

Editor, *Journal of Asian Studies*:

As a general rule I think it in bad taste for authors to reply to reviews of their work, and I should have preferred to let your readers form their own judgment of Professor Steiner's interpretation of bits of sentences torn from their context. But two points in his review (*Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. XXIII, no. 4; pp. 601-602) cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged.

The first concerns what I have called the theory of the "permanent revolution." Professor Steiner devotes nearly half his review to showing how wrong-headed I am about this, and in the process suggests that I would have done better to translate *pu-tuan k'o-ming* more literally as "uninterrupted revolution," as do the official Chinese versions of the texts involved. The Chinese, he says, might translate "permanent revolution," with its Trotskyist connotations, as *jung-chiu k'o-ming*. But they have always translated "permanent revolution" precisely as *pu-tuan k'o-ming*. I said as much in my book (cf. p. 53, ". . . the Chinese term is the same as that used earlier to translate Trotsky's theory.") Professor Steiner, who feels that my notions "need to be examined with discrimination before they can be accepted," did not choose to take this affirmation at face value, as was indeed his privilege. But in verifying it he would have done better had he consulted a few sources rather than relying on his linguistic imagination. Obviously, in a brief survey such as the introduction to *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, I could not present all the evidence for my view. In my French monograph on the subject, cited in the notes (cf. note 76, p. 54), I adduced the following three facts:

1) In the official Chinese edition of the *Selected Works* (*Hsüan Chi*, Peking, 1951, vol. I, p. 275), Mao says: "*Wo-men . . . pu shih To-lo-ssu-chi-chu-i ti pu-tuan-k'o-ming-lun-che . . .*"

2) One of the authors writing in 1959 on the theory of *pu-tuan k'o-ming* says that Trotsky "stole" the term, which he uses interchangeably to refer to the ideas of Marx,

Lenin, and Trotsky on this theme. (Cf. Ju Ch'ien's article in the *Jen-min Jih-pao*, 27 June 1959.)

3) The second edition of Oshanin's Chinese-Russian dictionary, published in Moscow in 1955, translates *pu-tuan k'o-ming lun* as "*teorija permanentnoj revoljutsii*," which can only refer to Trotsky's theory.

I could produce many other examples of the use of *pu-tuan k'o-ming* to translate Trotsky's "permanent revolution," but these seem sufficient. I should be interested to see whether Professor Steiner can cite even one Chinese text in which this theory is translated as "*jung-chiu k'o-ming*." If not, I would suggest that his criticisms, like my text, "often produce confusing or contradicting [*sic*], if not misleading, conclusions, when closely examined in detail."

Inasmuch as the Chinese writing today could not be ignorant of the Trotskyist connotations which have always been attached to *pu-tuan k'o-ming*, I thought it only fair to translate "permanent revolution." Needless to say, I do not mean to suggest that since the term is the same, the theory propagated in China during the years of the "Great Leap Forward" is identical with that of Trotsky. Some of the differences are suggested even in the brief passage devoted to this very complex question in the book under review by Professor Steiner, and in my French monograph I have devoted many pages to analyzing not only the striking similarities, but the even more remarkable differences between these theories, comparing them also with those of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin. But, as indicated at the beginning of this letter, I do not propose to enter into a discussion of Professor Steiner's criticism of the substance of my views.

The second point which I feel obliged to answer relates to his affirmation that in the end I "seem sorry for Mao." To document this, he resorts to the technique, as throughout the review, of quoting out of context, citing my judgement that Mao "may yet come to grips once more with the reality to which, throughout the first forty years of his revolutionary

activity, he adapted himself so skillfully," but pointedly omitting the sentence which follows immediately, "But this is by no means certain," and the whole orientation of the final section of the introduction, which bears the heading, "Is Mao Tse-tung Obsolete?" Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that if I am not precisely "sorry" for Mao, I am both interested in his "complex and contradictory" personality, and struck by the human drama of his career. Obviously this in itself is reprehensible in Professor Steiner's eyes. In stating that I seem "sorry for Mao," he is edging as close as he dares to stating that I do not display the implacable and single-minded hatred for all communists everywhere which he plainly regards as the only moral attitude. I do not share the liberal illusion that there is a little good and a little bad in everyone and everything, and that one should therefore refrain from passing judgement on anything, or from denouncing obvious evils. I do not think that any fair-minded reader will find my analysis of Mao's thought and behavior uncritical, or that it will be appreciated in Peking. But I think that it is not only interesting, but vitally important, for Americans to understand the mentality and problems of their political adversaries, and this can never be done by regarding them as robots or demons and not as human beings.

Apart from this, let me simply say that I did not have the pretension of writing a "definitive" study of Mao's thought, nor do I think the time is ripe for a definitive study. So I will only rejoice if my book, as Professor Steiner says, "far from resolving existing controversies, . . . may exacerbate them . . ."

STUART R. SCHRAM

Centre d'Étude des Relations Internationales

Editor, *Journal of Asian Studies*:

Whether my review of M. Schram's *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* fairly assesses its place in the literature I leave to those who read the book. I characterized it as "an important advance in Western studies of Mao Tse-tung," and thought it "refreshingly exploratory and suggestive." I recommend it to others, as I have to my own students. Since writing the review M. Schram has challenged, I have read his *La "Révolution Permanente" en Chine* and can therefore understand why he

might be perturbed that, in the course of illustrating another point in my review, I happened to comment on his treatment of "permanent revolution" in the work now under consideration.

My point was that M. Schram treated the theme of "permanent revolution" in a manner that would confuse the reader concerning the relationship of Mao's theory of revolution to Trotsky's during the 1958–1959 period. M. Schram wrote: "The *key term* in this new phase of the *ideology* of the Chinese Communist Party was that of 'permanent revolution'" (my emphases), stating that the term was first "rehabilitated" in Liu Shao-ch'i's report of May 5, 1958. His treatment of the subject (pp. 52–54) concluded by characterizing a passage from an article by Wang Chia-hsiang as one "that might have been written by Trotsky himself." Between the opening and closing passages of the treatment, as I have just quoted them, M. Schram makes some useful (and in my judgment, correct) observations; but I questioned the substantive inference that would be drawn by the reader of the whole. He would certainly believe that the Chinese Communists had in some manner, however peripheral, "rehabilitated" Trotsky in some relevant shape or form. In my mind, such a suggestion was untenable and I thought it best to place a reader on notice.

The problem is mainly semantic, and concerns the context in which *pu-tuan k'o-ming* is to be understood—whether as "permanent revolution" in the Trotskyist sense, or as "uninterrupted (or continuous) revolution" in the Maoist sense. Apparently some early translator of Trotsky's "permanent revolution" into Chinese happened upon *pu-tuan k'o-ming* (literally: "uninterrupted revolution") when he *might* have used the more explicit *yung-chiu k'o-ming* (literally: "permanent revolution"). Granting that "permanent revolution" is regularly translated as *pu-tuan k'o-ming*, it by no means follows that *pu-tuan k'o-ming* is henceforth translatable only as "permanent revolution." Cannot the Chinese Communist Party employ *pu-tuan k'o-ming* for "uninterrupted revolution" when the term is being used in a non-Trotskyist (or Marxist-Leninist) sense—as the CCP does, in fact, use it? In what context did the Chinese use *pu-tuan k'o-ming* in 1958? First, we must

take account of the Chinese preference for translating the term as “uninterrupted revolution” in their own English versions of the 1958 documents. This was probably not accidental. Second, the differentiated context is strongly reinforced by the manner in which Liu Shao-ch’i and the Central Committee dealt with *pu-tuan kò-ming* in 1958. In his political report of May 5, Liu asserted (in the translation by Foreign Languages Press, Peking): “Marx, Engels and Lenin often pointed out that the watchword of the working class should be ‘uninterrupted revolution’ [*pu-tuan kò-ming*]”—which is to say, “Marx, Engels and Lenin,” but *not* Trotsky. He further asserted that the Party and Mao “have *always* guided the Chinese revolution by the *Marxist-Leninist* [*not* Trotskyist] theory of uninterrupted revolution” (my emphases). The Central Committee’s Wuhan resolution (December 10, 1958) asserted, in Peking’s translation into English: “We are advocates of the *Marxist-Leninist* [*not* Trotskyist] theory of uninterrupted revolution [*pu-tuan kò-ming*]” (my emphases). (On the point in question, M. Schram correctly interprets this particular document while referring to “permanent revolution.”) As M. Schram shows, in the first bibliographical reference cited in his letter, Mao had said [in 1937]: “We . . . are *not* advocates of *Trotsky’s* theory of permanent revolution” (my emphases). The omitted words covered by M. Schram’s ellipses in that sentence are: “*shih kò-ming chuan-pien lun-che,*” which would make the whole sentence read: “We are advocates of the changing [continuous?] revolution, not advocates of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution.” Could any distinction be more clearly made? (*Chuan-pien* may indeed have been an earlier attempt to circumvent the semantic difficulty, possibly abandoned because when translated as “modified” or “changing” it was less satisfying than *pu-tuan* used in an explicit Marxist-Leninist sense.) When Mao, Liu, and the Central Committee employ *pu-tuan kò-ming* in such clear and differentiated contexts at points in time separated by twenty-one years, I am persuaded they did so with the ideological understanding that *their* “Marxist-Leninist” *pu-tuan kò-ming* (rendered: “uninterrupted [or changing, continuous] revolution”) had nothing

in common substantively with Trotsky’s *pu-tuan kò-ming* (rendered: “permanent revolution”). In the third place, I cannot agree with M. Schram that the Wuhan resolution, if we consider its reference to what M. Schram calls “permanent revolution,” was “meant [among other things] to reassure the Soviets. . . .” The CCP was already deeply engaged in its ideological quarrel with the Soviet leadership—as Peking’s *The Origin and Development of the Differences between the Leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves* (September 6, 1963) plainly shows—and I believe it unlikely, at that juncture, that the CCP would expose itself to the charge of having “rehabilitated” Trotsky’s permanent revolution as a “key term in this new phase of the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party. . . .” So interpreting the context, I must reaffirm that M. Schram’s analysis on this point is among those that “need to be examined with discrimination before they can be accepted.”

Nor am I defenseless on the more technical linguistic front. I had not said that the Chinese ever used *yung-chiu kò-ming* for “permanent revolution,” and cannot cite the examples M. Schram demands. But my suggestion about *yung-chiu* was not manufactured from the whole cloth. Two bits of relevant linguistic intelligence have recently come to my notice, and they are suggestive if not conclusive. First, in March 1959, Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan in Peking published Liu’s May 5, 1958, report in parallel Chinese-Russian texts, with notes implying this was done for language instructional purposes. In the main body, *pu-tuan kò-ming* was rendered (in Russian equivalent) as “*permanennaya revolyutsia*”—which confirms the third bibliographical citation in M. Schram’s letter in a strict textual sense. But instructional footnote 6, at pp. 74–75, explains that the Russian adjective “*permanentyi*” is translatable into Chinese as either *pu-tuan-ti* or as *yung-chiu-ti*. Still more recently, in December 1963, the same publishing house issued *Chien-ming Ying-Han ts’u-tien* (A Concise English-Chinese Dictionary)—a remarkable and highly political dictionary. If one consults the headings “continuous” and “uninterrupted,” he finds meanings in which *pu-tuan* is directly engaged; if he consults the heading “permanent,” he finds no mention of *pu-tuan*

connotations. It is therefore not unreasonable to argue that contemporary Chinese usage makes distinctions that reinforce the argument based on contexts, even if the latter is in my view more significant and controlling.

M. Schram's wholly erroneous assessment of my personal "moral attitude" must have been derived from a mistaken content analysis of my review of his book. Many of my publications over a fifteen-year period have been concerned precisely to acquaint Americans (but not them exclusively) with "the mentality and problems of their political adversaries"—a concern which I seemingly share with M. Schram even if he may be unaware of it. If he can find anything in those publications to suggest that I regard the Chinese Communist as "robots or demons and not as human beings," I would be happy to hear from him.

H. ARTHUR STEINER

University of California, Los Angeles

Editor, *Journal of Asian Studies*

Professor Richard Dorson opens his rather patronizing review of *Asiatic Mythology* by J. Hackin and others in the *Journal* for November, 1964, by announcing, "now the original French publication is made available in lucid English translation." Then he proceeds to treat the book as a recent French work, and chides the writers for ignoring the relatively new discipline of folklore studies and some of its recent writings. However, the minimum of preliminary investigation would have revealed that this volume is merely a re-issue of an earlier book that first appeared a generation ago. Actually, the original publication, *Mythologie Asiatique illustrée*, came out in 1928, and this translation was first published in 1932.

Although it was brought out in England, it soon reached American book stores and found its way into our libraries.

The fact that it was written by scholars of an earlier period, trained in somewhat different ways, of course makes a vital difference for the understanding of this book and what it set out to do. The reviewer's praise of "the splendid chapter on modern China" by Henri Maspero seems especially ironic. Maspero's comments dealt with China in the first two decades of this century, an era that is forever gone, and they certainly have no validity for what we now know as modern China. Had Mr. Dorson properly understood the nature of the book he was attempting to review, he would not have done such injustice to Professor Sergei Elisséeff in criticizing the latter's well-written summary of Japanese mythology as it was then understood. Why should Professor Elisséeff be scolded for disregarding "the informative recent collections of Yanagita Kunio and his school" when Yanagita and his group have only recently been publishing their findings, mostly within the last decade, thirty or more years after this book was written?

Mr. Dorson's underlying motive in his review seems to have been to scold the Orientalists for their provincialism, and to urge them to give more consideration to his own field of folklore studies—in which, by the way, he has made distinguished contributions. However, this attempt backfired, because he merely demonstrated the provincialism of people in other highly specialized fields when they try to extend their efforts beyond the familiar ground of Europe and the Americas without minimal preparation.

SCHUYLER CAMMANN

University of Pennsylvania