cerned with converting visual sensations into a picture. Drop from 'picture' the connotations of 'picturesque' and think in terms of visual enquiry and description. Thus, Cézanne's pictures are as much description and enquiry as mathematical pictures; symbolic logic pictures and pictures in physics - models. Cézanne studied objects and tried to grasp and present the relationships between them. Paul Klee argued that the artist's task was to 'render visible'.

Gropius and El Lisitsky utilised the discoveries of painting in their architecture. Art is complex. Before continuing the attacks perhaps it should be made quite clear what is being attacked. It is wrong that only an elite can have the opportunity to understand Cézanne but the wrong rests not with art per se but with our social structure and educational policy.

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Reviews

Philosophy in China


Serving the People with Dialectics: Essays on the Study of Philosophy by Workers and Peasants, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1972, 8p

Philosophy is no Mystery: Peasants put their study to work, F.I.P., Peking, 1972, 8p

Liberate philosophy from the confines of the philosophers' lecture rooms and textbooks, and turn it into a sharp weapon in the hands of the masses

Mao Tse Tung

Philosophy and education in China have been at the very centre of the struggles during the Cultural Revolution and since. In both fields during new experiments are under way, aimed at creating socialist forms of education and at 'liberating philosophy from the lecture room'. These 3 small pamphlets document and discuss these developments.

The pamphlet by Fann consists of 3 articles which arose out of a visit he made to China in 1972. The first of these articles, 'Philosophy in the Chinese Cultural Revolution', provides a brief and useful sketch of the Cultural Revolution and of its effects in education in general and in philosophy in particular.

As Fann makes clear, before the Cultural Revolution education and philosophy took surprisingly familiar forms and played surprisingly traditional roles in Chinese society. In 1949, at the time of Liberation, China was a poor and under-developed country (it remains so today, though much less so) and it had been shattered and devastated by decades of war. There was a severe shortage of educated people to become officials, technicians and teachers, a shortage which grew sharper as peace was brought to the country and the gigantic task of rebuilding commenced. The Communist Party needed all the help and cooperation it could get - including the national bourgeoisie and especially the intellectuals. The whole cultural field or the superstructure - especially the artistic and educational institutions - was staffed by the intellectuals. (p8)

Large parts of the superstructure (including, of course, the Party itself) thus remained under the control of intellectuals who had received their training and formative experience in the old society; mainly bourgeois intellectuals who continued to adopt the old attitudes and methods and run their institutions in the old ways. In particular, higher education was dominated by such intellectuals. Although the content of education had been reformed in line with the Soviet model, so that Marxism-Leninism and Mao's thought were major components of the syllabus, the form remained relatively untouched. Educational institutions remained cut off and isolated from the wider society - education went on 'behind closed doors'. Reforming education was purely theoretical - book learning, divorced from practice and practical experience. And by means of the familiar system of selection and assessment on purely academic grounds, by means of exams, the bourgeois intelligentsia reproduced and perpetuated itself in positions of power and privilege. However, the economic life of China was gradually being transformed towards socialism. Disagreements, conflicts and struggles emerged over the way in which socialism was to be built in China and over how politics and education and culture should contribute in this. It has been one of Mao's great contributions to Marxism to have recognised such struggles as class struggles: to have recognised, both in theory and in practice, that class struggle continues under socialism. These struggles were brought to a decisive head by the Cultural Revolution. The mass of the people were mobilised to 'struggle against, criticize and transform' the political, cultural and educational institutions which were frustrating and blocking the emergence of socialism and dragging China back down 'the Capitalist Road'. This superstructure, however, was predominantly in the hands of the bourgeois intelligentsia. Mao, in a political move of breathtaking imagination and daring, completely by-passed them, and issued the call:

'It is right to rebel against reactionaries. Bombard the Headquarters!' The struggles which ensued were intense and far-ranging. All areas of Chinese life were affected. Most rooms of the universities are now run by 'Revolutionary Committees'. In education, these are composed of representatives (a) of the working class, or in the countryside of the poorer peasants - the main responsibility of these representatives is to give political guidance; (b) of the teachers and students; and (c) of the academic administration. The monopoly of the bourgeois intellectuals has been broken. The system of selection and assessment has been transformed - marks and grades are no longer 'in command'. The doors of the schools and colleges have been opened. Students and teachers go out into society and participate in - learn from and contribute to - the life of the working people. Education is now designed to link theoretical knowledge with practi-
cultural knowledge and experience; and it is closely related to the needs of the mass of the Chinese people. These changes have occurred at all levels and in all areas of education, including philosophy. Almost everyone in China studies philosophy. Everywhere one goes there are groups of ordinary people—workers, peasants, housewives, soldiers, etc.—studying philosophy. They study philosophy, of course, from a Marxist standpoint. But, as Fann emphasizes, it is important to understand that they study Marxism, not merely as an economic or historical or political doctrine, but also as a method of analysis—as a theory of knowledge and as a logic. The history of Chinese philosophy has also recently become the subject of mass study as part of the present movement to criticize Confucian attitudes and ideas.

The pamphlet Philosophy Is No Mystery contains an account of how peasants of a Production Brigade (i.e., village) in Changle Prefecture started to study philosophy and to use it in their work and in their lives. During the 1950s, dialectics contains half a dozen articles written by such study groups of workers and peasants, telling how they put the method of dialectical materialism to use. Neither pamphlet contains any new or sophisticated philosophical ideas. The philosophical concepts they employ are crude and simple ones. However, the interest of these pamphlets lies elsewhere: they describe and explain how philosophical ideas can contribute, directly to the solution of everyday practical and immediate problems. We are so used to thinking of philosophy as an abstract academic pursuit that it is impossible not to be sceptical about the idea of workers or peasants studying philosophy. One imagines the crudest sort of political indoctrination in Mao's thoughts being carried out under his name. But, however, reports otherwise:

In contrast with the traditional philosophy which begins with words, and which is said that for the Chinese, philosophy begins with a task. Bourgeois philosophers wonder about how to prove the existence of the external world, or wonder about the existence of other worlds. With good reason, these problems do not exist for the workers and peasants of China: the masses in China learn philosophy so that they can apply it creatively to solve specific problems. Contrary to the widespread belief in the West that the intensive mass study of literature and writing breeds dogmatism in thought and conformity in ac-

These are the ideals and goals, at least, towards which Chinese society is aiming. It would be absolutely wrong to give the impression that they have been achieved, however. Socialism in China is still young, and the incredibly backward habits and attitudes of the old China remain a strong opposing force. Socialism is not a fixed and established fact, but something which must be constantly struggled for. Nevertheless, it is equally true that the experiments which are being undertaken in education and in philosophy are possible only within a socialist system. This is stressed in an interview which Fann had with Professor Fung Yulan, a distinguished historian of Chinese philosophy at Peking University, and which is included in the Fann pamphlet (reprint from Social Praxis 1/2, 1973). Prof. Fung says

Some foreign visitors are impressed by some of the specific measures in our educational system. They say 'this way of doing things is not bad; we should try it when we go back'. But this is nothing but daydreaming. What we are doing in China cannot be done in a capitalist society. [p44] As an example he cited the student-student relationships. Prof. Fung is 77 years old, and he is evidently speaking from experience when he says All social problems, in the final analysis, are problems of the social system. The comradeship between teacher and student is the most natural thing under socialism, but it is impossible under capitalism... Under capitalism the teacher-student relationship is a business relationship; I sell my knowledge and you pay tuition to buy knowledge. As to whether the knowledge I sell you is of the same type as that sold in our educational system, this is just like the way capitalists sell their commodities once the goods pass out of the door they are no longer responsible. Teachers are only interested in fame and money. For example, if I publish an article in a famous journal then my marketability goes up immediately. This will bring me a raise and maybe a promotion. I may even get offers from better schools with higher salaries. As to the students, they pay their tuition in return for some knowledge and diplomas so that they can find jobs. It cannot be otherwise under their social system. [p44]

In other words, none of the major problems in education and in philosophy in capitalist societies: the academicism, the lack of democracy and of cooperation between teachers
and students, the massive alienation of education and from society... Indeed, these problems can be resolved by isolated and specific changes within universities and colleges. They are problems of a wider social sort. Therefore, the struggles within colleges and within the different specialties - within philosophy for example - must ultimately take the form of a struggle against capitalism and for socialism if they are to succeed.

On the other hand, it seems to me that it would be fundamentally incorrect to conclude from the Chinese experience that the struggle within the universities is irrelevant and that one should concentrate only on the struggle against capitalism in the wider society. For one of the great lessons of China is that the class struggle is not merely concerned with questions of the economic base, and it occurs not only in the struggle between workers and capital, but also in the superstructure. What one also learns from China is the extent to which the struggle within the universities and within the different specialties is a part of the class struggle, the struggle for socialism. And one also learns the extent to which the apparently universal problems of education are not a product of unalterable human nature or a necessary part of educational history. Great strides can be taken towards resolving them - but only within a social system in which education is for social use and benefit and not for private profit. Thus one learns that the struggle for a true and meaningful education, so far from being irrelevant to the struggle for socialism, is a necessary part of it.

And unless the struggle for socialism is conducted on all fronts at once - at the base and in the superstructure - the results will ultimately be only a disguised form of capitalism.

The remaining article in the Fann pamphlet, 'The Ethics of Liberation: The Example of China' (reprinted from Monthly Review April 1974) is perhaps the most interesting of the three. It takes up a more general and 'philosophical' theme: the role of morality under socialism and in the liberation of man. What he has to say on this topic is of the greatest significance for the debate on the nature of morality which has been occurring in Radical Philosophy during the past year. Important articles by Richard Norman, Tony Skillen and Andrew Collier have all, to varying degrees, expressed scepticism about the validity of morality and moral thought. At the extreme, Collier dismisses all morality as oppressive ideology, alien to socialism. He says, My assumption at the outset is that any moral ideology serves a socially repressive function... the elimination of moral ideology is therefore taken as a rational desideratum... [P97] Fann addresses himself to precisely such scepticism: Living in bourgeois society, we are justified in viewing the moralizing of politicians and the preaching of ministers with extreme cynicism. And when we encounter a similar moral tone of voice in the pronouncements of liberation movements and their leaders we instinctively react with suspicion. But the apparent similarity is deceptive... [P27]

After a daunting account of the moral realities of bourgeois society, Fann writes, Liberation from this oppressive system requires, first of all, the re-introduction of ethics as a motivating force of the revolution. Commitment to a new ethical order is the first prerequisite of the revolutionary. This implies that the revolution must not only change the economic structure of the society, but also change man himself in the process... Changed circumstances alone do not change man. This is the important message of the Cultural Revolution. (P32-3)

The changes in man to which Fann is referring are partly moral ones. And it is not a matter of abolishing all morality, but rather of continuing this struggle in the field of morality, which means promoting socialist values and ways of life in opposition to capitalist ones. 'Right selfishness, repudiate Revisionism' was the great slogan of the Cultural Revolution. And Fann argues that Unless and until man is transformed into the antithesis of the selfish, egotistical and oppressive capitalist man, capitalism will be restored. (P33)

Liberation is not merely an economic or (in a narrow sense) political matter: it must also involve liberation from perverted forms of human relationship (such as those between teacher and student described by Prof. Fung in the above quotation). However, one must not make the opposite error of imagining that one is confronted by merely moral problems. The moral transformation of man in China has been one of the most impressive aspects of the Revolution - Western observers have frequently commented on it. (See Edgar Snow, Red Star over China, Penguin.) But this moral transformation has been possible only because it has been a part (though an essential one) of the overall revolutionary struggle to establish and develop socialism in China.

In this country there is still considerable ignorance of events in China. These little pamphlets will have served a useful purpose if they succeed in awakening people's interest in the remarkable developments which are occurring there.

Sean Sayers

Practical Knowledge


Theory and Practice (TP) is the third volume of Habermas's work to be published in English translation, through most of the remarks in it were written before the other two, Towards a Rational Society (TRS) (Heineman 1971), and Knowledge and Human Interests (KHI) (Heinemann 1972). The two exceptions are Chapter 4, 'Labour and Interaction', which was written at about the same time as KHI, and should be read in conjunction with the first three chapters of that book; and an Introduction, written for the 1971 German edition of Theorie und Praxis, which both summarizes his work in TRS and KHI, and examines some problems about the organization of political practice. The discussion of this last topic draws upon his work since KHI was written, which is analyzed in a useful article by T. McCarthy (Philosophy of the Social Sciences, vol.3, 1973): see also Habermas's two articles in Zurn's book, vol.13, 1970. As far as I can gather, the most important of his writings which remains untranslated is Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften (Tübingen, 1967), on the philosophy of the social sciences: some features of this are outlined in the first section of Wellmer's Critical Theory of Society (Herder and Herder, 1973).

In common with the early members of the Frankfurt School - such as Horkheimer and Marcuse - Habermas is centrally concerned with the implications of positivism for the relations between theory and prac-