the contradiction. For example, although there is significant competition among the economies of different countries, the present economic process of globalization should jointly develop on the basis of equality, in a mutually beneficial way. An economic recession of one side is unfavorable to the economic development of the other side.

(2) The defeat of one side of a contradiction by the other impels the disintegration of the unified form of the contradiction. In a contest, in case one side defeats another side, the unity of opposites relationship of both sides of the contradiction also makes a temporary declaration of disintegration.

(3) Both sides of a contradiction "perish together," which is replaced by a new opposition of both sides. For example, in the process of a thing's qualitative change, the original qualitative unified whole moves toward a common destruction, in order to be replaced by a new qualitative unified whole.

(4) Both sides of a contradiction merge to form a new thing, thereby causing the contradiction to be resolved. For example, two enterprises are originally competing adversary companies, which, for the sake of consolidation in the market, merge to become a single big company.

Paying attention to the complexity of the study of existing contradictions requires us to carry out specific analyses of concrete issues. Concrete analysis of concrete problems is the essence and living soul of Marxism. If attention is not paid to each kind of contradiction as well as to all aspects of their complex relations and specific characteristics, then in work, understanding be-

comes separate from reality, becomes dogmatic at the expense of the product.