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Question:

In *On Contradiction* Mao lays out two opposing world outlooks: the metaphysical conception and the dialectical conception.

Mentions of idealism “barefaced reactionary idealism” p.2

What is historical development of the concept, “idealism?”

Draft on Modes of Thought

The first concept introduced in the process of transformation was *mode of thought*, also known as one’s *knowledge form*. There are two modes of thought: *metaphysical*, sometimes called *realist*, and *idealist*.

To say that a person has a metaphysical mode of thought means that dominantly the way that person thinks is extrinsic/external. Manifestations include a) one-sided thinking that doesn’t show interconnections or relationships of conditions and of things; b) thinking that is iron-cast or static or unchangeable and takes the form of either THIS or THAT; and c) thinking that shows external conditions as the prime factor for motivating forward motion.

Other characteristics of persons with the metaphysical mode of thought are:

- independent
- seek competence
- desire material skills
- striving
- authoritative
- blame others
- take action
- feel superior
- developed ability to use procedures for their own purposes
- outcome oriented

To say that a person has an idealist mode of thought means that dominantly the way that person thinks is intrinsic/internal. Manifestations include thinking that places concepts, ideals, reason and pre-conceived plans above and against material reality. In other words, thinking that holds practice in contempt or thinking that holds that a deepening understanding of a thing comes not from practice or doing, but through more and more talk and discussion.

Other characteristics of persons with the idealist mode of thought are:

- easy-going
- go along with the opinions of others

take things personally
are indecisive
prefer to be with others
value ideas above acquiring skills
feel inferior

The obstacle that metaphysical thinkers have in solving problems is not being able to take a cognitive step from the particular to the general. The obstacle that idealist thinkers have in solving problems is not being able to take a cognitive step from the general to the particular.

Metaphysical thinking and idealist thinking are manifested differently in different people depending upon factors such as class, race, and gender, to be discussed later. As a starting place, it is helpful, however, to look at how modes of thought are manifested in young children.

In order to develop women's leadership, great attention was given to providing child care and to developing a child care program. Child care was first provided in individual homes by volunteer cadre. The home care was soon replaced by a fully licensed program in its own facility that provided care for about 40 infants and preschool children ranging in ages from 6 months through 5 years. The program ran for approximately __ years and was staffed initially by volunteer cadre and later by paid staff. Due to prohibitive costs of maintaining the infant care program, that particular part of the program closed during the course of the history of the center.

The initial question in developing the program was, what are the basic theories and practices being used by some of the best child care programs? What is there to build upon to take this theory and practice to a higher level?

Volunteer cadre studied and observed Montessori programs and studied major curriculum taught by the lab school of the University of Minnesota. Freud was studied for his contributions to the understanding of the identity between the parent and child. Contributions of Skinner and his progeny were studied to understand importance of external conditions in formation of the child. Piaget was studied for his contributions as a biologist to the understanding of stages of development, both at the beginning of the program and during later phases of the program.

The program provided a rich setting for building knowledge about modes of thought: Volunteer cadre observed children in all the aspects of a busy day in a child care setting. Volunteer cadre also learned quickly that the children responded to the manifestations of metaphysical thinking and idealist thinking that existed in the cadre themselves.

Parents spent many hours observing children and documenting their observations. In evening sessions cadre/parents compiled and studied their observations. The body of clinical practice, taking up a period of __ years resulted in the following findings:

One parent transmits the mode of thought that manifests itself as dominant in the child.
This parent is the principle influence, *PI*.

The child resists or refuses to do and learn things outside of his/her mode of thought.

The non-principle influence, *non-PI*, is responsible for the child's social conduct.

Insert story of G6 working at daycare center