

Mao Zedong's Late Views on Resolution of Contradictions

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Mao Zedong on “synthesis,” that is, the result of resolving a contradiction:

(A) In a meeting with Ai Siqi in the summer of 1964, Mao said:

"Synthesis is just the completed development of one side, the elimination of one side, and the resolution of the contradiction. " ¹

(B) In his talk on philosophy on August 18, 1964, Mao said:

"How can synthesis happen? The Guomindang and the Communist Party are two opposites. On the mainland synthesis was precisely this way--you all saw it. Their armed forces arrived and we ate them up, piece by piece. There was no synthesis of two peacefully coexisting sides.... One eats up another, big fish eat little fish, this is what synthesis is. No previous writings have described such errors [about synthesis], and my writing also has not described them." ²

(C) In a speech at Hangzhou on December 21, 1965, Mao said:

"To synthesize is just to eat the enemy up. How did we synthesize the Guomindang? We captured rank-and-file soldiers but did not kill them. Some were let go but the greater part replenished our army. We seized all weapons, provisions, and all kinds of equipment. What was not needed was "overcome," to use a philosophical term, such as people like [Guomindang General] Du Yuming. Eating up is also analysis and synthesis. For example, if you eat crabs, you only eat the inside, not the shell. The stomach and intestines absorb nourishment and get rid of the waste. You are all foreign philosophers, but I am a native philosopher. Synthesizing the Guomindang was just eating it up, absorbing the larger part, and discarding a small part. This is learned from Marx. Marx removed the outer shell of Hegel's philosophy, absorbed the valuable inner core, and transformed it into materialistic dialectics. He absorbed Feuerbach's materialism and criticized his metaphysics--the inheritance must still be carried on. Marxism absorbed the good and discarded the bad from French utopian socialism and English political economy." ³

¹ “综合就是妥发展一方，消灭一方，解决矛盾。” Yang Su [杨苏], *Biography of Ai Siqi* [艾思奇传], Yunnan Education Publishers [云南教育出版社], 2nd ed, 2002.

² “怎么综合? 国民党，共产党，两个对立面。在大陆上，就是这么综合的，你们都看到了。他的军队来，我们吃掉，一块一块吃。不是两方面和平共处的综合。他不要和平共处，他要吃掉你。……一个吃掉一个，大鱼吃小鱼，就是综合。从未的书上没有这样写过，我的书也没写。” Gong Yuzhi [龚育之], “Listening to Mao Zedong's Talk on Philosophy [听毛泽东谈哲学],” in Gong Yuzhi, *Gong Yuzhi's Recollections: Bygone Affairs in the "Palace of the King of Hell"* [龚育之回忆“阎王殿”旧事], Jiangxi: Jiangxi People's Publishing House, 2007, pp. 229, 231.

³ “综合就是吃掉敌人。我们是怎样综合国民党的？还不是把敌人的东西拿来改造？俘虏的士兵，不杀掉。一部分放走，大部分补充我军。武器粮秣、各种器材，统统拿来。不要的，用哲学的话说，就是扬弃，就是让杜聿明这些人。吃饭也是分析综合。比如吃螃蟹，只吃肉不吃壳。胃肠吸收营养，把 [628] 糟粕排泄出去。你们都是洋哲学，我是土哲学。对国民党的综合，就是把它吃掉，大部分吸收，小部分扬弃。这是从马克思那里学来的。马克思把黑格尔哲学的外壳去掉，吸收有价值的内核，改造成为唯物辩证法。对费尔巴哈，吸收他的唯物主义，批判他的形而上学，继承还是要继承。马克思对法国的空想社会主义，英国的政治经济学，好的吸收，坏的抛掉。” *Long Live Mao Zedong Thought* [毛泽东思想万岁], Tokyo, 1969, pp. 627-628.