

Mao Tse-tung's Understanding of the Political World: With an accent on the phenomenological method.

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I

This paper is an effort to understand the nature of the political world by examining Mao Tse-tung's own understanding of the political world. My view is that the essence of the political world lies in the practical life-the life as praxis and as subjective doing. I posit the political world as the world of subjective doings and accordingly I posit that an understanding of the political world must return to these subjective doings and investigate and open up their underlying meanings. In other words, my paper claims that an understanding of the political world is impossible without grasping the meaning of the subjective doings, without considering the perceiving and intending subjectivity which performs its concrete life and actualizes its own subjective doings. In this respect, my paper regards Aristotle's method of studying politics, i.e., the practical learning "from experts, namely the politicians"⁽¹⁾ as one of the most important ways for the proper return to the very subject matter of politics, praxis, the subjectivity of which achieves upon "reflection"⁽²⁾ scientific knowledge.

(1) Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. by H. Rackham (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Univ. Press, 1962), p. 639 (1180b31)

(2) Here, the paper accepts Husserl's view that science or "absolutely autonomous science" is possible only by means of critical self-reflection." See, Edmund Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, tr. by Q. Lauer (N.Y.: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 71; his, "Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man," in *ibid.*, pp. 188, 189, 190-191; his, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental*

According to Aristotle, political science belongs to "practical science" (praktike) whose "end is not to attain a theoretic knowledge of the various subjects, but rather to carry out our theories in action."⁽³⁾ Or, more correctly, political science is "practical" in the sense that the "scientific knowledge of politics" requires both "practical experience as well as study," that is, practice and reflection. So, Aristotle sees in the sophists' teachings of politics a crisis of political science, because they separate politics from its very subject matter, praxis, and identify politics with, or class it even as inferior to, "the art of rhetoric." Aristotle says that:

in politics the sophists, who profess to teach the science, never practise it. It is practised by the politicians, who would appear to rely more upon a sort of empirical skill than on the exercise of abstract intelligence:..... Yet we should expect them (i.e., politicians) to have done so had they been able, for they could have bequeathed no more valuable legacy to their countries, nor is there any quality they would choose for themselves, and therefore for those nearest to them, to possess, in preference to political capacity. Not that experience does not seem to contribute considerably to political success; otherwise men would never have become statesmen merely through practical experience as well as study. On the other hand sophists who profess to teach politics are found to be very far from doing so successfully. In fact they are absolutely ignorant of the very nature of the science and of the subjects with which it deals; otherwise they would not class it as identical, or even inferior to, the art of rhetoric.⁽⁴⁾

I see a similar crisis in contemporary political science, namely the separation of political theory from political practice and identification of politics with "the technique of control of human behavior." Thus, I attempt to overcome the modern crisis of political science by accepting Aristotle's

Phenomenology: *An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, ed., by David Can (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1970), pp.71-72; his, *The Idea of Phenomenology*, tr. by W.P. Alston and G. Nakhnikian (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), p.14.

(3) Aristotle, *op. cit.*, p.629 (1179b2).

(4) *Ibid.*, pp.639-641 (1180b32-1181a16).

method of practical learning, the learning of politics through experience and reflection upon this experience, and to develop his method into political phenomenology. So, in the present study of Chinese politics, the paper takes up the political practitioner, Mao Tse-tung, and examines his subjective perceptions of and practical intentions in the political world, that is, the whole of his political understanding, as its primal data. In this sense, the paper represents the opposite of all kinds of historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological and ecological approaches belonging to the sciences of the natural sort, which posit the social and political world as factual world out there. Rather the paper views the social and political world which has sprung up within perceiving and intending subjectivity, as the world which is constituted, in its essence, out of human subjectivity.

II

To begin with, the examination of Mao Tse-tung's own understanding of the political world implies, in a sense, a *suspensio* or *epochē* of our doxic understanding of Mao Tse-tung, which we have held so far. Rather, the effort to examine Mao Tse-tung's own understanding of the political world must be understood as an effort to arise from our own mundane way of viewing Mao Tse-tung, toward a pure seeing of Mao Tse-tung and to get into the essence of his perceptions and intentions. This means that we have, first of all, to put our interests, prejudices or beliefs, that is, all kinds of our opinions (*doxa*) and presuppositions and all the ontic validity based on such opinions (*doxa*) and presuppositions, into the "bracket" and to see our opinions as our opinions and our presuppositions as our presuppositions. Only then, we could arise from our opinions and presuppositions toward the genuine understanding of Mao Tse-tung. Here, the question is: What are those opinions we actually have held about Mao Tse-tung?; or, How has Mao Tse-tung actually been reflected upon by his surrounding-world (*Um-welt*)? In this paper, however, the question would be put more

specifically. The paper will examine, as two typical opposing views, the view held by the Chinese Communists themselves, i.e., Mao's party and his supposed successor, Lin Piao, and that of Chiang Kai-shek, his old political opponent. Then, we will turn to our main subject matter, Mao Tse-tung's own political understanding.

According to the "Resolution of Some Questions in the History of Our Party" which was adopted at the enlarged plenary session of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on April 20, 1945, "Mao Tse-tung' theory of and his practical work in the Chinese revolution form an example" of "the integration of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of the Chinese revolution,"⁽⁵⁾ Mao Tse-tung applied "the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism, to the big, semi-feudal and semi-colonial country of China" and developed "Stalin's teachings on the Chinese revolution"⁽⁶⁾; Mao Tse-tung, it says, "has emphasized the application of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism in the investigation and study of the actual conditions of Chinese society"; he "stressed again and again the truth, 'no investigation, no right to speak,' and fought again and again the danger of doctrinairism and subjectivism"⁽⁷⁾; Mao Tse-tung "provided in a more specific and comprehensive way the scientific basis of Marxism-Leninism for the orientation of the Chinese revolution"⁽⁸⁾; he laid down the "correct aspect" of the "political," "military" and "organizational"⁽⁹⁾ line based upon "practical work."⁽¹⁰⁾ In a word, Mao Tse-tung "took a big stride forward in the creative application of the revolutionary theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin to the actual condition in China."⁽¹¹⁾ Here, the Resolution calls on Communists who "live and fight in China" to

(5) Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Work* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1959), Vol. IV p. 171.

(6) *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 207.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 177.

(9) *Ibid.*, pp. 177, 188, 202, 206.

(10) *Ibid.*, pp. 177, 197.

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 174.

"adhere to the course set by comrade Mao Tse-tung" and to "study dialectical materialism and historical materialism...for the purpose of applying them, as comrade Mao Tse-tung does, to investigate and solve the actual problems of the Chinese revolution."⁽¹²⁾

This view on Mao's theory and practice as "an example" of "the integration of the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of the Chinese revolution" and as "a big stride forward" of "the revolutionary theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin" is now more succinctly and eloquently restated by Lin Piao. Lin says:

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's great merit lies in the fact that he has succeeded in integrating the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution and has enriched and developed Marxism-Leninism by his mastery generalization and summation of the experience gained during the Chinese people's protracted revolutionary struggle.⁽¹³⁾

And, Lin brings out one further point: Mao Tse-tung's thought has not grown spontaneously from among the working people; it is rather the result of Chairman Mao's inheriting and developing with great talent the ideas of Marxism-Leninism on the basis of great revolutionary practice."⁽¹⁴⁾ Here, Lin emphasizes the fact that Mao "has comprehensively inherited and developed the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat."⁽¹⁵⁾ This means that Mao's thought comprises in it two important elements, that is, the "inheritance" of Marx's and Marxists' ideas and, at the same time, the "development" of their ideas. In the first, Mao, Lin claims, is the greatest heir and the strongest defender of the Marxist-Leninist tradition of the era, opposing any opportunism of revisionism; "Comrade Mao Tse-tung is the greatest

(12) *Ibid.*, p. 208, 216.

(13) K. Fan, ed., *Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao: Post-Revolutionary Writings* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1972), pp. 391, 399, 450.

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 414.

(15) *Ibid.*, p. 498.

Marxist-Leninist of our era" and his "thought is Marxism-Leninism of the era" ⁽¹⁶⁾; his "line is a Marxist-Leninist line, different from opportunist line of every type" and the "firm, Marxist-Leninist revolutionary spirit is precisely an outstanding characteristic of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary line" ⁽¹⁷⁾; Mao has fought against "the Right and 'Left' opportunist line in the Party" ⁽¹⁸⁾ and he still wages "a tit-for-tat struggle against modern revisionism with the Soviet revisionist renegade clique as its centre" ⁽¹⁹⁾; so, "it is our present important fighting task," Lin urges, "to arm our minds with Mao Tse-tung's thought, to defend the purity of Marxism-Leninism and combat every form of ideological trend of modern revisionism." ⁽²⁰⁾ Secondly, Mao, Lin continues, has not only "inherited and defended" but also creatively "developed" Marxism-Leninism" in the political, military, economic, cultural and philosophical spheres, and has brought Marxism-Leninism to a higher and completely new stage." ⁽²¹⁾ Mao initiated "Marxist scientific method of investigating and studying social condition" ⁽²²⁾; he "creatively developed the Marxist-Leninist strategic and tactical ideas of a people's revolutionary war" ⁽²³⁾; he made "an epoch-making creative development of Leninism" on "the question of consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and preventing the restoration of capitalism" ⁽²⁴⁾ by initiating "the first great proletariat cultural revolution in history" ⁽²⁵⁾; as a result, "Marxism-Leninism has developed to the stage of Mao Tse-tung's thought." ⁽²⁶⁾ Here, "Mao Tse-tung's thought is the banner of our era" ⁽²⁷⁾; it "marks a completely new state in the development of Marxism-Leninism.

(16) *Ibid.*, pp. 415, 450, 475, 498.

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 355.

(18) *Ibid.*, p. 451.

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 424.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 356.

(21) *Ibid.*, pp. 450, 359, 366, 399, 414, 415, 424, 498, 508.

(22) *Ibid.*, p. 430.

(23) *Ibid.*, pp. 345, 355-356, 359, 360-361, 386.

(24) *Ibid.*, pp. 499, 424, 498, 508.

(25) *Ibid.*, pp. 500, 489, 493.

(26) *Ibid.*, p. 500.

(27) *Loc. cit.*

It is Marxism-Leninism of the present era for remolding the souls of the people," (28)

Chiang Kai-shek, however, views Maoism quite differently. He characterizes Maoism as simply "Stalinism." "The so-called 'Maoism' was but a Chinese version of Stalinism, while 'Mao Tse-tung's monolithic leadership' was but a Chinese reflection of Stalin's dictatorship." (29) Furthermore, Chiang holds that Maoism or "Mao's Communism, which has now become an orphaned spiritual son of Stalin," (30) is not an orthodox Communism at all. Though "Mao has styled himself the successor to orthodox Communism and to Marxist, Leninist and Stalinist thinking," (31) Mao "seeks to emasculate Marxism-Leninism and to usurp and negate Marxist-Leninist ideology. Who could regard Mao's party as one of Communist and Marxist-Leninist ideology?" (32) Mao, by "identifying the Communist International and the Communist bloc as his supreme antagonists, 'has even' shamelessly turned his back on his erst-while comrades and is seeking their destruction." (33) Here, Chiang declares; "The traitor Mao is wickedness personified" (34); he "incarnates all that is evil and brutal," revolting "against the whole world" and stirring up "endless troubles." (35) So, Chiang calls upon the whole Chinese people to march toward "the Mao-Suppression and National Salvation United Front." (36)

Now, we actually stand right in the middle of hectic controversies between

(28) *Ibid.*, p. 475.

(29) Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China* (N.Y.: Farnar, Straus and Cudahy, 1958), p. 116.

(30) Chiang Kai-shek, *President Chiang Kai-shek's selected Speeches and Messages in 1964* (Republic of China: Government Information Office, 1964), pp. 64, 4.

(31) *Ibid.*, p. 65.

(32) Chiang Kai-shek, *President Chiang Kai-shek's Selected Speeches and Messages in 1969* (Republic of China: Government Information Office, 1969), pp. 5, 4.

(33) *Ibid.*, p. 5.

(34) *Ibid.*, p. 40.

(35) Chiang Kai-shek, *President Chang Kai-shek's Selected Speeches and Messages in 1971* (Republic of China: Government Information Office, 1969), pp. 8, 10, 23-24.

(36) *Selected Speeches in 1969, op. cit.*, p. 1, 13, 31, 34.

two opposing opinions and conflicting interpretations. Such controversies, however, are, as Leo Strauss profounds, the essential characteristics of political life: "political life is characterized by controversies between groups struggling for power within the political community."⁽³⁷⁾ And this paper puts all these controversies into the "bracket" and turns directly to Mao Tse-tung himself. In other words, the paper takes as its primal data Mao Tse-tung him-"self", viz., his perceptions and intentions, and seeks and investigates a teleological connection or unity in his whole political perceptions and intentions; because, only by turning to Mao's perceptions and intentions, we can find the way to arise from our mundane way of viewing Mao Tse-tung and have a pure seeing of the essence of Mao's political ideas. So, the paper de-operationalizes all kinds of our previous opinions and presuppositions which are not grounded on Mao's own perceptions and intentions; it puts all these opinions and presuppositions out of action and out of operation and submits them to epochē. This means that we must disconnect Mao Tse-tung from all kinds of historical, sociological, anthropological, psychological and ecological contexts and put the pure essence of Mao Tse-tung and only this essence, which, despite all the epochē and disconnection, still remains as the genuine self of Mao Tse-tung, in the immediate center of our focus. Only then, We can reach a genuine understanding of Mao Tse-tung.

III

Mao says: "By Marxism we mean the living Marxism that can have practical bearing on the life and struggle of the masses and not Marxism in words."⁽³⁸⁾ Here, for Mao, the fundamental standpoint of Marxism is "the standpoint of life, of practice."⁽³⁹⁾ The world of Marxism is the world

(37) Leo Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1959), p. 90.

(38) Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Vol. IV., op. cit., p. 74.

(39) Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, (N.Y.: International Publishers, 1954), Vol. I, p. 293.

of "practice"; the "practice of life in the world" is, for Mao, what Marxism is essentially concerned with. Then, what is meant by practice? Let's turn to this fundamental point of Mao's thought, namely, to his conception of practice.

According to Mao, practice or social practice means the activity of changing reality. But it is not the mere act of changing reality, but the "active" participation in reality for the sake of its change, the "active" involvement of self in "the process of change in the objective world."⁽⁴⁰⁾ Practice is "active," in the sense that the change of reality is performed by applying one's whole self by applying the self's whole consciousness and knowledge about the world to the world. Thus, practice is "actively changing the world by applying the knowledge of its objective laws."⁽⁴¹⁾ It is actively changing the reality of a thing by involving one's self in the "experience" of the thing, that is, by "coming into contact with" the thing and "living (practising) in its surroundings."⁽⁴²⁾ It is directed application of self "towards changing objective reality on the basis of definite ideas, theories, plans or programmes"⁽⁴³⁾ i.e., on the basis of the essence of self, its knowledge. At the same time, man acquires knowledge and develops it to a more comprehensive understanding through practice, through participation in "the practice of changing a certain objective process at a certain stage of its development (whether changing a natural or social process)."⁽⁴⁴⁾ Or, one can never disclose the essence of the reality and understand it, without "the practical struggle to change reality, in which he personally participates."⁽⁴⁵⁾ So, according to Mao, we must participate in the practice of changing reality in order to gain knowledge.

If you want to gain knowledge you must participate in the practice of

(40) Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 294.

(41) *Ibid.*, p. 292.

(42) *Ibid.*, pp. 286, 287, 289, 290, 291, 292.

(43) *Ibid.*, p. 296.

(44) *Ibid.*, pp. 287, 293-294.

(45) *Ibid.*, pp. 289-290.

changing reality. If you want to know the taste of a pear you must change the pear by eating it yourself. If you want to know the composition and properties of atoms you must make experiments in physics and chemistry to change the state of atoms. If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must participate in revolution. ⁽⁴⁶⁾

For Mao, "practice" and "knowledge" constitute one unity; they are inseparable in real world: knowledge is the principle of practice and practice is the source of knowledge. And through the cyclical repetition of "practice" and "knowledge," and of "more practice" and "more knowledge," man elevates "the content of practice and knowledge to a higher level." And in this "unity of knowing and doing," Mao says, consists "the whole of the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge" ⁽⁴⁷⁾ This means that, for the understanding of Mao's conception of practice, we must understand his theory of knowledge.

Knowledge, according to Mao, are constructions of "impressions" of things, "together with idea of the general external relations between these impressions" and of those "concepts" or "conceptions," "judgments" and "inferences" about internal relations of things based on such "impressions" and "idea." In other words, for Mao, knowledge are two kinds: "perceptual" knowledge or "knowledge of phenomena" and "logical" or "rational" knowledge or "knowledge of essence." In the first, perceptual knowledge is that kind of knowledge which arises from perceptual practice or experience, that is, from "the perception through man's physical sense organs of the objective world surrounding him." ⁽⁴⁸⁾ And, man, through this "perceptual experience" ⁽⁴⁹⁾ or "perception"—that is, through the contact with the things of the external world" ⁽⁵⁰⁾—acquires "impressions" of things, the "idea" of external relations between these impressions and thus the knowledge about "the phenomena of things, the separate aspects of things, the external rela-

(46) *Ibid.*, p. 287, 288.

(47) *Ibid.*, p. 297.

(48) *Ibid.*, p. 288.

(49) *Ibid.*, pp. 290, 291.

(50) *Ibid.*, p. 290.

tions such things.”⁽⁵¹⁾ In other words, perceptual knowledge “reflect certain real things of the objective world; “however, they are merely fragmentary and superficial, reflecting things incompletely instead of representing their essence.”⁽⁵²⁾ At this stage, man cannot “form profound concepts or draw conclusions that conform with logic.”⁽⁵³⁾ In this sense, perceptual knowledge belongs to “the first stage of knowledge.”⁽⁵⁴⁾ “the lower stage,”⁽⁵⁵⁾ or “a minor process of knowledge (e.g. knowing a single thing or task).”⁽⁵⁶⁾ In short, “(p)erception only solves the problem of phenomena”⁽⁵⁷⁾; so, at the perceptual stage, knowledge are just “knowledge of phenomena.”

In the second, however, there is a higher form of knowledge, which embraces “the wholeness, the essence and the internal relations of things, discloses the internal contradictions of the surrounding world in its totality, in the internal relations between all its aspects.”⁽⁵⁸⁾ This is “logical knowledge”⁽⁵⁹⁾ or “rational knowledge,”⁽⁶⁰⁾ which appears at “the higher stage”⁽⁶¹⁾ or at “the second stage of knowledge.”⁽⁶²⁾ But, at this “rational stage,”⁽⁶³⁾ knowledge as such “no longer represent the phenomena of things,”⁽⁶⁴⁾ but reflect “essence” or “a thing in its totality,” in “its essence” and in “its inherent laws.”⁽⁶⁵⁾ In other words, logical or rational knowledge do not arise directly from perceptions but from “thought” and from “reflection” upon these perceptions;⁽⁶⁶⁾ they are the results, unlike perceptual

(51) *Ibid.*, pp. 284, 284-285, 286, 289.

(52) *Ibid.*, pp. 291, 289.

(53) *Ibid.*, p. 285.

(54) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 291.

(55) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(56) *Ibid.*, p. 292.

(57) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(58) *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286, 287, 290, 291.

(59) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(60) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 290, 291, 292, 293.

(61) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(62) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 290, 292.

(63) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 291.

(64) *Ibid.*, p. 285.

(65) *Ibid.*, p. 291.

(66) *Ibid.*, 285, 294.

knowledge, of mind's "own subjective activity"⁽⁶⁷⁾ or of the "leap" of reason which takes place "in man's mind."⁽⁶⁸⁾ Man, first, transforms the perceptual data into "conception," "judgment" and "inference"⁽⁶⁹⁾ through "reflection of the objective process in his thought"; then, he brings forth, upon the basis of these conception, judgment and inference, "ideas, theories, plans or programmes which on the whole correspond to the laws of that objective process."⁽⁷⁰⁾ And "conception, judgment and inference" constitute "the stage of rational knowledge"⁽⁷¹⁾ and, through them, men "come into contact with the essence of things (their qualities and the internal relations between one thing and another)."⁽⁷²⁾ In this sense, rational knowledge is "knowledge of essence"; and only in rational knowledge, men can reach essence, because "reason alone solves the problem of essence."⁽⁷³⁾ Then, Mao says: "The dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge is that rational knowledge depends upon perceptual knowledge and perceptual knowledge has yet to be developed into rational knowledge."⁽⁷⁴⁾ This means that rational knowledge, when separated from perceptual knowledge, becomes "merely subjective feeling" and thus "spontaneous and unreliable" knowledge,⁽⁷⁵⁾ while perceptual knowledge, without being developed into rational knowledge, lacks comprehensive understanding of "the entire objective process"⁽⁷⁶⁾; so that the two stages of knowledge, i.e., perceptual and rational stages of knowledge, can not be separated each other or should "belong to a single process of knowledge."⁽⁷⁷⁾ Accordingly, Mao rejects both empiricism and rationalism, insists on the unity of perceptual and rational knowledge⁽⁷⁸⁾ and finds in

(67) *Ibid.*, p. 294.

(68) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 286, 290-291.

(69) *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 290, 291.

(70) *Ibid.*, p. 294.

(71) *Ibid.*, p. 285.

(72) *Ibid.*, p. 290.

(73) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(74) *Ibid.*, p. 292.

(75) *Ibid.*, pp. 284, 290, 291.

(76) *Ibid.*, p. 292.

(77) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(78) *Ibid.*, pp. 290, 291, 292.

the "development" of knowledge the solution to this unity. He sees in the "development of perceptual knowledge into rational knowledge" their true "unity." Now, Mao turns to the development of rational knowledge. He says: "(t)he real task of knowledge is to arrive at thought through perception, at a gradual understanding of the internal contradictions of objective things, their laws and the internal relations of various processes, that is, logical knowledge."⁽⁷⁹⁾ And, it is "practice," Mao asserts, that achieves such a development; development of knowledge is essentially the development attained through practice, through "a rearrangement or a reconstruction" of "the data of perception,"⁽⁸⁰⁾ through the activity of "subjecting the abundant perceptual data to a process of remodelling and reconstructing-discarding the crude and selecting the refined, eliminating the false and retaining the true, proceeding from one point to another, and going through the outside into the inside"⁽⁸¹⁾; development is the very activity of practice, the activity of changing perceptual reality into conception, judgment and inference for the construction of ideas, theories, plans or programmes. As a result, perception and reason find their unity in practice; "perception and reason are different in nature, but not separate from each other; they are united on the basis of practice."⁽⁸²⁾ In short, for Mao, practice is the source of all knowledge: first, it gives rise to man's perceptual knowledge, to "the acquisition of perceptual experience from the objective world surrounding him";⁽⁸³⁾ then, it transforms perceptual knowledge into rational knowledge and into "a system of concepts and theories."⁽⁸⁴⁾ So, "human knowledge," Mao contends, "cannot separate the least bit from practice."⁽⁸⁵⁾

(79) *Ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

(80) *Ibid.*, p. 290.

(81) *Ibid.*, p. 291.

(82) *Ibid.*, p. 286.

(83) *Ibid.*, p. 291.

(84) *Loc. cit.*

(85) *Ibid.*, p. 284.

IV

Mao's theory of knowledge, however, does not stop here. Actually it cannot stop at "rational knowledge"; because the whole intention of Mao's theory of knowledge is not knowing but doing, not theory but practice, not explaining but changing; his intention is to take "the leap from rational knowledge to revolutionary practice,"⁽⁸⁶⁾ to bring the practice of changing reality into the whole world and to commit the whole consciousness and its knowledge to the remoulding work of the world. Mao's theory of knowledge has to be redirected from rational knowledge to social practice. So, the question is: How is it possible for knowledge which "starts with practice" and "reached the theoretical plane via practice,"⁽⁸⁷⁾ to turn again to practice and to take a leap to action? How can knowledge be transformed into self-transcending knowledge, which goes beyond itself toward practice? It is, according to Mao, man's desire which "wants to achieve success in his work, that is to achieve the anticipated results" and thus to verify itself according to the "objective result in social practice"⁽⁸⁸⁾ that causes knowledge to go beyond itself toward practice. The desire for "the success of work" in the objective world causes "the active leap" of knowledge to practice, redirects rational knowledge to social practice and transforms "subjective things" into "objective things."⁽⁸⁹⁾ And, knowledge, through its leap to practice, finds its incorrectness and incompleteness, and rectifies them for the better success.⁽⁹⁰⁾ This is the way along which knowledge develops and through which knowledge returns to practice.⁽⁹¹⁾

Now, for Mao, practice is the first principle of the theory of knowledge.

(86) *Ibid.*, p. 293.

(87) *Ibid.*, p. 292.

(88) *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

(89) *Ibid.*, pp. 292-294.

(90) *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

(91) *Ibid.*, pp. 292-295.

So, he says: "The viewpoint of practice is the first and basic viewpoint in the theory of knowledge of dialectical materialism."⁽⁹²⁾ This means that Mao brings practice to the center of the world, the world as "the concrete and historical unity of the subjective and the objective, of theory and practice, and of knowing and doing";⁽⁹³⁾ it is man's knowledge which is dependent on man's "practice"; and it is man's "practice" which determines the truth of man's knowledge-only practice can verify knowledge. To sum up: practice is not merely the primary source of knowledge; it is also the ultimate determining foundation of truth of knowledge, the criterion of "judging the trueness of one's knowledge or theory";⁽⁹⁴⁾ practice is not merely the efficient cause working at the ground of knowledge: it is the final cause and telos of knowledge, for the sake of which the movement of the knowing process is realized, and according to which the trueness of knowledge can be determined; hence, the actualization of practice in the world is the very historical actualization of the truth.

(92) *Ibid.*, p. 284.

(93) *Ibid.*, p. 296.

(94) *Ibid.*, pp. 282-297.