

to President Clinton demanding freedom for LaRouche, which has been signed by hundreds of prominent dignitaries the world over. Also printed in the Appendix is an address by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark on the LaRouche case, delivered to the

CSCE Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark

The book contains an extensive section of photographs of all the main characters in the kidnap plot and the "Get LaRouche" task force, who were responsible for the frameup and rail-

road of LaRouche. The case of the seventy-year-old political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche, who has unjustly spent over four years in Federal prison, has become known internationally as "the American Dreyfus Affair."

—Warren A.J. Hamerman

## Reviving the Works that Launched the Renaissance

The uncompromising thesis of this volume is that we must bring about a new global Renaissance to lift humanity out of the carnage of the twentieth century—hence "*Toward a New Council of Florence*," the ecumenical religious event which spawned the Golden Renaissance of fifteenth-century Europe. To promote this aim, translator William Wertz has presented sixteen writings by Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa, the seminal scientific thinker of the European Renaissance, which in their sum are bound to become as controversial today as they were five hundred years ago when they formed the basis for reconstituting the Christian Church, ushering in the Age of Discovery and the modern world.

Why controversial? Because in contrast to the "multicultural" approach which marks many so-called ecumenical efforts, Nicolaus of Cusa, a German patriot, churchman, and universal statesman, insisted that differences be resolved neither by dividing (in the Aristotelian way), nor by seeking the least common denominator where everyone backs off from controversy, but by finding a higher geometry, where "opposites coincide." In short, Nicolaus of Cusa is not Politically Correct.

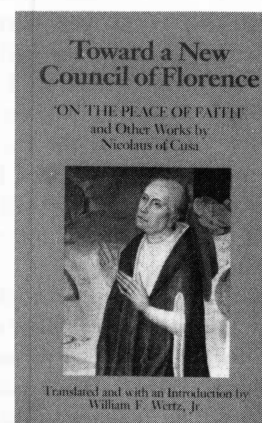
Previously, Wertz edited three volumes of translations of Friedrich Schiller, the great German poet of freedom. While serving three years as a Federal political prisoner with Lyndon LaRouche in the infamous frameup trial of 1988, he shifted his focus to Cardinal Nicolaus (Krebs) of Cusa (1401-64), named Cusanus after the Latin version of his birthplace, Kues on the Moselle River.

Cusanus was celebrated as one of

those Christian humanists who sought to recover the riches of ancient, especially Platonic, civilization and demonstrate its harmony with Christianity. The watershed of these efforts was the ecumenical Council convened in Ferrara and Florence between 1438 and 1444. The Council united Latin Catholics and Greek Orthodox for the first time in nearly four hundred years, as the Greeks agreed to accept the phrase *Filioque* ("and from the Son") in the Latin recitation of the Nicene Creed, a concept crucial to the Western doctrine of the Trinity. The importance of this movement for the triumph of the Idea of Progress in the Christian Renaissance is well elucidated in Wertz's Introduction.

To convey the Trinity, Cusanus used the method of the Coincidence of Opposites, which allows the intellect to recognize the ontological reality of the world of Becoming (change) which participates in the world of eternal Being. This was a frontal assault on the dictatorship of Aristotelian logic, and was recognized as such in his day.

While the predicates of Cusanus' scientific writings have been superseded by the progress he promoted, his commitment to seeking truth by the Platonic method of hypothesis-formation remains valid as ever. He changed people in his lifetime, even himself—shifting from an early adherence to conciliarism (which gave the Council authority over the Pope) to becoming an ardent defender of the Papal institution as crucial for Christian unity. Then he won over his most brilliant adversary, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who later, as Pope Pius II, brought Cusanus to Rome in 1459 and made him second in authority in the



**Toward a New Council of Florence:**  
**"On the Peace of Faith" and Other Works by Nicolaus of Cusa**  
translated and with an Introduction by William F. Wertz, Jr.  
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578 pages, paperbound, \$15.00

Church, as they jointly mobilized the military defense of Europe against the aggressive war of the Ottoman Turks and also, jointly, shaped the terms of peaceful dialogue with Muslims.

While focused on this strategic task, Cusanus found the energy to pen during his last years some of his deepest philosophical and scientific works (works from 1458-64 fill nearly half this volume); and Pius II wrote his *Commentaries*, one of the most celebrated books of the Italian Renaissance.

This reviewer does not know the echoes or reactions in the Muslim world to Cusanus's writings seeking a common high ground and lessening of violence. But in Greek Orthodox Byzantium, the *Filioque* was betrayed

by an imperial court which Cusanus branded as treacherous, and was rabidly rejected by a band of Aristotelian monks led by Gennadios, later installed as Patriarch of Constantinople by the victorious Turks when the city fell in 1453. In the Latin West, one Johannes Wenck wrote a bitter attack on Cusanus' first scientific masterpiece, *On Learned Ignorance*, which Cusanus identified as an outburst from the dominant "Aristotelian sect" within the Church: the foes of the Renaissance, whose thinking in fixed categories reminds us of many "fundamentalists." The heirs of Cusanus'

enemies still exist vocally in every religious group today—as well as among the atheistic Enlightenment set who run the networks of Freemasonic institutions in Europe and the Americas and dominate the academic and scientific establishments. This is why the German cardinal's writings remain controversial today.

Translator Wertz calls for a return to Cusanus' Platonic ecumenism in an era when the whole world risks becoming enflamed in confessional warfare, especially between Muslims and Christians, but also, between different Christian confessions. The Orthodox-

Catholic conflict has persisted ever since the fragile unity of the Council of Florence was shattered in the 1440's and 1450's. We see the cruelty of such "religious" strife in the Balkan cockpit today. The *method* of Cusanus points to the only way to prevent this tragedy from spreading over the globe. For Cusanus's alternative lies not in maintaining a fixed and inhuman *status quo*, but in forcing a radical shift in men's thinking everywhere, to open a pathway for the *imago viva Dei* in all peoples to shine forth in a resurgence of human creativity and progress.

—Nora Hamerman

## Zen Buddhism and the Decline of Chinese Painting

In China, poetry, music, and early painting all originated from one great invention: the beautifully constructed Chinese language. The sound of the tongue, with its different tones for pronouncing a syllable by the Han nation and most of the dialects, made it possible for the ancient poets to relish their strictly regulated verses. Chinese music, then, derived from singing classical poetry.

Furthermore, the pictographic form of the language made it possible to extend the art of calligraphy far beyond its counterpart in Sanskrit, for example. Chinese characters originated as pictographs cut on turtle shells, which were then imprinted as calligraphy on various available materials; thus, calligraphy matured before and independently from painting, which depended upon the much later invention of paper for ink art. Calligraphy is a form of art much appreciated by Chinese men of letters, but it is an abstract art form.

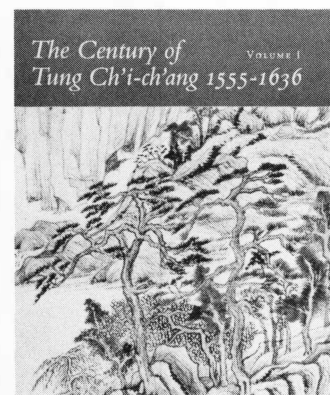
To understand the art pioneered by classical court painters, and the peculiar abstract path taken later by the "literati" school of Chinese impressionists, we have to distinguish the different concepts of nature among Chinese philosophies.

Confucians placed great emphasis on the "Way of Heaven" (*T'ian-tao*, the Maximum) and the "Way of Man"

(*Jen-tao*, the Minimum), viewing "Heaven" not only as "nature," but also as the source of all life and human values. The concept of "Heaven" encompasses the "universe," an organism brimming over with creative life force, the *logos* that gives people moral commitment to understand Heaven. The creation of life is not viewed as a mechanical physical process, but as a spiritual, purposeful procedure. In other words, "man" is the result of "Heaven's" unceasing creation of new beings with more and more wisdom. Relying on the wisdom and virtues bestowed by Heaven, man creates an increasingly sophisticated and refined culture and cultural values. Confucianism is the kind of humanism which does not deny the supreme power of Heaven, but seeks to investigate things in order to understand it.

Because of the system of universal civil service examinations based on these principles, official court painters tended to share the Confucian outlook.

On the other hand, both Taoism and Buddhism reject the idea that Heaven can be presented intelligibly to human beings. Nature to them is incomprehensible; human life has no purpose but to obey the mysterious "Great Way." While Taoism retains a passive and artistic view of nature, Buddhism leans toward an unblended religious sense of art. A faction in art



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which came to be known as the "literati" school, based on the Buddhist and Taoist worldview, typically preferred to paint according to their own fancy and without restriction, and advocated what they considered to be a free, understated, and romantic style.

### Rise of 'Literati' Painting

The aristocracy of the T'ang (A.D. 618-907) and Sung (A.D. 960-1279) dynasties were major supporters of Chinese painting. The objective behind artistic