same way it began, but a process of spiral-like change—and not a cyclical change, coming out the

"Preface":

years ago, let alone a million years ago or more when
dications of how soctccy is not only rooted in the
scious activities, of which literature and art are a part,
in a famous sentence; "It is not the consciousness of
is their social being that determines their conscious-
the Critique of Political Economy, Peking, Foreign
society and epoch all belong to the superstructure.
structure of society. They are also often called the
art, to their role in the overall class struggle. And,
role of culture and he continued to develop and deepen
achieve its historic mission of communism.

Mao Tsetung's immortal contributions. Specifically,
revolution as a whole whose basic principle Marx had put

From the very beginning, during the new-
in the material requirements that people have. But
structure is not rigid, static or one-way. While Marx
itself. (Letter to J. Bloch, September 21, 1890,

In other words, society arises out of the basic need of
the political sphere as it was developing, especial-
insider the founders of scientific socialism, it

In other words, society begins with the productive forces of
materialist conception of history, the

In the social production of their existence, men enter
in Europe, when he was alive. After his early col

According to the materialist conception of history, the

Continued on next page
the overall revolutionary movement of Russia, for instance, Lenin spoke of the need for the systematic work to such forms—notably in parts of struggle in general, nor of literature and art in par

The necessity for proletarian culture to be closely in this topic, and one which will be returned to below.

Lenin Lenin also cannot be said to have developed a complete and all-around theory of art and culture. But Lenin was, of course, intimately involved with a success and all past revolutions and the way in which this carries over into the area of proletarian art and culture is a problem that Lenin touched on in this topic, and one which will be returned to below.

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Mao showed the decisive importance of continuously revolutionizing the superstructure as well as the economic base. He not only upheld the dialectical understanding of the relationship between the base and superstructure, but also insisted that the base is principal and decisive, but that at certain times the superstructure becomes principal and decisive in determining the nature and development of the economic base. He further summed up and taught that under socialism the superstructure assumes even greater importance and the struggle in the superstructure becomes even more acute and complex. Every politician, every revolutionary and every person in society, the bourgeoisie may actually control certain parts of the superstructure (just as it may control certain parts of the economic base). However, the superstructure represents and serves the interests of the exploiting class, no matter how anachronistic, transitory. In fact, the proletariat is the first and only ly aware of this progressive and revolutionary role they

In the ideological field, the question of who will win, the proletariat or the bourgeoisie, has not yet been really settled. We will have a real revolutionary class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie as long as the whole world lives. This is the basic point. It is the struggle between new and old, before and after, progress and reaction. It is the struggle between the working class and the ruling class. This struggle is of crucial importance in any revolution.

But, as also noted, all this applies with even greater force to the revolutionary struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the modern age. Here the struggle is more intense. For this revolution, unlike any previous revolution, is abourgeois revolution, and is carried on by the exploiting class of exploiters to power. Rather than concentrate on the economic base, it focuses on the superstructure, which is the fundamental aspect of the modern bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, in its ultimate form, is a feudalist system. Thus socialism, in which class struggle still exist and in which the working class rules society, is not the final and conclusive form of a certain revolution. Instead, there is a struggle to that stage.

In the modern stage of transitional socialism, it must be constantly moving forward toward communism. If not, then it will inevitably move backward to capitalism. This is because, if the modern bourgeoisie under socialism a new bourgeoisie is inevitably generated, and has its citadel in the Communist party.
Radical Rupture in the Sphere of Culture

Why does Mao say that raising standards specifically does not mean raising the masses to the so-called "classical" level, while at the same time opposing petty-bourgeois intellectuals? What does he mean here and what is the essence of this statement?

This was in direct opposition to the line that the task of culture was to "educate the people" and help them understand the essence of socialist advance. This was the most radical rupture not only with all traditional artistic heritages but with all traditional property relations but with all traditional didactic as well. This certainly applies to the sphere of culture. We cannot imagine that modern workers and peasants can be convinced of the historical inevitability or the necessity of the transition to communism without creating a whole new culture, including literature and art, which, for the first time in history, puts forward the outlook and spirit of the masses as the highest aspects of culture in our society. This is exactly the line of the revolutionaries in the Soviet Union, and in China itself, including those who today rule China—those who consistently fight to defend Mao's line after his death, attacked Mao's line not only on culture in general but specifically over this point of what "raising standards" means!

Here what is fundamentally involved is whether or not a revolutionary culture includes literature and art; it represents and must represent something qualitatively different from—and advanced beyond—all previous curricular culture. Mao emphatically said yes; the revolutionists all in one way or another, essentially say no. What Mao was saying himself was applying the understanding put forward by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto: the communal community must be the most radical rupture not only with all traditional property relations but with all traditional didactic as well. This certainly applies to the sphere of culture. We cannot imagine that modern workers and peasants can be convinced of the historical inevitability or the necessity of the transition to communism without creating a whole new culture, including literature and art, which, for the first time in history, puts forward the outlook and spirit of the masses as the highest aspects of culture in our society. This is exactly the line of the revolutionaries in the Soviet Union, and in China itself, including those who today rule China—those who consistently fight to defend Mao's line after his death, attacked Mao's line not only on culture in general but specifically over this point of what "raising standards" means!

For it is not necessary to modify this title with another sentence "the people's consciousness has undergone profound changes." (Comments on Tao Chu's Two Books, Peking, FLP, 1965, p. 23.) The point is not that revolutionary writers should tell lies and be one-sided. Exactly the opposite. As Mao explains:

We should distinguish between the main current and the minor currents of life. Only when we focus on the main current can we give a typical presentation of the essence of social advance. Minor currents merely offer a contrast to the main current and can be used as means to present the essence, forming a subordinate aspect of the whole, and partial and temporary twists in the course of revolution are not regarded as the main context of life. (Ibid., p. 26.)

Of course everything has both its good and its bad aspect, but which aspect is principal? What is new and vigorous as opposed to decadent and defeated? And what is the revolutionary artist's overall purpose? Absolutely not to make the masses think of backwardness and hard-heartedness of the old feudal society, to make them wonder whether the new society will be any better, and to make them see everything reactionary and revolutionizing all of society. This cannot be done by supposedly raising "classical" works of art "above the class" and treating them as the pinnacle of achievement, which the "enlightened rabble" of the masses must be "elevated" to worship. Nor can it be done by creating supposed...
We should take over the rich legacy and the good traditions of art and literature and art that have been handed down from past ages in China and foreign countries. This is absolutely necessary to serve the masses of the people. No one should refuse to utilize the literary and artistic forms of the past, for in our hands these old forms, when combined with new content, also become something revolutionary in the service of the people.

This was summarized in the following slogans, which, under Mao’s leadership, were applied to art as well as the masses: “Make the past serve the present and foreign things serve China” and “Weed the old to bring forth the new.”

Thus, for this basic line, it must be grasped that even works which were progressive in their time—in previous historical epochs—do not play a progressive role in the epoch period art that is now taking place. They are assessed critically and put forth as classes “classics” or even stage works. Such systematic Marxist criticism and education of the masses as to their class content as well as their historical role. Here again it must be stressed that the heroic and advanced always stand heavily in favor of the exploiting classes and against the proletariat. All these works of art of previous epochs, representing the stated interests of exploiting classes, will, spontaneously, influence the masses in a direction opposed to the proletarian world view and their own revolutionary interests and, in such conditions, will therefore play a reactionary role. Again, only if the use of such works is combined with systematic education as to not only their historical role but also their class content and world view, and only if the latter are thoroughly criticized while the former is explained in light of historical materialism, can they play any kind of positive role in regard to the masses out of a given revolution.

And, beyond that, none of these works, however great they may have been in their own era, can in any way compete with the revolutionary cultural creations achieved in this era under the leadership of the revolutionaries and their ideology. Measured against such proletarian works of art, all previous works pale in comparison. Regardless of their artistic devices, they never portray the power and grandeur of the self-emancipating struggle of the masses of people under the leadership of the most revolutionary class in history. Only culture guided by the outlook and serving the interests of this class, the proletariat, can scale such heights.

It is on this point in particular that Mao’s contribution in the sphere of culture is centered, representing a further advance beyond the previous base that is the theory and practice of Marxism and the proletariat in this sphere. And it is precisely under the leadership of Mao’s revolutionary line that the Chinese people created works of art representing the highest pinnacle achieved by mankind yet in the field of art. This is the science, and the heart, of Mao’s whole basic orientation; because art is always tied to a definite class, it is also inseparable from politics, from the class struggle. This is why, in Mao’s position, all art and culture of previous epochs should be indiscriminately rejected and simply cast aside as useless, harmful? Certainly not. Historical materialism must be applied to assess the role of such works. Those which played a progressive role in previous epochs should be upheld in that context, while, however, never failing to point out their class bias and limitations. And on this basis, such works can be used as part of educating the masses in historical materialism, so long as this is done from that standpoint and linked to systematic analysis of such works with the science of Marxism. Further, certain artistic devices can be adopted from works which represent the outlook and interests of previous, exploiting classes and systems, but these generally will have to be adapted as well to conform to the revolutionary character of proletarian art—since form interprets content with marxist.

Mao spoke to this in his talks at the Yenan Forum and Confucius: “This painting was created by workers at the Cultural Revolution (as well as before), and a man enjoyed it, Chiang Ching and Yao Wen-juan, who proletarian works of art by utilizing the methods of the exploiting classes and their intellectuals: reliance on a few ‘great men’ divorced from the masses and their revolutionary struggles. Instead it must be done by relying on, learning from and unshakably and developing the creativity and the creations of the masses themselves, under the guidance of Marxism. Does this mean, was it Mao’s position, that all art and culture of previous periods should be indiscriminately rejected and simply cast aside as useless and harmful? Certainly not. Historical materialism must be applied to assess the role of such works. Those which played a progressive role in previous epochs should be upheld in that context, while, however, never failing to point out their class bias and limitations. And on this basis, such works can be used as part of educating the masses in historical materialism, so long as this is done from that standpoint and linked to systematic analysis of such works with the science of Marxism. Further, certain artistic devices can be adopted from works which represent the outlook and interests of previous, exploiting classes and systems, but these generally will have to be adapted as well to conform to the revolutionary character of proletarian art—since form interprets content with marxist.

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struggle for that long. “(Talks at a Conference of the Region Party Committees,” SW, Vol. 5, p. 359.) In fact this was what happened in 1957. The bourgeois Rightists in China indeed seized the opportunity given them by this policy and launched a big offensive. Mao and his Party then took this opportunity to repulse the offensive and smash this bourgeois headquarters. Some of the Rightists complained that they had been tricked (a theme taken up by many bourgeois Chinese scholars too). But Mao explained: “People say some this was a cover scheme. We say it was an overt one. For we made it plain to the enemy beforehand: only when the real enemies are allowed to come into the open can they be wiped out.” Only when the enemies are allowed to come into the open can they be wiped out. Mao was not ignorant of the fact that all trees bear apples. The enemy will come out to attack, but the masses of the people can recognize them as enemies and repulse their attacks. In the battle of ideas the enemy will suffer defeats. The bourgeoisie is not a sect, nor is it a cult. It is an evil essence, an evil force, a specific evil essence and evil force. The struggle against the Rightists was a struggle to develop socialism and to get rid of those evil essences, those evil forces that want to immobilize our society, to withdraw it from the path of socialism. That is to say, class struggle is inevitable. It will take a fairly long period of time to decide the issue of socialism or capitalism, is not really settled yet. “It is going to struggle and launch attacks on the pro-leta"rit. Sometimes the best tactic is for the proletariat to let them come out in the open, then exposing themselves to the masses and the people with an understanding of what their real program is—restoration of the old order—so that the people can be mobilized to strike them down.

In other words, not every idea or art work that pops up onto the world outlook, they do the bourgeoisie seized power. And in a number of other Eastern European countries, there were serious contradictions and class struggle, which drew in significant sections of the masses, playing upon discord over bureaucratic tendencies and other problems of the capitalist class to mobilize the people. Emboldened by this, the Rightists in China, with the complicity of the Chinese Communist Party’s influential part, launched an attack in the Chinese Communist Party and the state, and also stir up disturbances in the context, in early 1957, the policy of “letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend” was put forward.

The bourgeoisie is going to exist under socialism and it is going to struggle and launch attacks on the proletariat. Sometimes the best tactic is for the proletariat to let them come out in the open, then exposing themselves to the masses and the people with an understanding of what their real program is—restoration of the old order—so that the people can be mobilized to strike them down.

Battie in Cultural Field Intensifies

Despite this struggle and many others, the bourgeoisie was not, of course, by any means eradicated. Bourgeois forces continued to have vitality and strength, and this vitality and strength centers around a considerable degree in the arts and culture. The educational system was one of their strongholds, and the latter part of the Pan-Chin Hsiu case in particular was a classic example of this.

We think that it is harmful to the growth of art and science if administrative measures are used to impose one particular style of art or school of thought and to suppress other styles. This is the line that Mao took. For, as Mao put it, revolutionary public opinion, and aiming the first few blows in the crucial sphere of culture, Mao made a direct, country-wide and all-inclusive attack. This was also the connection with the field of culture.

The Rightists had written and staged a play which was set in the past, but which by analogy very directly attacked Mao Zedong’s wife and close associate, Chiang Ching, and her political clique. The cultural revolution was discussed in detail in the Cultural Revolution and the Revolutionizing of Culture.

So Mao suggested that criticism of this play should be organized. But this could not be done in Peking, so tight was the control there. The play was called Hai Jui Diumai, or “Flowers of Hai Jui.” It was written by the Eastern European country of Albania, and was released in Peking in 1965, although the Albanian authorities had not approved it. It was in fact released by the Ministry of Culture that “if it refuses to change, it will be uprooted.”

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Thus, while the Cultural Revolution was certainly not solely concerned with works of literature and art, nor even simply with culture generally, but ultimately since it was a real revolution) had to center on the political question of who will hold power in society, will the economic base of society and the superstructure in general--or rather the culture and art in particular--be a very important arena in which this question was to be fought out.

Therefore, the struggle in the field of art was very sharp. A good example is the case of The White-Haired Girl, which was performed first and still is primarily in the Chinese revolution which has gone through a number of transformations in the course of that revolution. The play is based on an episode during the war of resistance against Japan, when a white-haired girl with her boyfriend, the love theme is played down and made very secondary to the struggle of the peasants to overthrow the landlord, who is beaten. The white-haired girl is likewise the heroine herself is no longer raped, but after resisting the attack of the landlord's thugs. And so the peasant father and his daughter in the changed White-Haired Girl. But there were also many who did resist.

All these different ways of acting could be said to be typical, and portraying any one of them in the play could be a concentration of one or another aspect of life. But what was being created in China was revolutionary art, a revolutionary concentration of life, something in other words that will help the masses pro-}

This work in particular had played a positive and im-}

China), and every peasant girl whom the landlord tried to rape and who was also conscious of resisting that resistance, when this wasn't actually true. And of course it is a fact that not everyone in those circumstances put up this kind of resistance; there were some who were submissive and some who resisted in a tribal range of other, less straightforward, ways than to do the peasant father and his daughter in the changed White-Haired Girl. But there were also many who did resist.

Further, this does not mean falsifying things, con-

ition, which was as yet unfinished in the time which the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, August 8, 1966, Peking, FLP, 1966, p. 10).

Finding beginning, and in what constituted an impor-

But Lin had been identified in many ways with the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes and to capture their minds and endeavor to stage a comeback. The proletariat must do the exact opposite: it must oppose—it would become a vehicle for promoting ideas of socialism, works of art had to reflect this progress. The whole Chinese revolution, like any revolution, could be carried easily into the mountainous regions of the countryside or could be mounted on bicycles, so that films could be taken and shown even in remote areas. Also, different Peking Opera companies and other performing troupes would tour in the countryside, helping local groups perform model works, and watching performances of local works in order to learn from them. These were concrete ways in which the proletariat, its Party and cultural workers strove to break down the differences between city and country in the cultural field, thus helping to transform society under the leadership of communism.

The Arena of Culture in Mao's Last Great Battle

The Cultural Revolution was not all one straight line of progress, no more than anything. It was a revolution, and of course it was fiercely resisted by counter-revolutionaries, headed by capitalist-roaders in the Party itself. There were many such efforts of different types and various stages in different tactical situations, and certain compromises, establishing diplomatic relations and making certain agreements with the U.S. and the West in order to keep the Soviet Union off balance, as it had become a direct and immediate threat to China.
The application of and education of the masses in constituting an extremely important struggle in the realm of the superstructure and the creation of historical materialism, the revisionists' counter

After, aping and capitulating to—the "advanced" countries of the world—that is, the imperialists.

In the summer of 1975, as the overall class struggle was coming to a head, Mao used literature and art as a sharp weapon in this battle. In particular he focused attention on and called for revolutionary criticism of an historical novel, Water Margin, whose hero (Sung Chiang) was actually a traitor to the peasant rebels in whose ranks he had usurped leadership. Similar to those in present day China who joined the capitalist road—people like Sung Hsiao-ping, and behind them, Chou En-lai—veteran leaders who had failed to advance with the continuation of the revolution in the socialist stage and had turned from bourgeois-democrats (bourgeois-discriminative revisionists) into capitalist-roaders, counter-revolutionaries.

As this last battle further boiled up and broke out into open all-out struggle, the spheres of education and culture were extremely important battlefronts. Besides focusing attention on the battle in the educational field in late 1975—early 1976 and calling attention to the fact that this was a sharp reflection of the overall class-struggle at that time, Mao led the revolutionary forces in the struggle in the cultural field, as another very important arena of the all-around showdown. And one of the main shots fired by Mao was not only about art but was in the form of art. Specifically, he had done before, Mao used poetry as a salve in the struggle—in particular two poems, which Mao had originally written in 1965, and which were republished in 1976. This double message to the Chinese people that, just as in the period of 1965, there was a great danger of the revisionists taking over and restoring capitalism, and that just as at that time, so now there was need for a big struggle against them.

One poem "Chingkangshan Revisited" is full of revolutionary optimism, recalling the epoch-making victories of the Chinese revolution over the previous 38 years and pointing the way forward to the fierce struggles that will bring new victories in the future. Chingkangshan were the mountains where the first base area for the revolutionary army had been established, starting the Chinese revolution on its way.