

TALK ON PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY

Mao Zedong

(18 August 1964)

Before he began speaking, Mao asked that this talk be taken down, which was done by Gong Yuzhi. The source is the unofficial publication during the Cultural Revolution, called *Long Live Mao Zedong Thought*. The translation has been edited from the version published in *Miscellany of Mao Tse-Tung Thought, Vol. II*, publish by the Joint Publications Research Service, 1974. Page numbers in brackets refer to that version. For the Chinese text, see:

<http://marxistphilosophy.org/maozedong/index.html>

It is only with class struggle that there is philosophy (it being useless to discuss the theory of knowledge apart from practice). It behooves comrades who study philosophy to go to the countryside. They should go this winter or next spring to take part in the class struggle. One should go even though one's health is poor. People won't die by going down to the countryside. There may be some flu, but it will be all right when they put on more clothes.

The way the liberal arts are presently being handled in colleges is no good. They go from book to book, and from concept to concept. How can philosophy emerge from books? The three components of Marxism are scientific socialism, philosophy, and political economics. They are based on sociology and class struggle: the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The Marxists found out that it would be futile for wishful thinking socialists to persuade the bourgeoisie to change their heart, and that they must depend on the class struggle of the proletariat. There had already been many strikes by that time. According to investigations of the English Parliament, it was found that a 12-hour work system was not as profitable to capitalists as an 8-hour work system. It was on this premise that Marxism evolved. It is only with class struggle as a basis that one can study philosophy. Whose philosophy? Bourgeois philosophy or proletarian philosophy? Proletarian philosophy is Marxist philosophy. There is also the economics of the proletariat which transformed classical economics. Those who study philosophy feel that philosophy comes first. This is wrong, for the first thing is class struggle. It is only when the oppressed begin to resist and search for a way out that they manage to find

philosophy. Only by proceeding from this premise have we come to have Marxism-Leninism and to find philosophy. We have all come this way. It is because others wanted my head and Chiang Kai-shek wanted to kill me that I began to engage in class struggle and philosophy.

College students, those in the liberal arts, should begin to go down to the countryside this winter. Those who are studying the sciences need not move now, though they may move once or twice. But all liberal arts students, [385] students of history, political economics, literature, and law, must go. Everybody should go: Professors, instructors, administrative workers, and students, for a period of five months at a time. They should spend five months in the rural areas and five months in factories to acquire some perceptual knowledge. They should take a look at horses, cows, sheep, chickens, dogs and pigs, as well as rice, kaoliang, legumes, wheat, and millet. In winter, one may not see crops, but at least one can see land, and people. Wherever they engage in class struggle can be considered to be a university where they can learn many things. What is Beijing University and what is a university of the people? Which is better! I myself studied in the school of hard knocks,¹ where I managed to learn something. I read Confucius, the *Four Books*, and the *Five Classics*, and, after reading them for six years, I could recite them even though I couldn't understand them. I believed then in Confucius and even wrote some articles. Later I attended bourgeois schools for seven years. Six years plus seven years make a total of 13 years. I

¹ "Green Forest University"

studied the whole bag of bourgeois natural sciences and social sciences. I also studied education. I spent five years in normal school and two years in middle school, including my time in the library. At that time I believed in Kant's dualism, especially idealism. I was originally a feudalist and a bourgeois democrat. Society made me turn to revolution. For several years I served as teacher and principal of a 4-year grammar school. I also taught history and Chinese literature in a 6-year school. Then I taught for a short while in a middle school, though I knew almost nothing. I joined the Communist party, joined the revolution, and I knew only that I wanted to make revolution. But revolt against what and how? Of course, it was to revolt against imperialism and against the old society. What is imperialism? I did not understand it too well. I understood even less about how to make revolution. What I learned in 13 years was useless for making revolution. I could use only the tool — language. Writing articles is a tool. As for the reasons they are basically useless.

Confucius said that "the benevolent person is humane and loves people." But which people did he love? All the people? Not on your life! Did he love the exploiters? Not completely, since he loved only some of them. Otherwise, why was it that Confucius failed to attain high office? They did not want him, even though he loved them and sought to unify them. However, he almost starved, and was moved to declare that "the true gentleman remains firm in misfortune," and still he came close to losing his life when the people of Kuang wanted to kill him. There were those who criticized him for not going as far as the state of Qin when he journeyed to the west, when in fact the poem in the *Book of Odes* entitled, "Qiyue Liuhuo," refers to events that took place in Shensi,² and the poem entitled "Huangniao" refers to the killing of three ministers as a sacrifice to the death of Duke Mu of Qin.³ [386]

² Location of former state of Qin.

³ Tradition has it that the *Book of Odes* was compiled by Confucius when he travelled about the land in search of songs and poems he deemed to be suitable. That he would include the two poems referred to above shows that he did travel as far as Qin in the far west.

Sima Qian⁴ had a high regard for the *Book of Odes*, saying that its 300 odes were all the products of the ancient worthies and sages being roused to action. The greater part of the *Book of Odes* is made up of popular songs and folk songs from among the common people, and the common people were also worthy and sagacious. Whenever they were roused to action by the anger or resentment in their hearts, they would write odes! [In these pieces they said such things as], "Neither sowing or reaping, how do you come to have so much grain; neither trapping or hunting how is it that you come have those pelts hanging in your home? You gentlemen should not be eating what you have not earned!" The expression, "performing no work in office while taking the emoluments," is derived from this. This poem is an expression of resentment to Heaven and opposition to the rulers Confucius was fairly democratic, and he collected some poems expressing love between men and women. Zhu Xi⁵ wrote commentaries to them in which he deemed them to be licentious. In point of fact, some of them were and some of them were not, the latter being poems in which the relationship between the ruler and his ministers was described in terms of male-female relations. From the state of Shu⁶ of the ten states during the Five Dynasties Period [907 - 959 A D] there is a poem entitled "A Qin Woman's Poem on Winter," written by Wei Zhuang during his youth, and in which he expresses his longing for his sovereign.

As for the business of going down [to the countryside], it will begin this winter and next spring. You should go down by stages and in batches, to take part in class struggle. It is only thus that you can learn something and learn how to make revolution. You intellectuals live every day in your offices; you eat well dress well, you never walk, and so you get sick. Clothing, food, housing and transportation are the four great essentials of life. By changing your living conditions from good to bad, by going down to take part in class struggle, by steeling yourselves through the "four cleans" and "five antis," you intellectuals will change your appearance.

⁴ A noted historian.

⁵ A Song Dynasty scholar.

⁶ Synonymous with Qin.

What kind of philosophy would you learn if you didn't engage in class struggle!

Go down and give it a try! You can come back if you become really sick, since it wouldn't do for you to die. If you become so sick as to approach death, then come back. Once you go down, you will be enthusiastic. (Comrade Kang Sheng remarked: The Institute of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Academy of Sciences should also go down, since it is fast becoming an institute of antiquities, a sort of fairyland where they no longer eat the food of human beings. Those in the Institute of Philosophy won't even read the *Guangming Ribao*.) I read only the *Guangming Ribao* and *Wen Hui Bao*, but not the *Renmin Ribao* because it won't publish any articles of a theoretical nature. After my suggestion, they began to publish them. The *Jiefangjun Bao* is very lively and readable. (Comrade Kang Sheng: The Institute of Literature show no concern for the problems of Zhou Gucheng while Sun Yefang of the Economic Institute has been fooling around with Liberman's⁷ works and with capitalism.)

[387] It is all right to engage in some capitalism. Society being so complex, wouldn't it be too monotonous to engage only in socialism to the exclusion of capitalism? Wouldn't that be too one-sided an approach, without any unity of opposites? Let them engage in it. It would support them, whether it was a frantic attack, demonstrations in the streets, or an armed revolt with rifles. Society is so complex that there is not a single commune, a single county, or a single Central Committee that doesn't have the need to implement the policy of one dividing into two. Look, hasn't the rural work department been abolished? It was engaged exclusively in contracting production to the peasant family, the "four great freedoms," credit loans, trade, labor hiring, and land transactions. It issued notices in the past. Deng Zihui used to argue with me, and at the Central Committee meeting, he suggested that we launch the four great freedoms. To permanently consolidate the New Democracy would be tantamount to engaging in capitalism. The New Democracy is a bourgeois democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat. It should affect

⁷ Evsei Lieberman was a Soviet economist whose views influenced the post-Khrushchev reforms in 1965.

only the landlords and the compradore bourgeoisie, but not the national bourgeoisie. To distribute land to the peasants is to transform feudal landlord ownership into the ownership of individual peasants, which is still under the domain of bourgeois revolution. It is by no means strange to distribute land, since MacArthur has distributed land in Japan and Napoleon also distributed land. Land reform cannot eliminate capitalism, and thus will never enable us to reach socialism.

In our nation now, about one-third of the power is controlled by the enemy or by those who sympathize with the enemy. We have been here for 15 years and have two-thirds of the domain. Today a party branch secretary can be bribed with a few packs of cigarettes and there's no telling what one could achieve by marrying his daughter off to such a person. In some areas land reform has been peaceful, and the land reform teams are rather weak. From the looks of things, there are more than a few problems at the present time.

I have received the materials on philosophical problems.⁸ I have seen the outlines.⁹ I haven't found time to read the others yet. I saw also the materials on analysis and synthesis.

In gathering materials in this way, it seems that those on the laws of the unity of opposites, on the interpretations of the bourgeoisie, of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and of revisionism are all good. The views of the bourgeoisie, Yang Xianzhen, and the late Hegel have been around a long time, but they are even more nefarious today. There are also the preachings of [A.A.] Bogdanov [1873-1928] and [Anatoliy] Lunacharskiy [1875-1933]. I have read Bogdanov's economics, Lenin also read it, and I seem to recall that he praised his section on original accumulation. (Kang Sheng: Bogdanov's economics are quite possibly superior to anything coming out of modern revisionism. Kautsky's is superior to Khrushchev's, and Yugoslavia's is superior to that [388] of the Soviet Union, [M.] Djilas had a few complimentary things to say about Lenin, namely that he

⁸ This refers to materials on the problem of contradictions — note of the recorder, Gong Yuzhi.

⁹ Referring to outlines of articles on criticizing the theory of combining two into one — recorder's note.

engaged in some self-criticism on the China problem).

Stalin realized that he had made some mistakes on the China problem, and they were by no means small mistakes. We are a great nation of several hundred million people. He opposed our revolution and our seizure of political power. In order to seize political power throughout the entire nation, we had prepared for many years, and the entire war of resistance was preparation. If you read the documents of the Central Committee in that period including *On New Democracy*, you would have understood this. This is to say that it was impossible for us to set up a bourgeois dictatorship, and we could only establish a new democracy under proletarian leadership wherein we had a people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the proletariat. For some 80 years in China, all democratic revolutions under bourgeois leadership have failed. The democratic revolution which we led was bound to triumph. This was the only road, there was no other. This was the first step, and the second step was socialism. *On New Democracy* was the only comprehensive program. It dealt with politics, economics and culture, but not with military affairs. (Kang Sheng: *On New Democracy* has had great significance on the world communist movement. I asked some Spanish comrades who said that their problem was that they undertook only bourgeois democracy, but not new democracy. They did not undertake these three things: the army, rural villages, and political power. They subjected their work entirely to the needs of the Soviet Union's foreign policy, with the result that nothing was accomplished.)

That is precisely what Chen Duxiu did.

(Comrade Kang Sheng: They [the Spanish] wanted the Communist party to organize the army and hand it over to others. This would have been useless.)

(Comrade Kang Sheng: They did not want political power and did not mobilize the peasants. The Soviet Union told them that if they set up a dictatorship of the proletariat, England and France might oppose them and this would be bad for the Soviet Union.)

How about Cuba? Cuba sought both political power and an army, and she also mobilized her peasants. For this reason she succeeded.

(Comrade Kang Sheng: When they fought, they also fought conventional battles, just like the bourgeoisie, and they made a last ditch stand in Madrid. They did everything they could to comply with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.)

The Third International had not yet been dissolved, and we did not go along with it. The Zunyi Conference did not go along with it. It was only after a decade of rectifications, at the time of the "Seventh [Party] Congress," that a decision was made ("The Decision on Certain Historical Problems") and the "leftists" were rectified. Those who were dogmatic basically [389] failed to study China's special characteristics. Although they had spent more than ten years in the rural areas, they did not study the agrarian land [tissue], the productive relations or the class relations. One cannot gain an understanding of the rural villages by simply going there. One must study the relations between various classes and strata in the rural villages. It took more than ten years before I was able to understand them. I went to tea houses and gambling joints to meet everyone and investigate them. In 1925 I set up the Institute of the Peasant Movement to conduct rural investigations. I sought out poor peasants in my native village for investigation. They had no rice to eat, and their lives were dismal. There was a peasant whom I invited to play Chinese dominos (the cards consisting of Tian, Di, Ren, He, Meijian, Changsan, and Bandeng). Afterward I invited him to dinner. Before, after and during the dinner, I talked with him, and learned how violent class struggle was in the rural villages. He was willing to talk to me because, first, I treated him like a person; secondly I invited him to eat, and thirdly he could win some money from me. I would lose to him, losing one or two silver dollars, and he was quite satisfied. There was a time when he was so desperate that he came to me to borrow one dollar. I gave him three dollars without expecting any repayment. It was impossible in those days to get any assistance which did not require repayment. My father used to feel that if a man did not look after himself, he would be damned by heaven and earth. My mother disagreed with him. When my father died, very few people came to his funeral, though many came to my mother's funeral. One time, some

members of the Gelao Society¹⁰ burglarized our home. I thought it was a good thing because they stole things which they did not have, but my mother could not accept my view.

There occurred in Changsha a riot of rice looting and they even beat up the provincial governor. There were some peddlers, all natives of Xiangxiang, who sold toasted beans in Zhangsha and were returning to their native villages. I stopped them to ask them what had happened. The Green and Red

Brotherhood in the countryside also held rallies and went out to raid the homes of some rich families. This was reported in the Shun Bao of Shanghai and troops were sent from Zhangsha to suppress them. Their discipline was poor; they robbed some middle peasants, thereby isolating themselves. One of the leaders went into hiding in the mountains, but he was captured and executed. Later, the village gentry held a meeting and killed several poor peasants. There was then no Communist party, and it was a sort of spontaneous class struggle.

Society pushed men like us onto the political stage. Who would have thought of promoting Marxism? We had never heard of it. What he have heard and read about were Confucius, Napoleon, Washington, Peter the Great, and

Meiji Reformation, the three heroes of Italy, all of whom were part and parcel of capitalism. We read also about Franklin. He was born into a poor family, but later became a writer, and experimented with electricity (Chen Boda: Franklin was the first to advance the thesis that man is the animal that makes tools.)

[390] He did mention that man is the animal that makes tools. Before it was said that man is the thinking animal, and that "The function of the mind is to think,"¹¹ thus saying that man is superior to all things. Who elected him to this post? He was self-appointed. All these theses evolved during the feudal age. Later, Marx suggested that because man can make tools, he is a social animal. Actually, it took mankind at least a million years to develop his brain and hands. Animals will develop further. I don't believe that it is only man that can have two hands, and that horses, cows and sheep won't advance anymore. Can it be that only apes can progress? Moreover, is it only one

kind of ape that can progress, while others are all incapable of evolution? Will the horses, cows and sheep of a million or ten million years from now remain the same as they are now? I think they will change. All horses, cows and sheep and insects will change. Animals have evolved from plants, such as seaweed. Even Zhang Taiyan knew about it. In his book about Kang Youwei's views on revolution, entitled: "Bo Kang Yuwei Lun Keming Shu." ("A Criticism of Kang Youwei's Views on Revolution"), he reasoned as follows. The earth was originally a dead earth, without plants, without water, and without air. It took tens of millions of years to produce water, and this water was not formed randomly from hydrogen and oxygen. Water also has had its own history. Long ago, even the two gases, hydrogen and oxygen, did not exist. It was only with the emergence of hydrogen and oxygen that it became possible for these two elements to combine to form water.

We must study the history of natural sciences. We should read books. To read for the needs of struggle is greatly different from reading aimlessly. Fu Ying¹² said that it takes millions of combinations before hydrogen and oxygen can form into water, and it is not simply a process of combining two into one. His words seem to be reasonable, and I want to talk with him about it. You must not reject everything about Fu Ying (speaking to XX).

In the past we did not deal very clearly with analysis and synthesis. We understand analysis a little better, but not much has been said about synthesis. I have asked Ai Siqu about it, and he said that now we speak only about conceptual analysis and synthesis, not objective and practical synthesis and analysis. How should we have analyzed and synthesized the Communist party and the Guomindang? The proletariat and the bourgeoisie? Landlords and peasants? The Chinese people and imperialism? In the case of the Communist party and the Guomindang, how should we have analyzed and synthesized them? Our analysis involved nothing more than how much strength, how much land, how many people, how many party members, how many troops, and how many base areas, such as Yan'an, we had. What were our weaknesses? We had

¹⁰ A secret brotherhood.

¹¹ Translator: "Mancius"

¹² A physical chemist.

no large cities, our army had only 1.2 million troops, and we had no outside help while the Kuomintang had enormous foreign aid. Comparing Yan'an with Shanghai, Yan'an had only a population of 7,000. Adding the [party] organs and the [military] units, there were some 20,000 people, and [391] it had only handicraft industry and agriculture. So how could it be compared with any large city? Our advantage was that we had the support of the people while the Guomindang had alienated them. Although they had more land, more armed forces and more arms, nevertheless, their soldiers had been conscripted forcibly, and these officers and soldiers were antagonistic. Of course, they also had some troops of considerable combat strength, and weren't easily routed. Their weakness lay in that they had been separated from the people. Whereas we aligned ourselves with the masses, they alienated them.

They spread the word that the Communist party shares property and wives and they spread it even into the primary schools. They issued a song: "There are Zhu De and Mao Zedong, who engage in slaughter and arson, and what would you do? They taught school children to sing it. Having sung the song, they would question their parents and brothers, and this resulted in their making propaganda for us. There was a child who heard the song and went to ask his father about it and the latter replied: You need not ask me; you will see for yourself once you have grown up. This was a middle-of-the-roader. He then went to ask his uncle who scolded him saying: "What do you mean, killing and arson? I'd beat you if you insist on asking me again." It so happened that his uncle had been a member of the Communist Youth League. All the newspapers and radio stations scolded us. There were many newspapers, with a score or more in each city. Each party or faction had a paper, and they were all anti-Communist. Did the common people listen to them? Not on your life! All that has happened in China, we have experienced. China is a "sparrow." Even in foreign countries, there are bound to be rich people and poor people, counter-revolutionary and revolutionary and Marxist-Leninists and revisionists. Don't you dare believe that everybody will believe the counter-revolutionary propaganda and rise up against us. We read the newspapers, do we

not, and yet we haven't been influenced by them.

I have read *Dream of the Red Chamber* five times, but haven't been influenced by it because I regarded it as history. In the beginning, I read it as a story, and later as history. In reading *Dream of The Red Chamber*, nobody seems to have paid any attention to its 4th chapter which, in fact, is a general outline of the entire book. There was Long Zixing who told stories in the home of the Rongguo family, setting them to verse and adding his own commentary. The fourth chapter, entitled "The Gourd Monk Decides the Case of the Gourd," makes mention of official protection, with specific references being made to the four affluent families. There was Jia Bujia whose home was made of white jade and decorated with horses made of gold. The Shi family of Jinling [Nanjing] was so large that they needed more than their Afang Palace, which itself extended for hundreds of miles. If the dragon king of the East Sea needed a white jade bed, he would request it from the Wang family of Jinling. In bountiful years much snow (Xue) [the fourth family] would fall, and precious gems and gold were as plentiful as earth and iron.¹³ *Dream of the Red Chamber* mentions each of the four affluent families. The class struggle seen in *Dream of the Red Chamber* is very violent, and many scores of [392] people lost their lives, of which only 20 or 30 (someone has counted 33) were from the ruling class, the rest, some 300 in number, being slaves, such as Yuanyang, Sichi, You Erjie and You Sanjie, etc. If one does not discuss history from the point of view of class struggle, his perceptions of history will not be very clear. It is only by using class analysis that it [history] can be analyzed clearly. Although *Dream of the Red Chamber* was written more than 200 years ago, those who have studied it have not yet understood it, thus showing how difficult is the problem. Both You Pingbo and Wang Kunlun were specialists, while He Chichang has also written a preface. There is also Wu Shichang. These are new experts on *Dream of the Red Chamber* discounting the old ones, Cai Yuanpei's views on

¹³ Translator's note: this elliptical passage is structured around a primitive rhyme scheme, and it contains several puns which defy translation.

Dream of the Red Chamber are incorrect, and Hu Shi's approach is better

How does one synthesize? The Guomindang and the Communist party being two opposites, you have seen how they have been synthesized on the mainland and it went like this: When their troops came, we swallowed them up, piece by piece. This is not Yang Xianzhen's theory of combining two into one; nor is it a synthesis of peaceful coexistence. They do not want peaceful coexistence, they want to eat us up. Otherwise, why would they have attacked Yan'an? Their troops ran all over Northern Shaanxi, except for three counties on the three borders. You have your freedom and we have ours. You had 250,000 men and we had 25,000 just a few brigades, and some 20,000 soldiers. Let's analyze how it was synthesized. Wherever you wanted to go, you went, and we ate up your army one bite at a time. If we could win, we fought; if not, we ran. There was a whole army which was completely wiped out between March 1947 and March 1948, after we eliminated tens of thousands of their troops. Yichuan was surrounded by us, and when Liu Kan, an army commander, came to reinforce their troops, he was killed. Two of his division commanders were killed, the third was captured, and his entire army was routed. This was a case of synthesis. All his rifles, artillery and troops were synthesized i.e., absorbed by our side. Those who wanted to stay with us did so, while those who were unwilling to stay were given traveling expenses. After eliminating Liu Kan, a brigade in the city of Yichuan surrendered without fighting. What was the synthesis in the three great battles of Liaoshen, Pingjin and Huaihai? Fu Zuoyi had thus been synthesized, and all of his 400,000 troops surrendered their arms without firing a shot.

One eats one and the big fish devours the smaller; this is synthesis. This has never been written in the books; it is not written in my books. Yang Xianzhen came out with his combining two into one, saying that synthesis is the linking together of two inseparable things. What kind of link is there in the world that cannot be separated? There are links, but they can always be separated. There is nothing that is inseparable. We have worked for more than two decades, and many of us have been swallowed by the enemy. When the 300,000 troops of the Red Army reached the Shaanxi-Gansu-

Ningxia border region, only 25,000 remained, all others had been eaten, routed, killed or wounded.

[393] It is necessary to discuss unity of opposites on the basis of life. (Comrade Kang Sheng: It won't do to merely discuss concepts.)

There should be synthesis when one analyzes; there should be analysis when one synthesizes.

When man eats animals and vegetables he first makes some analysis.

Why doesn't he eat sand? If there is sand in rice, then it is not good to eat. Why won't man eat the grass which horses, cows and sheep consume, and eats only such vegetables as cabbages, etc. Such decisions are based on analysis. Shen Nong¹⁴ tasted a hundred kinds of herbs, thereby making medicinal prescriptions. After many thousands of years, we have analyzed what can be eaten, and what cannot. Grasshoppers, snakes and turtles are edible; so are crabs, dogs and eels. Some foreigners won't eat them. People of North Shaanxi won't eat eels or fish; nor do they eat cats. There was a big flood along the Yellow

River one year, and tens of thousands catfishes of fish were flushed onto the riverbanks, all of which were eventually made into fertilizer.

Mine is a native philosophy, and yours is foreign philosophy.

(Comrade Kang Sheng: Chairman would you please talk about the problem of the three categories?)

Engels spoke about the three categories, but I don't believe two of them (unity of opposites is the most basic law; transmutation between quality and quantity is the unity of opposites between quality and quantity, but there is basically no negation of negation.) To take the laws of transmutation between quality and quantity, negation of negation, and unity of opposites together is the trinomial, not the monistic theory. What is most basic is the unity of opposites. Transmutation between quality and quantity is unity of opposites between quality and quantity. There is no such thing as the negation of negation. Affirmation, negation, affirmation, negation... in the development of things, there is in each phase both affirmation and negation. When slave society negated

¹⁴ Legendary founder of Chinese agriculture and medicine.

primitive society, it was affirmation in regard to feudal society. Feudal society was a negation of slave society, and affirmation of capitalist society. Capitalist society was a negation of feudal society, and also an affirmation of socialist society.

How does one synthesize? Could it have been that primitive society and slave society coexisted? There was coexistence, but only to a limited degree.

In the last analysis, primitive society had to be eliminated. There were also stages of social development, primitive society being divided into several stages. There were then still no sacrifices of women at burials, but they had to obey the men. At first, it was the men who obeyed the women, but it was then reversed and women obeyed men. There were a million or more years during which this stage of history was confused. Class society has been in existence less than 5,000 years. There were the so-called Longshan and Yuanshao cultures, the last stage of primitive society which featured pottery.

[394] In short, one ate another, one overthrew another, one class was eliminated another class arose, one society was eliminated, and another society arose! Of course, the process of development was not completely pure. The slave system was still maintained in feudal society, but it was primarily a feudal system. There were some serfs, as well as industrial slaves, such as those engaged in handicrafts. Even capitalist society is not so pure and no matter how advanced capitalist society may be, there are also some backward portion like the slavery in the southern part of the United States, Although Lincoln eliminated slavery, there are still Negro slaves and the struggle is rather violent. Some 20 million people are taking part in it, by no means a small number.

One eliminates another, growing, developing, and eliminating, this is true for all things. If one does not eliminate others, one will be eliminated himself. Why must man die? Even the nobility must also die. This is a natural law. The life of a forest is longer than human life, but it does not exceed a few thousand years. It won't do for there to be no death. If we could still see Confucius today, the earth would not be able to contain all mankind. I go along with Zhuangzi's way of beating a basin and singing when his wife passed away. When someone

dies, a celebration rally should be held to celebrate the victory of dialectics and the elimination of old things. Even socialism must die, for if it does not, there will be no communism. Communism will also last many millions of years. I don't believe that there won't be qualitative change in communism and that it won't pass through stages of qualitative change! I won't believe it! Quantity changes to quality, and quality changes to quantity. I cannot believe that a specific characteristic can go on for a millions of years without undergoing some change. According to dialectics, this is inconceivable. Take one principle for example: "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs." After one million years, this would become a kind of economics. Do you believe this a have you thought about it? When that day comes, you won't need economists, since a textbook would do, and even dialectics would then be dead.

The life of dialectics is that it continues to head toward its opposite. Mankind will eventually reach its doomsday. When theologians talk about doomsday, it is pessimism used to scare people. When we speak about the destruction of mankind, we are saying that something more advanced than mankind will be produced. Man as we know him is very unsophisticated. Engels says that one must proceed from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom, freedom being understood in comparison with necessity. This sentence is not complete in that he has only mentioned half of it, without telling what comes next. Can one be free by merely understanding what is meant by freedom? Freedom is the understanding as well as the transformation of necessity. One has to work at it. It won't do to merely understand what is meant by freedom. After one has found the rules, one must be able to apply them, by doing pioneer work, by breaking the earth, building houses, opening mines, and developing industries. When the population grows in the future a food becomes insufficient, it will be necessary to extract food from minerals and this is the sort of transformation which will bring freedom. Will it be so free in the future? Lenin has said that in the future there will be as [395] many airplanes in the sky as flies, and what will happen if they become so rampant that they crash into each other? How will they be regulated and will there be that much free-

dom if they are so regulated. There are now about 10,000 buses in Beijing, while in Tokyo there are some 100,000 (or is it 800,000?) and so they have plenty of automobile accidents. We have fewer vehicles, and moreover we educate our drivers and the people, and so we have fewer accidents.

What will Beijing be like 10,000 years from now? Will there be only 10,000 buses? New things will be invented. These tools of communication won't be needed, and men will be able to fly about by means of some sort of simple apparatus. One would be able to fly anywhere and land anywhere. Thus, it is not enough to simply understand necessity, but one must be able to transform it. I don't believe that there will be no division of stages in a communist society, and that there will be no qualitative changes. Lenin said that everything can be divided. Citing the atom as an example, he said that not only atoms are divisible, but electrons can also be divided. Nonetheless, it was deemed as indivisible before. The science of the fission of the nucleus is still relatively young, being only 20 or 30 years old. In the last few decades, scientists have analyzed the nucleus of atoms in which were found neutrons, antineutrons, mesotrons and anti-mesotrons. These are heavy, and there are also lighter ones. They were discovered primarily during and after World War II.

The fissionability of electrons and atomic nuclei, was known long ago. In electric wire, copper and aluminum are used to separate external electrons.

In the air at about 300 li above the earth, the ionosphere has been discovered where electrons and atomic nuclei are separated. There is as yet no fission of electrons, but the day will certainly come when there will be. Chuang Tzu said: "If one takes away half of a footlong hammer every day, there will be no end to it even after ten thousand generations." (Zhuang Zi: Tienxia Bian, quoting Gongsun and Longzi) This is true. If you don't believe it, you can try, and if it is exhaustible, then it is not science. Things are always developing, and this process goes on endlessly. Time and space are infinite. In space, both macrocosms and microcosms are infinite and indivisible.

This is why scientists will always have work to do, even after one million years. I really

enjoyed Soichi Sakata's¹⁵ article on basic particles in the Natural Sciences Research Bulletin. I have never before seen such an article. He is a dialectical materialist and has quoted from Lenin: "The shortcoming of philosophers is that they do not engage in practical philosophy, and what they do is bookish philosophy."

We must bring out new things; otherwise, what would we do? And what would those that follow us do? New things exist in practical things, and so it is necessary to grasp practical things. Is Ren Jiyou really a Marxist? I really enjoyed his articles on Buddhism. He seems to be very learned and was Tang Yungtong's student. He discussed only the Buddhism of the Tang Dynasty, but not later Buddhism. The rational philosophy of the Sung Dynasty developed from the Chan (Zen) school of Buddhism of the Tang Dynasty, and this represents a move from subjective idealism to objective idealism. It will not do to delve into such matters [396] as Buddhism and Daoism without acquiring an appreciation of all that is entailed. How can we disregard him [Ren]? Han You¹⁶ would not talk of reason. His slogan was "one should learn only the meaning, not the words". He borrowed this idea from the writings of others. He did not talk of reason and what little he talked about was based primarily on what the ancients had said. Other of his writings, such as the *Shi Shuo [A Discussion of Teachers]* had something new to offer. Liu Zihou¹⁷ was different, because he steeped himself in Buddhism, the teachings of Laozi, and Daoism as well as materialism. Nonetheless, his *Heaven's Answers (Tiendui)* was too brief. His *Heaven's Answers* was developed from Chu Yuan's *Questions Put To Heaven (Tianwen)*. During the past several thousand years, he has been the only person who wrote such a piece as *Heaven's Answers*. What was said in *Questions Put to Heaven* and *Heaven's Answers*? It was not explained clearly and they are impossible to comprehend, and I have only a general idea as to what they are supposed to be about. *Questions Put to Heaven* is remarkable in that it raised all kinds of questions concerning the universal nature, and history as early as several thousand years ago.

¹⁵ Japanese physicist, 1911-1970.

¹⁶ A Tang poet.

¹⁷ Liu Zangyuan, a Tang Dynasty poet.

(In regard to the discussion of the question of combining two into one), the *Red Flag* may

reprint some better articles and write a report.