

Jen-min Jih-pao Editor's Note

(Peking Jen-min Jih-pao, July 18, 1964)

The Kuang-ming Jih-pao published on July 7 an article by Chin Wei-min (金为民) and Li Yun-ch'u (李云初) entitled "Some Queries on the Spirit of the Times." This article was written to refute the criticism by Yao Wen-yuan (姚文元) against Chou Ku-ch'eng's (周谷城) article "Unified Whole and Separate Reflections." Although Chou Ku-ch'eng's "Unified Whole and Separate Reflections" is still unable to represent his principal viewpoint on the question of art creation, yet its discussion on the question of the spirit of the times is rather outstanding. In order to enable our readers to understand how things stand in discussions on the question of art creation, apart from giving the principal points of argument in controversy for general information, we publish once again this article by Chou Ku-ch'eng, and are going to publish the articles by Yao Wen-yuan, and Chin Wei-min and Li Yun-ch'u. Readers are asked to judge for themselves whose point of argument is more correct. We hope that more people will participate in this discussion, so that right and wrong may be distinguished, and knowledge may be raised.

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A Summary of Discussions on the Question of Art Creation

(Peking Jen-min Jih-pao, July 18, 1964)

For more than a year, a heated debate has been going on in literary and art circles in our country. This debate began after Chou Ku-ch'eng's (周谷城) article "The Historical Position of Art Creation" was published in the Hsin Chien-she, No. 12, in 1962. In this article, Chou Ku-ch'eng aired his own views on a series of important problems concerning art creation. The viewpoint of this article has aroused the attention of students in art theory, aesthetics, and even philosophy. Many persons are opposed to Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint as expressed in the article "The Historical Position of Art Creation," and have discussed some of Chou Ku-ch'eng's views in relevant articles written in the past few years. Almost without exception, after the publication of every important article in criticism of him, Chou Ku-ch'eng always wrote an article in reply to defend his own viewpoint.

This is an important debate bearing on the question of art theory. Writers and artists should be mindful of it, because they should know some literary and art theory, otherwise they will go astray. Comrades engaged in other fields of work should also do what they can to comprehend this question, so that they may widen their horizon and heighten their knowledge. In order to help our readers understand the contents of this debate, we now give below a brief account of the principal problems and principal points of arguments which are in controversy in this debate.

I. The Question of "Realm of No Difference"

Chou Ku-ch'eng holds that "in order to explain creation, it is best to examine first of all the situation before creating anything... What is the situation before creation?... It is the realm of no difference in life... Problems in life come one by one, and so are contradictions. Once they are here, we are forced to solve them, and once a problem or contradiction is solved, there necessarily appears in life the realm of no difference." "The realm of no difference is the realm of no contradiction." "What we usually call subjectivity and objectivity are without a difference here," and this kind of realm "is, positively speaking, also called the realm of absoluteness." He says: "Artistic life goes beyond difference into absoluteness."

Many critics repudiate this view of his. Yu Hsing (许行) says: "In the course of social life, the realm without contradiction and difference will never appear." Chou Ku-ch'eng affirms the existence of "the realm of no difference," and rejects the universality of contradiction. The taking of art as a means in pursuit of "the realm of no difference will deprive art of the lofty social function which it should assume." Wang Tzu-yeh (王子野), Chu Kuang-ch'ien (朱光潜) and others point out that with an old contradiction solved, there is a new contradiction, and the realm of no contradiction and difference does not exist between them. If it is admitted that there is a stage without contradiction in the process of development of things, "then from where does the next step of development derive the driving force or cause?" Many articles hold that the theory of "continuity of interruption" as deduced by Chou Ku-ch'eng from "the realm of no difference" does not hold water. Li Hsing-ch'en (李醒生) goes further to point out: "The so-called 'realm of no difference' and the realm with a difference are subjective, mental realms fabricated by Mr. Chou." Mr. Chou uses the subjective mentality to replace the objective reality, is finally caught by subjective, idealistic solipsism and historical idealism, and thus completely rejects the struggle within the contradiction and class struggle.

II. The Fountainhead of Art

Chou Ku-ch'eng says: "The fountainhead of beauty can only come from struggle. Without struggle, there is no success or failure to speak of. Without success or failure to speak of, emotion and sentiment will not arise. Without sentiment, the fountainhead of beauty is necessarily exhausted... Beauty or art or an object of art owes its fountainhead to sentiment." He also says: "We can only say that the section of life which one is most profoundly impressed and the sentiment arising therefrom are caught by the artist, given a body and attached to an image for the purpose of giving an independent impression to people. We cannot say that all kinds of life are touching and constitute the fountainhead of art. If all kinds of life are touching and can give birth to strong emotions, then the selection of subject matter by artists is meaningless." "The bourgeoisie holds of course that sentiment is the fountainhead of art, but the proletariat also considers that sentiment is indispensable to art."

Wang Tzu-yeh, Yü Hsing and other people hold that Chou Ku-ch'eng's argument to the effect that "sentiment is the fountainhead" of art is wrong. They stress that social life is the sole fountainhead of art. Yü Hsing says: "Mr. Chou has for a number of times stressed that sentiment is the fountainhead of art and denied that social life is the fountainhead of art. His real object is nothing more than trying to explain that the fountainhead of art does not lie in the objective world, but in the subjective world of the artists." Chu Kuang-ch'ien holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint is bourgeois expressionism, and that "in regard to the basic viewpoint that the task of art is to give expression to sentiment, Pao Shan-k'uei (包山葵), K'o Lo-ch'i (克罗奇) and Mr. Chou are in complete agreement." Concerning the fact that Chou Ku-ch'eng takes "the selection of subject matter" as a basis of reckoning that sentiment is the fountainhead of art, many persons point out that this is to confuse problems. Yü Hsing says that in saying that life is the fountainhead of art, it is never meant to say that life is art. The Marxist theory of reflection is an active, revolutionary theory of reflection. The two propositions, namely "life is the fountainhead of art" and "life reflected by art is higher than ordinary, practical life" are not contradictory in any way. Ma Ch'i (马奇) holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng's point of argument rejects the need for art to reflect the life of the people and the need for an artist to go into the fiery struggle. He further points out that "any cleverly camouflaged theory which is divorced from taking social life as the sole fountainhead of art" is nothing more than a fraud which seeks to allure the revolutionary artists into detaching themselves from social life, and to oppose the transformation of the world outlook of the artists, and dreads the birth of revolutionary works of art."

III. The Characteristics of the Process of Art Creation

Chou Ku-ch'eng thinks that "the process of art creation should be 'a struggle' proceeding from the subjective to the objective, and the subjective and the objective should not 'run parallel.' Before creation begins, the author has a strong subjective desire. When creation is in progress, the subjective and the objective come into sharp conflict and stand against each other. After creation is made a success, the subjective should have been expressed as the objective." He holds that creative activity can only begin at a time when life is disquiet. This kind of disquiet life has three characteristics: "First, the objective situation is clearly revealed, is self-contradictory, that is, stands opposed to the subjective, hampers physical activity, and makes free advancement impossible. Second, the psychological activity and the physical activity of the subjective, which were in harmony before, are now separately revealed, giving birth to independent activity. Third, life is rendered unstable and even agonizing; the subjective and the objective are separated, mind and body cannot be unified, and unified activity is impeded." At this juncture, "independent psychological activity" gives form to what is usually called thinking, and it is necessary "to modify the physiological activity," "to eliminate the obstacle before us," "to restore the unity of mind and body," and to find a way out from the dilemma. This is the ideal. "When an ideal is only expressed in feeling but not translated into action," such a realization "can be described as a nominal realization of the ideal," that is the practice of art.

Wang Tzu-yeh hold that this is in effect a reprinting of the abstract method of psychological analysis of the bourgeois theorists. Lu Kuei-shan (陆贵山) holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng "one-sidedly limits the content of thinking to individual life isolated from social life, but never mentions anything about the social origin and class origin of the content of thinking." Ma Ch'i criticizes what Chou Ku-ch'eng describes as "giving a body to feeling," and says that this is in no way "a scientific process to create beauty." He holds that "this is nothing more than a theory in defense of formalism which rejects the objective content of art and even formalism which destroys the form." Yü Hsing holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng looks upon ideal as a way for an individual to find a way out of the dilemma and give pursuit to "the unity of mind and body," and his view approximates that of pragmatism. He also holds that the use of "giving a body to feeling" and "nominal realization of ideal" to show that the course of creation is drawing toward "the theory of self-expression" of subjective idealism. Yao Wen-yüan (姚文元) says: "As Mr. Chou sees it, the process of creation is not a process to reflect the social life of mankind through the movement of opposites in thinking in the mind of the artist, but an objective process to give expression to the subjective through the fierce 'struggle' between the subjective and the objective. This is the naked creation theory of subjective idealism."

IV. Feeling and Reason in Art

Chou Ku-ch'eng holds that "the function of an object of art lies in impressing people with feeling; an object of art give expression to feeling on the one hand, and impresses people with feeling on the other." It "shocks the whole character of the person thus impressed without knowing why." He describes this situation as something "approximate to what is generally called intuition." As to the nature of feeling in art, he thinks that "genuine feeling" must be expressed, and opposes the idea of "class feeling." His reason is that: "The term class feeling is too vague. Is it the bourgeois hatred of the proletariat? Is it the proletarian hatred of the bourgeoisie? Is it the soft-hearted feeling of the petty-bourgeoisie? So vague a term cannot be used here. The use of it calls for explanation, and it is better not to use it." "Struggle is not limited to class, for there is also man's struggle against nature. The feeling arising from man's struggle against nature cannot be incorporated into class feeling. For example, the feeling of the peasants against natural calamities and the feeling of the fishermen against the stormy sea cannot be satisfactorily described as class feeling." "Genuine feeling is greater than class feeling; when we discuss the theory of art, the one with a greater compass ought to be taken... The feelings expressed in individual works are concrete and can never be vaguely substituted with the term class feeling."

The viewpoint of Chou Ku-ch'eng is opposed in many critical comments. Wang Tzu-yeh holds that "works of art must have feelings as well as ideas, and none of the two can be done away with." He adds that "feeling is dominated by reason and thought." Lu Kuei-shan holds that "the image of art is an alloy of recognition and feeling," and that "the factor of feeling in art arises from and serves the recognition of truth." He asks Chou Ku-ch'eng: "In one-sidedly exaggerating feeling and describing feeling as the sole important factor in art, what place do you propose to give to reason and thought?" Chu Kuang-ch'ien points out: "Because 'reason' is excluded in art, Mr. Chou necessarily wants to exclude the ideological character of art and the role of recognition." He thinks that this is a viewpoint which Chou Ku-ch'eng's expressionism will necessarily hold in the relationship of feeling and reason. As to Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint which stresses "genuine feeling" and opposes the idea of "class feeling," it has been criticized by many articles. Yü Hsing considers that Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint "has no other way out but to look upon man as abstract man above class, and broaden the 'limits' in search of 'common human nature.'" Chu Kuang-ch'ien holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint is above class. He says: "The question lies in what is 'genuine.' In a class society, feeling is necessarily branded with class." Should feelings be expressed according to the feelings of various classes, or should all class feelings be 'converged' indiscriminately to form 'feelings' (like love and hate) thus liquidating their class contents? He asks Chou Ku-ch'eng which of these two is genuine.

V. The Spirit of the Times

Chou Ku-ch'eng holds that art creation must bring out things above imitation. He says: "Things above imitation belong to creation on the one hand, but are the spirit of the times prevailing throughout society on the other." There are different ways of thinking in different ages, and they "converge to form the spirit of the times." "Although the spirit of the times is a unified whole in all ages, yet it is also distinctly different when it is reflected by different classes and even individuals. When these kinds of difference are incorporated in various works of art, they form the characteristics of creation, or the expression of originality or talent."

In many articles of criticism, it is held that this viewpoint is the inevitable conclusion of Chou Ku-ch'eng's "genuine feeling." Yü Hsing holds that "in history, the thinking of the oppressor class and the oppressed class, the ruling class and the ruled class have never 'converged' to form a unified spirit of the times." "The spirit of the times refers to nothing more than the spiritual force driving history forward in a certain society within a certain historical period." Chou Ku-ch'eng's viewpoint "mixes up the ideas of the different classes, rejects the leading position held by the proletarian ideology, and rejects the uncompromising struggle between the proletarian ideas and all kinds of non-proletarian ideas." Yao Wen-yüan holds that Chou Ku-ch'eng "obliterates the dissimilar nature of the opposites of a contradiction, rejects the revolutionary transformation arising from struggle, and that this forms the philosophical basis of Mr. Chou's view that 'non-proletarian and counterrevolutionary' ideas all 'converge' to form the spirit of the times. In methodology, this is a kind of sophistry." Yao Wen-yüan also says: "We commonly say that literature and art seek to express the spirit of the times in the socialist age today. This is the great spiritual feature of the revolutionary people in the practice of socialist revolution and socialist construction as well as the great spiritual feature of the revolutionary people in the struggle against imperialism and its lackeys, but is not the spirit of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie who oppose socialism and capitulate to imperialism."

The Kuang-ming Jih-pao published on July 7 an article by Chin Wei-min (金为民) and Li Yün-ch'ü (李云初) entitled "Some Queries on the Spirit of the Times." This article was written to support Chou Ku-ch'eng and repudiate Yao Wen-yüan. The article says that in history "there is the advanced, revolutionary spirit of the times" as well as "the decadent, reactionary, stagnant and backward spirit of the times." They hold that in art all the exemplary persons and things of the different classes and strata give direct manifestation to the spirit of the times, and that the description of persons and things must now give great attention to "the ordinary deeds of ordinary persons."

VI. The Social Functions of Art

Chou Ku-ch'eng holds that the social functions of art creation "may narrowly be divided into three bigger categories: (1) for supplementing deficiencies, (2) for rectifying mistakes, and (3) for developing the good points." "Genuine works of art seek not to prevail upon people with reason but to impress people with feeling." "People prevailed upon by reason may participate in the struggle against nature or the class struggle and drive history forward; people impressed by feeling may also participate in the struggle against nature or the class struggle and drive history forward." "Works of art, provided they give expression to genuine feelings, can be touching. In this connection, the nominal realization of an ideal may have a very long role to play:...provided the feeling manifested is humanly possible, it will not fail to impress people, and is therefore called immortal."

The articles criticizing Chou Ku-ch'eng hold that this is not in correspondence with the realities of literature and art. Ma Ch'i says that there is no such thing as super-class, unified, general art in present-day world, and that "arts belonging to different classes will play different social functions." After pointing out Chou Ku-ch'eng's abstract discussion on the functions of ideal and art, he has this to say: "The social functions of art must submit to concrete class analysis," and "if the super-class, abstract discussion is not abandoned, and the method of class analysis

is not genuinely implemented," no matter what front is put up, the essence of the problem cannot be covered up. Yu Hsing holds that "art must not only appeal to our feeling but also to our reason." If the recognition of art can only be kept at the intuitional stage, then the cognitional and educational functions of art are indeed pitiable. Lu Kuei-shan holds that "there is no such thing as the common feeling of mankind based on the theory of universal human nature, and the immortality of works of art is not because they give expression to any human feeling of a "common nature." Wang Tzu-yeh says: "Immortal works certainly must have genuine feelings, but not all works with genuine feelings are immortal," and evaluation cannot be carried out without considering the ideological content. Emphasis should be laid on class feeling, but not on abstract, genuine feeling.

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of these words honor the revolutionary spirit, and when they are used together with the spirit of the times, no matter whether you talk in one way or the other, you will be understood. For example, it is correct and proper for you to say that the spirit of the contemporary era takes the revolutionary spirit as the lead, or that the revolutionary spirit is the leading spirit of the contemporary era. It seems that Mr. Yao is rather fond of abstract generalization, but is not fond of analyzing facts. This applies at least to the criticism of a part of my article.

The Unified Whole and Separate Reflections

(II) My article "The Historical Position of Art Creation" was carried in the Hsin Ch'ien-she, No. 12, 1962. A passage in this article says: "Although things above imitation belong to creation on the one hand, yet they constitute the spirit of the times prevailing throughout society on the other hand. In primitive clannish society, because man fought against nature and tribes fought against tribes, there often formed different kinds of thinking which converged to form the spirit of the times of the clannish society. In slave society, productive forces made greater headway than before, and society was split into the exploiting and the exploited classes, the oppressor and the oppressed classes. The State system emerged along with classes. At that time, apart from man's struggle against nature, there were also struggles between classes and nations. All this again formed thinking more complex than before, and such thinking converged to form a more complex spirit of the times of the slave society. With the transition of slave society to feudal society and of feudal society to capitalist society, the production relationships and struggles varied with the ages. The feudal age was marked by the resistance of the peasants against the oppression and exploitation of the feudal landlords and the continued outbreak of struggles; the capitalist age was marked by the resistance of the workers against the oppression and exploitation of the bourgeoisie and also the continued outbreak of struggles. Therefore, the feudal age also had various kinds of thinking which converged to form the spirit of the times at that time, and the capitalist age also had various kinds of thinking which converged to form the spirit of the times at that time. Although the spirit of the times of various ages is a unified whole, yet it is also distinctly different judged by the way it is reflected by various classes and even individuals. All these differences find their way into various works of art, and give form to the characteristic or originality of creation, or the expression of talent. Speaking in terms of what is prevailing in the whole society, this is called the spirit of the times; speaking in terms of what the concrete works separately reflect, this is called the expression of talent."

This section of the article conveys two ideas, one being the unified whole, the other separate reflections. Separate reflections constitute the parts, while the unified whole constitutes the whole. The whole is made up of a good number of complex parts; these parts stand opposed to and struggle against each other. Therefore, such a whole is not a thing above class and devoid of content. To put it the other way round, the parts stand opposed to and struggle against each other at all times within the whole; therefore, they can only reflect each other, but cannot replace each other. Mr. Yao disagrees with this. He does not admit that there is such a thing as the unified whole based on the struggle of opposites, nor does he admit that there are parts which reflect each other. Whenever the unified whole is mentioned, he holds that it is a hotchpotch and incompatible with logic. Whenever separate reflections are mentioned, he holds that they speak for the bourgeoisie and sabotage the spirit of the times. This theory of Mr. Yao is questionable.

(III) Here, let us first discuss two points:

(1) It is right to say that the unified whole is a hotchpotch, but it is wrong to say that it is incompatible with logic. All things in existence are made up of parts which stand opposed to and struggle against each other. This is true of natural phenomena, and is especially true of social phenomena. What the scientists call the "macroscopic world" is made up in this way, and even the so-called "microscopic world"

which can be observed only through a microscope that magnifies things tens of thousands of times is also made up in this way. Speaking of social phenomena, to make a long story short, since there is class society, the mentality and thinking of each nation, each country, each organ, each organization, each school, each family and even each individual are made up of parts which stand opposed to and struggle against each other. This is an iron-clad fact expressed in words, and in what way is it not compatible with logic?

(2) It is also very questionable to say that separate reflections speak for the bourgeoisie and sabotage the spirit of the times. For the sake of the revolution, persistence in the ideological weapon of the proletariat and in the struggle against the bourgeois ideology is correct in every respect and should be followed by everybody. However, there must first be something to struggle against in a struggle. If besides the proletarian ideology there are no bourgeois and other non-proletarian ideologies in existence; or if they existed once but are extinct today; or if what they reflect cannot be seen in any aspect, is our revolutionary struggle still necessary? To be sure, there is no need for us to create something out of nothing, or a target to struggle against for the sake of revolution; or to foster the bourgeois ideology at a time when there is no more trace of the bourgeois ideology. However, there is no need for us to say what is in existence as non-existent. Somebody is boasting today that in his country there is no class, and hence no difference in thinking. After all, this is only boasting, and we do not learn from them. Therefore, there is no harm for us to talk about the thought of the reactionaries of various countries, the thought of modern revisionism, and the thought of modern dogmatism. Why can't we talk about them if what we seek is not to support them but to exterminate them?

(IV) Mr. Yao may say: (1) He is not opposed to exposing the situation of the enemy, and does not deny that different classes have different forms of creation. Hence, his article says: "Because the class origin of art and the nature of contradiction it faces are different, there are two completely different forms of originality in the history of art, and their functions are also entirely different. One kind of originality is revolutionary and progressive, while the other kind is reactionary and considers rotten things as marvellous." These words of Mr. Yao are entirely correct, and may be described as unexpectedly coinciding with what I have said: "What are reflected by different classes and even individuals are distinctly different." Mr. Yao may also say that notwithstanding the congruence on this point, the characteristics and originality of art function in different ways when they are applied in different classes. "If the characteristics and originality of art are used to praise the proletariat and the revolutionary people in a better way and to reflect the revolutionary struggle with a greater feeling, they can of course give an even more outstanding expression to the spirit of the times. But if they are used to beautify and add power of attraction to the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois affection and even feudal superstition then in basic spirit they are distinctly different from the proletarian ideal, and can only play the role of destroying the spirit of the times." Mr. Chou has said nothing on this point. It is quite right that I have talked nothing about this, but is it just as good for Mr. Yao to talk more on what I have not talked about?

(2) The question does not lie here. It seems that Mr. Yao means to say that it was unfortunate that there had been different classes and different kinds of thinking in history, and since that there is only one class and one kind of spirit today, the unified whole based on the struggle of opposites and the separate reflections of different classes and individuals should not be mentioned again. Since Chou Ku-ch'eng has mentioned them, then his view "runs counter to scientific analysis and the facts and belongs to historical materialism divorced from class analysis." Mr. Yao proceeds from subjective desire, sets the facts aside, and uses the abstract method to generalize things in this way. Since this is his personal desire, there is nothing wrong with it.

(3) However, there lies here the question whether revolution is still wanted. If China has only one class and one kind of spirit today, what then is the object of the revolution? To carry out revolution without an object is to shoot an arrow without a target. If there is an object but the mention of it is forbidden, then we are deceiving ourselves and other people. This is incompatible with our study of the class struggle today. In our study today, it is first necessary to ask whether or not different classes exist objectively, whether or not class contradictions exist objectively, and whether or not the struggle exists objectively in effect. If all this does not exist, then the effort to intensify the class struggle is redundant. Mr. Yao may say that there is no such things as shooting arrows without a target and self-deception and deception of other people. Whatever the case, there cannot be a unified whole and separate reflections, for they run counter to scientific analysis and facts. I think this is not the case. Please permit me to explain slowly.

Concerning the Unified Whole

(V) Mr. Yao has refused from the beginning to acknowledge that different classes and different ideas can converge to form a unified whole. He says: "How can it be said that the hymn of Long Live the King and the Marseillaise, the Marseillaise and the Internationale, works which are fundamentally opposed to each other in ideological content, converge to form the same spirit of the times? This is beyond imagination and runs counter to logic. As a matter of fact, since it is admitted that there is antagonism between the oppressor class and the oppressed class and between the exploiting class and the exploited class, then there is bound to be antagonism in class consciousness which reflects the class interests of the different classes, and it is not possible for such consciousness to converge to form any unified whole. In the socialist society, a life-and-death struggle is being carried out between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and the proletarian ideas are also in sharp struggle with the bourgeois and feudal ideas. They cannot converge to form any unified whole. Practice in literary and art creation since liberation tells us that when works of literature and art strongly express the spirit of the times, it is always a time when the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat is up and rising and socialist literature and art are resolutely fighting for a clean break with the bourgeois and feudal ideas." This section of Mr. Yao's article is not without problems.

(1) Since different classes and ideas are locked in sharp struggle, they are at all times within a unified whole; and unless they are within a unified whole, the sharp, life-and-death struggle cannot be carried out. In China and foreign countries, in ancient and modern times, class struggle is carried out not back to back, but face to face. It is not carried out between a bronze and iron wall, but is brought deep into the position of each other. It is carried out not amidst a mild wind and fine drizzle, but in a scene of rolling heads and bloodshed. Can such a struggle be carried out outside the unified whole? If it is carried out outside the unified whole, there is fundamentally no struggle. The sharp struggle must have been carried out within the unified whole. Struggle pulls different ideas together, and forms the unified whole based on the struggle of opposites. The placing of identical ideas pure and simple, in the same place will not lead to struggle, and there is no unified whole to speak of. Only the struggle of opposites can give shape to a unified whole. Mr. Yao is probably accustomed to seeing identical things which are pure and simple, and he therefore firmly refuses to believe that things marked by the struggle of opposites can form a unified whole. As a matter of fact, since there is universe, as long as it is a unified whole, it is always made up by parts based on the struggle of opposites.

(2) Moreover, if the parts based on the struggle of opposites are not within the unified whole, there cannot be separate reflections, and in fact there will be fundamentally no separate reflections. If the front and the back, the right and the left of the thought of "Long Live the King" are not washed by non-Long-Live-the-King ideas, will it be separately reflected? If the front and the back, the right and the left of the thought of the Marseillaise are not washed by non-Marseillaise ideas, will it be separately reflected? If the front and the back, the left and the right of the thought of the Internationale are not washed by non-Internationale ideas, will it

separately reflected? If the thought of the 3,000,000,000 people of the whole world is the thought of the Internationale, will the thought of the Internationale be separately reflected? The parts based on the struggle of opposites are at all times within the unified whole, and the unified whole incorporates at all times the parts based on the struggle of opposites.

(VI) If the parts based on the struggle of opposites cannot form a unified whole, what things else can form the unified whole? Since there is universe, or to make a long story short, since there is mankind, what are the things which are not formed with parts based on the struggle of opposites? Speaking of natural phenomena, what we commonly consider as identical things pure and simple like sea water, air, ether, atoms, electrons, etc, are in effect not purely identical, but are formed with parts based on the struggle of opposites. Speaking of social phenomena, the entities which we are most familiar, like nations, countries, organs, organizations and families, are in effect not purely identical, but are formed with parts based on the struggle of opposites.

(1) Whether or not the parts based on the struggle of opposites can form a unified whole is quite a problem to the bourgeois philosophers. Taking examples from the history of modern thinking for illustration, this was a problem to John Locke, to David Hume, and to Ernst Mach, and is also a problem to contemporary Russel. They all feel that it is not easy for scattered things to form a whole.

(2) In the eyes of the Marxist scholars, however, this is not a problem. Before the emergence of Marxism, this problem was studied by Heraclitus in ancient time and Hegel in modern time. Their studies were probably not perfect and flawless. After the emergence of Marxism, however, the question of the relationship between the whole and the part has been properly solved. I. Dietzgen's The Positive Fruit of Philosophy gives a popular and detailed explanation to the question. The unified whole incorporates at all times the different parts form at all times the unified whole. Moreover, the different parts forming the unified whole are not separated from and encroached upon by each other, but are interconnected, interdependent, and struggle against and condition each other.

(VII) As to the argument that the different kinds of thinking of different classes cannot form a unified whole, this is also fundamentally incompatible with the facts in the fatherland. First, is not the cultural legacy of the fatherland a unified whole? But it incorporates the different kinds of thinking of different classes. Is not the history of the fatherland a unified whole? But it incorporates the different kinds of thinking of different classes. Is not the history of the fatherland a unified whole? But it incorporates the different kinds of thinking of different classes; moreover, it incorporates at all times the different languages and religious beliefs of different nationalities. Is not the People's Republic of China a unified whole? But up to now, it incorporates not only the different kinds of thinking of different classes, and in fact there are also different classes, different nationalities, different languages and different religious beliefs in it. If it is held that different kinds of thinking cannot form a unified whole, that is, the parts cannot form the whole, then a unified China, the Chinese history, and the Chinese cultural legacy cannot exist. What kind of theory this is!

According to facts, the unified whole formed with parts based on the struggle of opposites cannot be rejected. Notwithstanding Mr. Yao's firm denial, he has unconsciously affirmed the whole thing. Says he: "In order to know scientifically what is the spirit of the times, it is necessary to analyze scientifically the times, the history, and the objective historical contents as reflected by the spirit of the times. Lenin said: 'The method of Marx is first to consider the objective contents of the historical course at a concrete time in a concrete environment, so as to understand first the movement of which class is the principal motive force which impels the progress of society in this concrete environment.' (Collected Works of Lenin, Vol. XXI, page 121) This is also our basic method to analyze the spirit of the times." This passage demonstrates one thing; namely the parts based on the struggle of opposites form the unified whole. Suppose there are only purely identical things, but not the

unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites, what things else must we "scientifically analyze" and "understand first," why must there still be the question of "which class," and what "historical contents" are still not clearly understood? There is of course no need for me to say that Mr. Yao is self-contrary in thought, but I may say that iron-clad facts are beyond rejection.

Concerning Separate Reflections

(VIII) What condition is needed to reflect separately different kinds of thinking? The one and only condition is the aforesaid unified whole based on the struggle of opposites. No matter whether they are reflected as customs and habits, academic ideas, religious ethics, or literature and art, this condition is essential. Without this condition, there cannot be different reflections.

(1) Mr. Yao does not acknowledge there is such unified whole. When I make a brief mention of it in a section of my article, he expresses disapproval. First, he says: "It is unthinkable and runs counter to logic." Next, he says: "It runs counter to the course of history." Next again, he says: "It runs counter to scientific analysis and facts." Finally, he says that Chou Ku-ch'eng "may walk into a blind alley." Although Mr. Yao is so hostile to the unified whole based on the struggle of opposites, and does not want the condition for reflection, yet he is able to write what is called a strong reflection by saying: "We hold that the spirit of the times in works of literature and art is a spiritual force of the revolutionary class for transforming the world. It reflects the demand for the practice of world transformation by the revolutionary class, and turns around to impel the development of revolutionary practice. It is a concentrated reflection of the thought, sentiments and ideals of the new, revolutionary class and stratum in works of literature and art that represent the direction of advancement in historical revolution, a (direct or indirect) concentrated reflection of the interests, desires and demands of the broad laboring people in works of literature and art in a certain historical period, a strong reflection of the spiritual features of the revolutionary class and the broad people who fight for the realization of their principal task at a certain historical stage and their historical course in works of literature and art." Without the condition for reflection, it is rather mystical for him to be able to talk about a strong reflection. The theory of literature art abhors most the theory of no conflict; and as Mr. Yao is talking about the revolutionary spirit, he will of course not withdraw into the circle of the theory of no conflict. But since the revolutionary spirit has nothing to do with the whole based on the struggle of opposites, can it be said that it comes from the so-called realm of no difference which is oneness pure and simple?

(2) Mr. Yao cannot of course admit this. Moreover, his article says: "The age of the proletarian revolution, the class ideals and demands of the proletariat, and the proletarian spirit of thorough revolution give expression to the spirit of the times; and the bourgeois liberty, equality and fraternity become the thought antagonistic to the spirit of the times." Doesn't this also indicate the different ideas of different classes are independent from and do not encroach upon each other; or form a unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites. If the former is the case, the revolutionary spirit fundamentally cannot be borne; and if the latter is the case, he has again fallen into my circle.

(IX) Not only the prerequisites for reflection constitute a unified whole; even in the case of the concrete expression of reflection in the field of art, like architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry and dancing, as long as an object of art is involved, a part of the unified whole is reflected to a greater or lesser extent. Mr. Yao disagrees with this view of mine and says: "This method comes under the scope of historical idealism which explains art by means of art."

(1) As a matter of fact, Mr. Yao is wrong. Referring to the passage quoted by your article from my article, you have at least failed to understand the original text. The original text clearly says that the ideas of different classes form the unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites, and are separately reflected by different classes and individuals. The unified whole itself is fundamentally not art; it must be separately reflected before it can be brought in touch with art. What is after all

the meaning of "explaining art by means of art?" Can it be said that the unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites is also called art? In regard to this passage of my article, Mr. Yao has sarcastically remarked that I "have copied this passage word by word in the Wen-yi Pao." To be honest, I must tell Mr. Yao that I have not only copied it word by word in the Wen-yi Pao, but have, from last December up to now, copied it for a total of five times. In doing this, I seek not to persist in what is wrong, but to explain clearly the problem in response to your call. Hence I have copied this passage once again in this article. In this connection, the readers may check up things to find out whether I have explained art with art or with the struggle of opposites.

(2) The part reflected by works of art must be a part of the course of struggle. The course of struggle must at least be made up of two opposites, namely the aspects of oppression and the oppressed, or exploitation and the exploited; one aspect alone cannot give shape to a struggle. This is also true of thought. What I call "the spirit of the times prevailing throughout society" includes at all times two opposite 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; one aspect alone of the thought cannot give shape to a struggle. Mr. Yao dislikes to hear that the different thoughts of different classes form the unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites, and goes so far as to cast away one side of what I call thought and keep the other side. Taking the feudal age for illustration, he casts away the thought of the peasants and keeps the thought of the feudal landlords. The original text reads: "The feudal morality is a combination of the man-eating morality and the morality of the slaves. After the formation of the feudal society, it advocated the eternity of feudal oppression and conscious submission to oppression. Although this kind of consciousness was the ruling consciousness of the feudal society and the thought 'prevailing throughout society,' it was not the spirit of the times which drove history forward." It is true that the thought of the landlords did not drive history forward. We all know that since there was class society, the whole history is the history of class struggle; history is driven forward by class struggle, not by the thought of the landlords. Why does Mr. Yao want to cast away the thought of the peasants, and seek the motive force for progress from the thought of the landlords alone? The motive force for progress can only be found from the course of struggle itself, and consequently, any works of art can only reflect a part of the course of struggle, and must also reflect a part of the course of struggle.

(3) The thought of the landlords is of course not the motive force that drives history forward. As a matter of fact, divorced from the course of struggle, even the thought of the peasants cannot drive history forward. We may even be so daring as to say that divorced from the course of struggle, the revolutionary thought of the peasants itself will fundamentally not appear. Mr. Yao talks freely of the works reflecting the thought of the peasants and says: "In the age of feudal rule, the revolution of the peasants is the principal motive force that gives impetus to social progress. The works which reflect the spirit of the times are first the works which sing praise to and reflect the revolutionary spirit of the peasants and other oppressed people and their demand for resistance, the works which expose the reactionary and dark nature of the feudal class which oppresses, exploits, deceives, and anaesthetize the people, or a part of such works." To be sure, literature and art should serve the peasants. But there is a question here: From where does the revolutionary spirit of the peasant come? If it evolves independently, I have nothing to say; but if it evolves in the course of the struggle of opposites, then it cannot be denied that the different ideas of different classes form the unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites. Works of art must reflect a part of the course of the struggle of opposites, and we cannot talk about reflection in departure from the course of struggle.

(X) Although the revolutionary spirit discussed throughout Mr. Yao's article is based upon abstract generalization, yet abstract generalization is not necessarily a bad thing. Provided it is used to stress the revolutionary spirit, thus arousing the attention of the readers, the effort is not made in vain. If the title is changed

to "A Brief Talk on Revolutionary Spirit," then the text of the article will agree better with the title, and the readers will profit to a greater extent. What I want to discuss is the question of relationship between the whole and the part. The antithesis and struggle of the different ideas of different classes are incorporated at all times in the unified whole. This has always been the case in ancient and modern times, in our country and other countries. This is also the case in China today. However, the unified whole based upon the struggle of opposites is unable to express itself, and must be separately reflected by different classes and individuals. Therefore, in my course of study, there arises the question of relationship between the unified whole which is based upon the struggle of opposites and the parts which are separately reflected. With the endeavor to make my own action and method of work more effective, I constantly meditate upon some problems, and hope to understand and see things more clearly. It is undesirable to have the view but not the working method, and it is even less possible to have the working method but not view. In response to the call of Mr. Yao, I want to vindicate myself on the issue, but may not be able to do it. If I want to state my case more clearly, I must make a stronger effort in study. (Reproduced from Kuang-ming Jih-pao, November 7, 1963)

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