

# The European 'Enlightenment' & The Middle Kingdom

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De la seule Raïson salutaire interprête,  
Sans éblouir le Monde éclairant les esprits,  
Il ne parla qu'en Sage, et jamais en Prophète:  
Cependant on le crut, et même en son pays. *VOLTAIRE,*

*Enlightenment spokesmen saw Chinese oligarchism as a model for the West. This drawing falsely portrays Confucius as an Oriental Despot, and is inscribed with Voltaire's anti-Christian diatribe:*

*"Only from wholesome reason does he interpret,  
Without dazzling the world, enlightening the spirit.  
He speaks only as a sage, not as a prophet.  
Nonetheless, he was believed, and even in his own country."*

There has been a recurring phenomenon in western European history, whereby a temporary but intense glorification of the Middle Kingdom—as the Chinese call their country—has been espoused by that grouping of oligarchical ruling families best described as the Venetian Party. In each case, the China being glorified is not that of the Confucian cultural and scientific tradition, but rather, the China of one or another period of economic and social decay, when Confucianism declined in favor of Taoist or Buddhist influences. For example:

- During the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries, Venice collaborated with the genocidal Mongol regime. The hordes of Genghis Khan laid waste to much of China in the same bloody manner they did to Russia and Central Asia, leaving millions dead and a decimated economy in their wake. While the Venetians *welcomed* the Mongols into Europe and conspired with them to destroy the enemies of the Serenissima, they deployed one of their slave-trading families, the Polos, to solidify relations with the Mongol chief Kublai Khan, who had established the capital of the Empire in present day Beijing. Marco Polo's reports on this diplomatic and trade mission glorified

the brutal, cult-ridden Mongol despotism, giving them credit for those aspects of Chinese culture and economy left standing from the splendor of the Sung Dynasty (A.D. 960-1279) which the Mongols had not utterly destroyed [SEE Box, p. 36].

- The European Enlightenment of the Eighteenth century was built to a significant extent on the defeat of the efforts by G.W. Leibniz<sup>1</sup> and his collaborators to establish the “Grand Design” of an alliance of East and West, both an economic alliance tying Asia and Europe together economically, and also an ecumenical alliance between Christianity and Confucianism. Leibniz had worked closely with the Jesuit missionaries in China who followed the ecumenical policies of the founder of the China Mission, Matteo Ricci.<sup>2</sup> This effort was largely destroyed in the early Eighteenth century, but, ironically, was followed by a period of almost fanatical infatuation in Europe over all things Chinese, which went hand and hand with the Enlightenment. Three leading figures in this “Chinoiserie” were the Physiocrat François Quesnay, Voltaire, and Christian Wolff. Those aspects of Chinese history and culture which Leibniz had identified as the source of greatness, were written out of the history books, while the term “Enlightened Despotism” was coined (by Quesnay), alleging that the Chinese model of feudalistic rule by a select few over the ignorant peasant masses was the “cause” of China’s development. The fact that the Eighteenth-century emperors of China were, in fact, *regressing* once again into just such a despotic rule, was to a large extent due to the sabotage by the Venetians of the potential East/West alliance during the reign of the previous

Emperor, K’ang Hsi,<sup>3</sup> who had worked closely with the Jesuits to bring the ideas of the European Renaissance into China.

Enlightenment figures like Voltaire and his fellow Deists seized upon the description of Confucian philosophy propounded by the *enemies* of Ricci and Leibniz—arguing that China was great precisely because the Chinese worldview was *not* consistent with Christianity—in order to use this distorted picture of China in their efforts to destroy the fruits of the Christian Renaissance in the West.

- A third recurrence of this process began in the early Twentieth century under the direction of Bertrand Russell, and continues to this day. Russell’s efforts on behalf of British intelligence to destroy the republican movement of Sun Yat-sen, and to prevent the industrial development of Asia, were based on a portrayal of the Chinese peasantry as Enlightenment “noble savages,” content in their ignorance, poverty, and Taoist cult beliefs, who had only to guard against the twin evils of western industrialization and the “elitist” Confucian tradition within China. Russell’s efforts contributed significantly to the emergence of the Maoist peasant revolt.

The entire Communist period, at least until recently, has been characterized by a belief among China’s leaders that their nation’s survival depends upon the raw power of the peasantry to feed the nation through primitive, human-wave methods, regardless of what disasters, natural or man-made, might be brought down upon them. Plans for development inevitably stop short of proposing the modernization of agriculture and the transformation of the peasantry into an urban-based citizenry—which most of the leadership fears would threaten the existence of China’s essential character.

The past twenty-five years have seen an increas-

1. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), whose scientific and philosophical works transformed the West, was also deeply involved as a world statesman in Europe, Asia, and in the New World. He edited a journal of letters and reports from the Jesuits in China, called *Novissima Sinica*, in which he wrote: “I consider it a singular plan of the fates that human cultivation and refinement should today be concentrated, as it were, in the two extremes of our continent, in Europe and in China. . . . Perhaps Supreme Providence has ordained such an arrangement, so that, as the most cultivated and distant peoples stretch out their arms to each other, those in between may gradually be brought to a better way of life.”
2. Matteo Ricci led the first team of Jesuit missionaries into China in 1581, and headed the mission until his death in 1610. Ricci was the first to recognize the coherence between the Confucian tradition in China and the Christian worldview of the West, while also recognizing the atheistic and irrational nature of the Ch’an (Zen) Buddhist and Taoist ideologies. Over the next century and a half, the Jesuits followed Ricci’s policy of collaborating with the Confucian scholars, introducing both Christianity and Renaissance science to the Chinese, while also making the Confucian philosophical and scientific works of Chinese antiquity available to the West through translation.

3. The Ching Dynasty Emperor K’ang Hsi (reigned 1667-1722) was educated by both the leading Confucian scholars, and the leaders of the Jesuit Mission in China, who by that time had risen to leading positions in the court. Although not a convert to Christianity, K’ang Hsi supported and sponsored the teaching, and proselytizing, of the Christians throughout the Empire.

*Political prisoner Michael Billington’s “Toward the Ecumenical Unity of East and West: The Renaissances of Confucian China and Christian Europe,” and “The Taoist Perversion of Twentieth-Century Science,” have appeared in previous issues of Fidelio. Excerpts from Section I of this article were originally published as part of “Phil Gramm’s ‘Conservative Revolution’ in America,” a special report in Executive Intelligence Review, Vol. 22, No. 8, February 17, 1995.*

## Venice and the Mongol Hordes

The two Venetian Polo brothers and one of their sons, Marco, travelled in Asia throughout the second half of the Thirteenth century, serving for seventeen years in the court of Kublai Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan and the ruler of China and the entire Mongol empire, from Peking to Europe. The story of Venetian intrigue with the Mongol hordes is infamous. With the “peace of the grave” imposed on most of the world by the butchery of the Khans, the Venetians were free to carry on their commerce and share in the plunder, including the vast wealth stolen and shipped out of China by the Mongols to their western territories.

The Polo family were traders, who headed off into Asia dealing in various goods, including slaves—primarily captives of war sold into slavery by the Mongols and others. Marco Polo’s book on his travels includes the following incredible description of the invasion of China by Genghis Khan and his grandson Kublai, which in fact reduced China’s population from 115 million to 85 million within about twenty-five years:

When he conquered a province, he did no harm to the people or their property, but merely established some of his own men in the country among them, while he led the remainder to the conquest of other provinces. And when those whom he had conquered became aware how well and safely he protected them against all others, and how they suffered no ill at his hands, and saw what a noble prince he was, then they joined him heart and soul and became his devoted followers.

The Mongol dynasty was a pure Legalist regime, grinding up both the population and the technological infrastructure produced by the Sung Confucian Renaissance. The great trading ships were turned to the purposes of conquest, including failed efforts to occupy Japan and to move south into Southeast Asia. The internal economy was looted to exhaustion, such that the population declined by yet another ten million souls before the dynasty collapsed.

It is important to note that the silk routes, both through Persia and the northern route through Samarkand in the Turkish lands, had been dominated, since the T’ang Dynasty (Sixth-Eighth centuries A.D.) by various communities of gnostic Christians—in particular, Manichaeans and Nestorians.\* The

Manichaean sect converted the Uighars, one of the Turkish tribes in Central Asia, in the Eighth century. These Manichaean Uighars became the primary traders in the Tarim Basin, leading into China, and both as traders and as astrologers were welcomed into the Buddhist and Taoist dominated T’ang court.

Nestorian Christians played a critical role in the very formation of the Mongol aristocracy, even before the time of Genghis Khan. The Nestorians had already been established within China during the T’ang Dynasty in the Seventh century, but they were expelled along with the Buddhists and the Manichaeans in the Ninth century by a fanatical Taoist emperor (primarily for the wealth gained by seizing the extensive holdings of the various sects). Both the Nestorians and the Manichaeans came back in force with the Mongol hordes. Kublai Khan’s mother, in fact, was a Nestorian Christian, along with many of his leading officers throughout the empire.

The Polos made contact with both sects while in China, and helped the Manichaeans establish themselves with the Khan. The Manichaeans’ “World of Light/World of Darkness” gnostic ideology found fertile ground in Taoist *yin/yang* dualism, and in the Mahayana Buddhist sect’s denunciation of the material world as evil; it virtually merged with Buddhism, and later with Taoism, to the extent that one of the Manichaean texts was incorporated into the Taoist canon. The Mongols, heavily influenced by Taoism and by the extreme Tantric Buddhism of Tibet, found no problem accepting the Manichaeans into the fold. They also found agreement on the proscriptions against bathing—both Genghis Khan and Mani refused to bathe because it defiled the water!

\* Mani was a Third-century Persian gnostic whose dualistic doctrine of a “World of Light” and a “World of Darkness” came to be interlaced with Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and other gnostic sects, as well as Christianity, as it spread across Central Asia into China. Nestorius was a Fifth-century Patriarch of Constantinople, who denied the hypostasis of Christ as both God and man. Like Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity was centered in Persia, and accommodated itself to Zoroastrianism and other beliefs as it spread west to China. According to Nicolaus of Cusa, theological differences between Islam and Christianity on the question of the divinity of Christ, result from Nestorian influence on the Prophet Mohammed.

ingly open embrace of Russell's ideology by certain Western interests intent more on looting the mass pool of cheap labor in China, than in helping China develop as a modern nation. Sustaining this looting process depends on keeping the majority of the population in a state of utter backwardness and ignorance, while demanding ever greater "free-trade" reforms.

Such a policy of forced backwardness for the masses coheres with the ancient Taoist and Legalist view—that man is one with the beasts and the inert objects of nature, rather than *in the image of the Creator*, relegating the majority of China's population over generations to a state of degraded, unchanging manual toil in conditions not far removed from those of the animal species—which has been the source of the recurring breakdowns of civilization throughout Chinese history. It is this degraded view of man which, throughout history, has tended to corrupt the Confucian scholars, giving rise to the syncretic "Three Religions" movement, amalgamating Confucianism with atheistic Taoism and Buddhism.

## Chinese Legalism and 'Oriental Despotism'

Despotic rule is well known to the Chinese as Legalism, the name applied to the philosophical system which developed in direct opposition to Confucius and Mencius under the direction of, primarily, Shang Yang (c.390-338 B.C.) and Han Fei Tze (d.233 B.C.). Han Fei Tze was a student of Hsun Tze, considered by historians to be a Confucianist. The difference between Confucius and Hsun Tze, however, is as great as the difference between Plato and Aristotle. Confucius and, especially, Mencius viewed man as fundamentally good, as defined by the quality of "jen" (*agapē*, or humaneness) which is granted to man by Heaven as a reflection of the perfect *jen* of Heaven; Hsun Tze, on the other hand, like Aristotle, viewed man as devoid of any inherent qualities different from the beasts, which learn only through accumulated sense perceptions and instinctual reactions to rewards and punishments. Hsun Tze wrote:

The nature of man is evil; his goodness is acquired. His nature being what it is, man is born, first, with a desire for gain. . . . Second, he is born with envy and hate. . . . Third, man is born with passions. . . . To give rein to man's original nature and to yield to man's emotions will assuredly lead to strife and disorderliness and he will revert to a state of barbarism.

The only solution to man's evil nature, is for a powerful leader to impose order through harsh and strict pun-

ishments and rewards. This, not coincidentally, brings to mind the infamous quote from Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, that man is governed only by "original and immediate instincts: hunger, thirst, the passion that unites the two sexes, the love of pleasure, and the dread of pain."

This bestial view of man became the foundation of the first unified Chinese empire, the Ch'in. The Ch'in Dynasty lasted only fourteen years, from 221 to 207 B.C., during which time the Confucian classical texts were destroyed and those scholars who resisted were buried alive. The poor and indigent were declared guilty of the crime of poverty, and mobilized into slave brigades to build the Great Wall and other such projects. This followed the prescriptions of Legalist theoretician Shang Yang, who wrote:

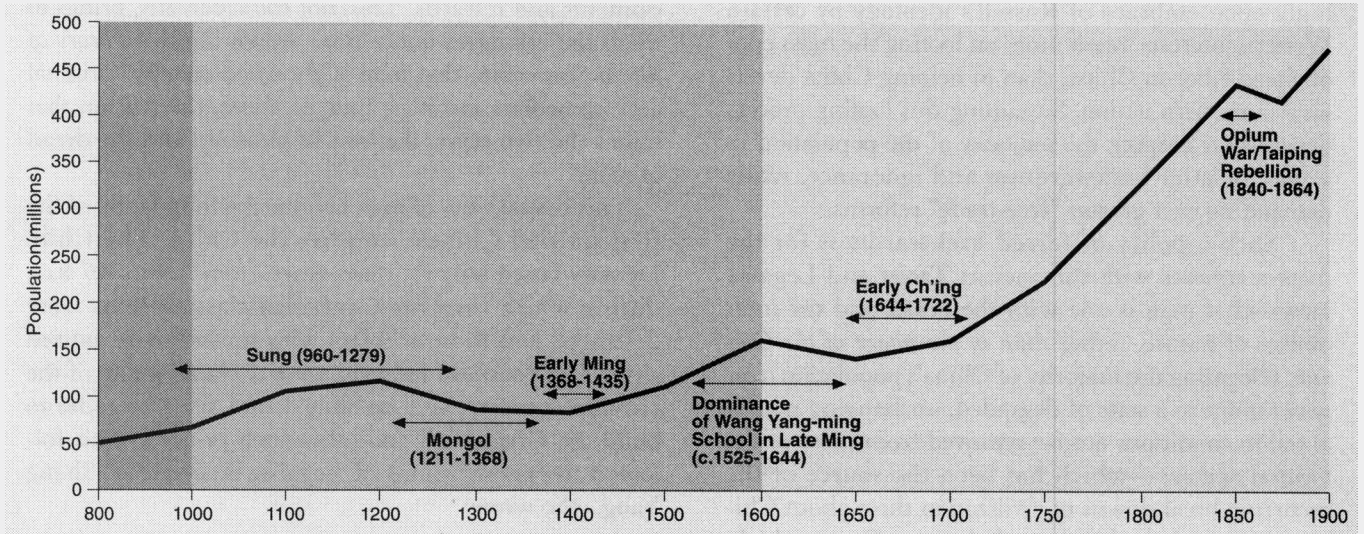
If the ruler levies money from the rich in order to give alms to the poor, he is robbing the diligent and frugal and indulging the lazy and extravagant. Poverty must be due either to laziness or to extravagant living.

Although the Legalist Ch'in Dynasty was overthrown soon after the death of its first Emperor, Ch'in Shi-huang, the Legalist doctrine remained a powerful influence throughout Chinese history, always confronting the Confucian worldview, and corrupting it when unable to replace it. Mao Zedong explicitly modeled his reign on that of the tyrant Ch'in Shi-huang, bragging that he killed even more "counter-revolutionary" intellectuals than did the Ch'in Emperor.

It is this "Legalist Oriental Despotism" which has been repeatedly seized by the Venetians as a *model* for the West, falsely crediting this degenerate form for the progress achieved in China during the periods guided by Confucianism, especially that of the Sung Dynasty Confucian Renaissance identified with the work of Chu Hsi and his associates during the Eleventh and Twelfth centuries.

Thus, the Venetian/British interests represented by the Club of the Isles<sup>4</sup> today, are attempting to impose their policies of enforced backwardness on China's interior, while exploiting the cheap labor driven into the coastal free trade zones. This "China Model" is then portrayed as the ideal to the rest of the developing sector, including, in particular, the glorification of the Taoist nature cult as the ideal for a world religion. Such Taoism is the core ideology of Prince Philip's Unity of Religions advocates, as well as the theoreticians of "Liberation Theology,"

4. See "The Coming Fall of the House of Windsor," *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 21, No. 43, Oct. 28, 1994, Special Report, pp. 12-71.



Rapid population growth accompanied the three major periods of influence of the Confucian (Sung) Renaissance, while population collapse followed each recurrence of Taoist/Legalist rule. In addition to the Sung period proper, there were two major revivals of Confucian ideas as guides to the institutions of the Empire, each leading to a period of dramatic economic, scientific, and cultural advance: First, the early Ming Dynasty, following the devastation of the Mongol occupation in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries; and second, the early Ch'ing Dynasty, following the collapse of the Ming in 1644. British Empire "Legalist" policies, combined with their manipulated anti-Confucian Taiping Rebellion, resulted in another population collapse during the Eighteenth Century.

Note changes in time scale at A.D. 1000 and 1600.

Source: Colin McEvedy and Richard Jones, *Atlas of World Population History*.

such as Catholic theologian Hans Küng and others associated with the World Council of Churches. In order to *prevent* a global, ecumenical alliance based on the concept, proposed by Pope Paul VI, that "Development is the new name for peace," Hans Küng and others have counterposed a pseudo-ecumenicism aimed at reducing *all* religions, emphatically the monotheistic religions of the West, to forms of pagan, Taoist ideology.<sup>5</sup>

## I. 'Natural Law' vs. 'Conscience' In the Middle Kingdom

To understand how the practitioners of the Eighteenth-century European Enlightenment used China in their battle to destroy the influence of Leibniz and the Platonic Christian tradition in Europe, it is necessary to investigate the foremost philosophical battle which defined the course of history in China—the parallel in Chinese culture to the conflict in the West between those advocating

the worldview of Plato on the one hand, and Aristotle on the other. The fundamental conflict of antiquity identified above, with Confucius and Mencius confronting the Taoists and the Legalists, has come down to modern times in the form of the conflict between the opposing ideas of Chu Hsi (A.D. 1130-1200) and Wang Yang-ming (A.D. 1472-1529).

Chu and Wang are, unfortunately, popularly described as the leaders of two different schools within the same general philosophical tradition, known as "Neo-Confucianism" in the West, just as Plato and Aristotle are often fraudulently linked together as co-thinkers in something called "Greek philosophy." Although Wang Yang-ming and his followers, even today, attempt to portray Chu and Wang's thought as compatible, with minor differences on secondary issues, they are in fact the antagonists of opposite, irreconcilable conceptions of man and man's role in the universe. Chu Hsi both revived and advanced the teachings of Confucius and Mencius from antiquity, whose ideas had been diluted and formalized, or outright discarded, over the centuries by the influences of Taoism, Buddhism, and the Legalist form of political despotism. Chu led a Confucian Renaissance, in part by developing a metaphysics which answered many questions left open by Confucius and Mencius, while counter-

5. Cf. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "What Is God, That Man Is in His Image?," *Fidelio*, Vol. IV, No. 1, Spring 1995.

宋  
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The philosopher Chu Hsi. His Sung Dynasty Neo-Confucian Renaissance laid the basis for rapid scientific and economic development.

ing the gnostic and empiricist metaphysics of the Taoists, and the mysticism of the Ch'an (Zen) Buddhists. Wang Yang-ming, three centuries later, unable to comprehend the fundamental ideas and method of Chu Hsi, and after more than twenty years as a Taoist, developed an amalgam of Taoist metaphysics and Confucian Rites, perverting the Confucian tradition and fostering an acceptance of an immoral syncretic mix of Confucianism, Taoism, and Ch'an Buddhism. This, we will see, was the ideology embraced by the Enlightenment figures in Europe.

## Chu Hsi

Chu Hsi took the fundamental concept of Confucianism, *jen* (humaneness, or humanity), and developed it in a way which is usefully compared to the concept of *agapē* in the New Testament. He complained that the term had been used to represent love, which was not wrong in itself, but which missed the essence of the concept intended by Confucius and Mencius. In an essay called "Treatise on *Jen*," Chu argued that *jen* is the "principle of love, the source of love, and that love can never exhaust *jen*." Reflecting the Christian notion of *agapē* as the Holy Spirit, which connects all things in the unity of God, Chu Hsi wrote:

*Jen* cannot be interpreted purely from the point of view of function, but one must understand the principle that *jen* has the ability to function. One should not regard the original substance of *jen* as one thing and its function as another. The meaning of *jen* must be found in one idea and one principle. Only then can we talk on a high level about a principle that penetrates everything. Otherwise it will be the so-called vague thusness and stupid Buddha nature.<sup>6</sup>

What distinguishes this higher notion of love, is that it is an active principle of change in the universe, rather than a Buddhist or Taoist feeling state which submerges the individual in a universal "all is one" soup of undifferentiated substance. Specifically, Chu says that "The mind of Heaven to produce things is *jen*. In man's endowment, he receives this mind from Heaven, and thus he can produce."<sup>7</sup>

It is this *jen*, subsuming the other fundamental Confucian virtues which are man's inborn gift from Heaven (righteousness, propriety, and wisdom), which defines man as fundamentally good, as Mencius, especially, insisted. Chu Hsi, aware that this was often misinterpreted, wrote: "Love is not *jen*; the principle of love is *jen*. The mind is not *jen*, the character of the mind is *jen*."<sup>8</sup> This was particularly aimed at a contemporary of Chu Hsi (Lu Hsiang-shan, the predecessor of Wang Yang-ming's ideas), who argued that the mind itself was *jen*, meaning that the mind alone, contemplating itself, was adequate to achieve sagehood, without any notion of *jen* permeating all the things in the universe, or any need to investigate those things. Wang Yang-ming was to argue later that the mind was able to know good from evil naturally, *without the need to study or investigate the laws of the universe, as if by intuition*. This he called "innate knowledge" (*liang chih*), a concept which he considered to be his major contribution to human knowledge. Chu Hsi had identified the problem with this concept long before Wang Yang-ming articulated it, arguing that it was the *capacity* of the mind to love, to study, to investigate, and to create which was the gift of Heaven, not a set of formal criteria inherently in the mind for making judgments. Chu wrote in regard to his contemporary Lu and (implicitly) Wang: "Their defect lies in completely discarding study and devoting themselves solely to practice. . . .

6. Quoted in Sato Hitoshi, "Chu Hsi's 'Treatise on Jen,' " in *Chu Hsi and Neo-Confucianism*, ed. by Wing-tsit Chan (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986).

7. Chu Hsi and Lu Tsu-ch'ien, *Reflections on Things At Hand*, trans. by Wing-tsit Chan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967).

8. *Yu-lei (The Collected Works of Chu Hsi)*, 20,124. English selections in *Learning To Be A Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu*, trans. by Daniel K. Gardiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

They even want people to be alert and intuit their original mind. This is their great defect.”<sup>9</sup>

While Chu repudiated the essentially atheistic view of the Buddhists and Taoists, that all things are made of a single substance, he believed that all things are created by the same Creator and reflect the universal principle of that Creator. This principle he called, simply, Principle (*Li*). The Universal Principle he equated with God, the Lord-on-High, the Supreme Ultimate, while he defined the nature of every created thing as its individual Principle (*li*), which partakes of the pure goodness and complete wholeness of Universal Principle. Man, alone, is created with the perfection of form which allows for the conscious investigation of the Principle of things, for the participation with the mind of Heaven in the production and creation of the universe.

*Li* is the Principle which underlies the laws of the universe, a concept of Natural Law which locates man’s capacity to know and participate in the unfolding development of the myriad things and events in the universe. Showing the Platonic/Christian nature of Chu’s conception of the relationship between God (Universal *Li*) and the created things (individual *li*’s), he emphasized repeatedly that: “*Li* is One, but its manifestations are many.” Leibniz, upon studying Chu Hsi’s ideas, recognized in the concept of the *Li* a notion very close to his own concept of the “monad” as the primitive substance of all things in the universe, without parts, extension or divisibility. Leibniz wrote: “Can we not say that the *Li* of the Chinese is the sovereign substance which we revere under the name of God?”<sup>10</sup> Chu Hsi distinguished the Universal *Li* from the *li* of the created things, including that of man, by the fact that the mind of Heaven, which is *Li*, is conscious and intelligent, but “it does not deliberate as in the case of man.”<sup>11</sup> The question of man’s free will is located within the perfect will of God.

Chu Hsi combines a negative and a positive theology in explaining the nature of God, the Universal *Li*. In equating *Li* with the Supreme Ultimate and the Ultimate of Non-being, Chu argues that

it occupies no position, has no shape or appearance. . . . It is prior to physical things, and yet has never ceased to be after these things came to be. It is outside *yin* and *yang* and yet operates within them, it permeates all form and is everywhere contained, and yet did not have in the beginning any

9. *Wen-chi* (*The Collected Letters of Chu Hsi*), 31;15b-16a.

10. G.W. Leibniz, “Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese,” in *G.W. Leibniz: Writings on China*, ed. by Daniel J. Cook and Henry Rosemont (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1994).

11. *Yu-lei, op. cit.*, 1,16 and 1,18.

sound, smell, shadow, or resonance that could have been ascribed to it.<sup>12</sup>

(Note that, whereas to the Taoists *yin* and *yang* represented the fundamental duality of the universe, Chu Hsi reduced them to being nothing more than the existence of opposites inherent in all created things, positive/negative, light/dark, etc., all subsumed in the unity of the real world defined by *Li*.)

Chu Hsi chose a passage from the Confucian classic *The Doctrine of the Mean*, with his own specific interpretation, in order to identify the foundation of the peace and well-being of society, as the act of the individual mind to “extend knowledge to the utmost, which lies in investigating the Principle in things to the utmost.” By making this invisible Principle, *Li*, which has no shape or other sensory aspects, the subject of investigation in the development of human knowledge, Chu Hsi laid the groundwork for a truly modern science, in a manner similar to that of Nicolaus of Cusa in the West in the Fifteenth century. Rather than empiricist methods of merely recording sensory data and deducing linear consequences of such appearances of things, Chu Hsi set the course for the investigation of the lawful causal relations in the developing universe, the investigation of Natural Law.

## Wang Yang-ming

The Mongol hordes swept across China in the decades immediately following Chu Hsi’s death in 1200, depopulating the country and destroying the Sung Renaissance. The revival of the Confucian tradition, and of Chu Hsi’s teachings in particular, under the Ming Dynasty that overthrew the collapsed Mongol rule in 1368, contributed to the promise of a renewed Renaissance in China. But by the 1430’s there was a reversal of the policies of development and global exploration of the early Ming leaders, and the dynasty entered a sustained period of decay and collapse.

In the late Fifteenth century, Wang Yang-ming emerged as the first of a series of philosophers who became known as the School of Mind, as opposed to Chu Hsi’s School of Principle. Julia Ching, a modern collaborator of Hans Küng whom we will meet again later, in her glowing biography of Wang Yang-ming, accurately compares him and his followers over the next century to Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and, especially, Heidegger.

12. Letter from Chu Hsi to Hsiang-shan, quoted in Julia Ching, *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

Wang dates his own development from a failed experiment that he and a friend carried out in 1492. Wishing to discover what Chu Hsi meant by his concept of *Li*, the young men decided to investigate the principle of something to the utmost, as Chu had suggested. They chose some bamboo in the garden of Wang's father. Like the people in Plato's cave, they sat and stared at the bamboo for days on end, failing to understand that Chu Hsi had demonstrated that the physical appearance of the bamboo was merely a shadow of its true nature, its *li*. They gave up without having discovered anything except that they were both getting sick.

Wang turned to Taoism and Ch'an Buddhism, and after many years, reflecting back on the experiment in his father's garden, he made the "discovery" that, "There is no object, no event, no moral principle [*Li*], no righteousness and no good that lies outside of the mind. To insist on seeking the supreme good in every event and object is to separate what is one into two."<sup>13</sup> It is from this sudden enlightenment that Wang developed his notion of *liang chih* mentioned above, which can be translated either as "innate knowledge" or "knowledge of the good." In place of Chu Hsi's emphasis on extending knowledge through the investigation of the principle in things, Wang Yang-ming wrote:

Extension of knowledge is not what later scholars understood as enriching and widening knowledge. It means simply extending my innate knowledge to the utmost. . . . The sense of right and wrong requires no deliberation to know and does not depend on learning to function. That is why it is called innate knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, what Chu Hsi ascribed only to God, namely, the capacity to act intelligently without deliberation, Wang Yang-ming ascribes to all mankind. Like the innate moral intuition of Descartes, and the categories of *a priori* judgment in Kant, Wang Yang-ming replaces the intelligibility of the laws of the universe and of the creative process with pure instinct, or at best a form of conscience. Wang argues that if one's intentions are sincere, then the "innate knowledge" will correctly guide one to the correct action. In fact, he specifically replaces Chu Hsi's scientific investigation with sincere intentions: "The work of seeking sincerity of intention is the same as the investigation of things."<sup>15</sup>

This rejection of any universal principle, in favor of a dependence on individual "conscience" or intuition, iden-

tifies a breakdown of the concept of man *in the living image of God*. Each individual is reduced to his own physical being, like a beast, confronting the world on the basis of a Hobbesian "all against all," lacking any universal criteria or measure for determining whether one's conscience or "innate knowledge," or any idea whatsoever, conforms with Natural Law. (The method by which universal criteria—Natural Law—may be applied to individual actions and discoveries, is the subject of Lyndon LaRouche's discovery in the science of physical economy, in which scientific truth is determined according to a metric which derives from the development of humanity as a whole.<sup>16</sup>)

It is lawful that, just as the ideas of Descartes and Kant led to the overt fascism of Nietzsche and Heidegger, so Wang Yang-ming's school generated the anarchy of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries in China (such as that of Li Chih, a Nietzsche-like figure of the late Sixteenth century) which brought down the Ming Dynasty.

It was precisely this question of the inadequacy of "following one's conscience" without any concept of a universal principle to inform the conscience, that Pope John Paul II addressed in his Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* in 1993, and upon which LaRouche elaborated in "The Truth About Temporal Eternity."<sup>17</sup> In this regard, it is worth quoting at length from the Pope's recent book, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, for two reasons: first, because he analyzes the Enlightenment in a way which demonstrates the close parallel to the Chu/Wang conflict in China; and, second, because it demonstrates sharply the difference between the views of the Pope and those of Julia Ching, quoted above, whose collaboration with Hans Küng in operations against China today will be reviewed below. Both Küng and Ching are nominal Catholics, while fully embracing the same ideologues of the Enlightenment here criticized by John Paul II.

In chapter 8 of his book, the Pope examines Descartes, who, he writes,

marks the beginning of a new era in the history of European thought, who . . . inaugurated the *great anthropocentric shift in philosophy*. "I think, therefore I am" . . . is the motto of modern rationalism. All the rationalism of the last centuries—as much in its Anglo-Saxon expression as in its Continental expression in Kantianism, Hegelianism, and the German philosophy of the Nineteenth and Twentieth

13. *Wang Wen-ch'eng kung ch'uan-shu (The Complete Works of Wang Yang-ming)*, 4;179b.

14. *Wang Wen-ch'eng kung ch'uan-shu, op. cit.*, 33;951a,b.

15. *Wang Wen-ch'eng kung ch'uan-shu, op. cit.*, 1;60a.

16. See, for example, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "On LaRouche's Discovery," *Fidelio*, Vol. III, No. 1, Spring 1994.

17. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "The Truth About Temporal Eternity," *Fidelio*, Vol. III, No. 2, Summer 1994.





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The Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (right) recognized that the coherence between the teachings of Christianity and those of Confucius (above), made Chinese civilization receptive to Western science.



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The scientist and philosopher G.W. Leibniz (above) studied Ricci's reports on Chinese society and culture. He organized for economic development of the entire Eurasian continent from Europe to China.

centuries up to Husserl and Heidegger—can be considered a continuation and an expansion of Cartesian positions. . . . [Descartes] *distanced us from the philosophy of existence*, and also from the traditional approaches of St. Thomas which led to God who is *autonomous existence* . . . . By making subjective consciousness absolute, Descartes moves instead toward *pure consciousness of the Absolute*, which is *pure thought*. Such an Absolute is not *autonomous existence*, but rather *autonomous thought*. Only that which corresponds to human thought makes sense. The objective truth of this thought is not as important as the fact that something exists in human consciousness.

This passage could be transposed virtually word for word, substituting Wang Yang-ming and his followers for Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger, and substituting Chu Hsi for St. Thomas Aquinas. Wang's *liang chih*, like Descartes' "I think, therefore I am," replaces the Absolute, the Supreme Ultimate, the Universal *Li*, of Chu Hsi, with the totally subjective Absolute of the mind. Wang Yang-ming even writes: "The mind is *Li*. Is there any affair in the world which is outside the mind? Is there any virtue which is outside the mind?"<sup>18</sup>

18. Wang Wen-ch'eng *kung ch'uan-shu*, *op. cit.*, 1;56a.

Pope John Paul II continues, that Descartes created the climate in which, within 150 years,

all that was *fundamentally Christian* in the tradition of European thought *had already been pushed aside*. This was the time of the Enlightenment in France, when *pure rationalism held sway*. The French Revolution, during the Reign of Terror, knocked down the altars dedicated to Christ, tossed crucifixes into the streets, introduced the cult of the goddess of Reason.

The Pope should have added, that these practitioners of the Enlightenment also beheaded Lavoisier, declaring that the Revolution had no need for science. The "Reason" worshipped by the Enlightenment was not the Divine Spark which guided Nicolaus of Cusa, Kepler, and Leibniz in the creation of modern science, but the empiricist, subjective logic of Aristotle, which can be used to justify anything at all, no matter how evil or destructive.

Wang Yang-ming also attacked the "scholars of these later days," as he referred to Chu Hsi and his supporters, on the issue of Taoism and Ch'an Buddhism. While insisting in his later life that he was not only a Confucian but the true philosophic descendant of Confucius and Mencius, he nonetheless wrote:

The practices of the two teachings [Ch'an Buddhism and Taoism] can all be my practices. . . . But certain scholars of these later ages have not understood the completeness of the teachings of the Sages [Confucius and Mencius]. For this reason, they have distinguished themselves from the two teachings as though there exist two views of truth.

This has, through the ages, served those who advocate Taoist gnosticism, but who, for political reasons, need to pay lip service to Confucianism. In this regard, it is not surprising that Wang Yang-ming believed in what is now called "appropriate technology" for the peasant masses, whose lives, he insisted, should remain the same, generation after generation, unfettered by knowledge of the laws of the physical universe or by economic development. Wang praised the golden age of Yao and Shun, the semi-mythical emperors of the Third millennium B.C., when he claimed (contrary to the historical record as written by Confucius), "there was no pursuit after the knowledge of seeing and hearing to confuse them, no memorization and recitation to hinder them, no writing of flowery composition to indulge in, and no chasing after success and profit."<sup>19</sup> This is the model of "Oriental Despotism" so desired by the Venetian designers of the Enlightenment.

Although the characterization of China as the model of "Enlightened Despotism" was a construct based on the worst tendencies in Chinese history and society, it is nonetheless the case that Chu Hsi and his school, who created the Confucian Renaissance during the Sung Dynasty, never proposed or discussed any notion of the concept of the modern nation-state. In the West, Nicolaus of Cusa, building on the Christian Platonist concept of Natural Law developed by St. Augustine and St. Thomas, posed the necessity of establishing government on the basis of the consent of a free and informed citizenry, drawing on the Divine Spark of reason in man to derive laws, and for the people to participate in the process of empowering or removing governments according to their adherence to Natural Law.<sup>20</sup> As Lyndon LaRouche has noted recently in regard to the Augustinian notion of Natural Law before the time of Cusa, it remained "contemplative," never becoming adopted as the basis of political society. This could also be applied to Chu Hsi and the leaders of the Confucian Renaissance. Chu Hsi advocated the extension of education to all children, and even wrote children's books toward that purpose, while he also sponsored books and

educational programs on agricultural technology for farmers; but he never proposed the kind of nation-state which was necessary for his educational initiatives to succeed against the policies of those who believed it served their purposes to keep the masses in a state of ignorance.

The Mongol invasion crushed any potential for further development. Subsequently, as the Ming Dynasty declined, Wang Yang-ming and his followers destroyed the concept of Natural Law altogether in a manner similar to the Seventeenth-century European theorists Hugo Grotius and Samuel Pufendorf, who divorced Natural Law from moral theology.<sup>21</sup> In the Chinese case, Natural Law was replaced, at best, by the Rites—codes of proper conduct and the veneration of ancestors, as well as philosophical explications of moral beliefs and standards, which were compiled over centuries. Important as such customs are for a society, they must be recognized as *derived* from Natural Law, not as Natural Law itself. Giving the Rites the force of Natural Law, creates the potential for those Rites to become a means of distortion and oppression, rather than a means of celebrating the underlying truths they reflect.

Set free from its moorings in the Absolute, in Universal Truth, custom is rendered subject to the vagaries of individual intentions. As with Nietzsche, and as with the Sixteenth-century anarchist Li Chih, such "freedom" from the Absolute opens the door to arbitrarily changing or discarding the Rites, the customs, altogether—and hence, creating the conditions for the spread of anarchy and fascism.

While the Ming Dynasty was thus degenerating, Matteo Ricci and his fellow Jesuit missionaries arrived in China in 1581, and by the early Seventeenth century were active within the Ming court. When the Manchurians overthrew the Ming in 1644, the Jesuits quickly established themselves with the new Ching Dynasty ruler. Relations with the first Ching emperors were such that the education of the crown prince was entrusted in part to the Jesuits, together with classical Confucian training. It was this young man who became the famous K'ang Hsi Emperor, under whom the collaboration between East and West reached its highest level, with Leibniz personally leading the European side in collaboration with the Jesuits in China. The science of the Golden Renaissance and the revived Chu Hsi School of Confucian scholarship within China, served to fuel an era of extraordinary scientific and cultural advance, brought to an end primarily by the ene-

19. Wang Yang-ming *ch'uan-chi, chuan hsi lu*, 2:118.

20. William F. Wertz, Jr., "Man Measures His Intellect Through the Power of His Works," *Fidelio*, Vol. III, No. 4, Winter 1994.

21. *Ibid.*

mies of Leibniz and the Renaissance in Europe, during the so-called Rites Controversy.<sup>22</sup>

## II. The European Enlightenment And the Middle Kingdom

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The three primary figures who led the Eighteenth-century China craze in Europe—Christian Wolff, Voltaire, and François Quesnay—were all involved in direct operations to destroy the influence of the Renaissance, and of Leibniz in particular. All three considered the same fundamental question which Leibniz had posed to himself: *what must be concluded from the evidence that China had developed a thriving culture, with an extremely high population density and a relatively advanced state of economic development and education, at the time of the arrival of the Jesuit missionaries, despite its being generally isolated from European science, culture and religion?* Leibniz concluded that something within the dominant worldview of the Chinese must cohere with the great truth discovered during the Christian Renaissance pertaining to the application to society of the concept of man created *in the image of God*. The Enlightenment enemies of Leibniz concluded quite differently, that the answer lay merely in the structure of China's existing government and institutional forms. With this empiricist sleight of hand, the entire effort to unite East and West on the basis of an ecumenical agreement on the vision of man as *imago viva Dei*, was scrapped—together with the potential for Eurasian-wide economic development. What emerged instead, was Venetian glorification of “Oriental Despotism.”

The period following the death of the K'ang Hsi Emperor in 1722 saw a rapid retreat into the “Three Religions” movement, and a slow death of the potential of the K'ang Hsi period. The Emperors Yung Cheng (reigned 1723-35) and Ch'ien Lung (reigned 1736-95)

were, perhaps understandably, disgusted with the Christians, for what they viewed as duplicity and idiocy over the preceding Rites Controversy. Voltaire was to quote with delight the edict of Yung Cheng, expelling the Christians: “What would you think if I sent bonzes and lamas to your country? If you fooled my father, could you not also try to fool me?” Several of the Jesuits who had become indispensable to the court were allowed to remain, but it is perhaps indicative of the general degeneracy of the entire situation that one of the primary tasks of the remaining Jesuits was to use their architectural skills to construct not a cathedral, but a duplicate of a grand French chateau, with rococo ornaments and fountains, for the emperor's summer palace!

The earlier K'ang Hsi Emperor's 1692 edict welcoming and encouraging the missionaries of all orders to vastly expand their numbers in China, and extending the right to settle and teach throughout the empire, had symbolized the government's commitment to spread the new Western learning throughout the population. The fact that the missionaries openly opposed the Taoist and Buddhist sects did not deter K'ang Hsi from this approach, although as sovereign he did not himself attempt to suppress the sects' activities. His successors, however, not only threw all but a few Christian missionaries out, but themselves reverted to Buddhist and Taoist beliefs. The economy and general welfare of the nation, including the rapid population growth, were more or less sustained through the Eighteenth century by the tremendous developments of the previous K'ang Hsi period, but at a decreasing rate. The impulse for progress and the process of assimilation of Renaissance scientific method were lost. The gradual weakening of the country, intensified by the massive British drug smuggling of Indian-grown opium in the early Nineteenth century, left China virtually defenseless before the British invasion forces of the 1840's, 1850's, and 1860's.

Throughout the Eighteenth century, the Society of Jesus was fighting for its very existence, culminating in the complete suppression of the Order in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV. The history of the Jesuits' role as one pole of the disastrous, Venetian-controlled “Reformation/Counter-Reformation” battles of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, is beyond the scope of this work [SEE “Venice's War Against Western Civilization,” this issue, p. 4], but it can be generally asserted that in the Eighteenth century, the Venetian-allied forces of the Enlightenment across Europe attacked the Jesuits as the target of convenience in their effort to destroy the Catholic Church. The Jesuit missionaries in China, for nearly 150 years after Ricci's arrival in 1581, had been largely untainted by the Reformation conflict or the Draconian policies of the Council of Trent, and saw them-

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22. After over a century of acrimonious debate, opponents in Europe of Matteo Ricci's method of collaborating with the Confucian scholars on issues of philosophy and science, led by the Dominican Friar Domingo Navarrete, finally succeeded in convincing the Vatican to denounce the Confucian Rites of ancestor veneration, the honoring of Confucius, and related practices, as pagan religious acts, which were to be forbidden to all Christian converts. This effectively destroyed the Christian mission in China, since the Rites were the basis of morality in civil society, and no Chinese leader could allow them to be undermined. Only in the 1940's, did the Vatican reverse this unfortunate ruling against the Rites. See Michael O. Billington, “Toward the Ecumenical Unity of East and West: The Renaissances of Confucian China and Christian Europe,” *Fidelio*, Vol. II, No. 2, Summer 1993.

selves primarily as emissaries of Christ, the Pope, and the best of European science and culture in a non-Christian land. However, by the 1720's, the Jesuit missionaries had lost the fight over the Rites in China, and the Rites Controversy itself—in a distorted form—became one of the issues of the attacks and counter-attacks between the Order and its opponents in Europe. Most of the missionaries were expelled from China, and those who remained were mere appendages of the court under anti-Christian, and only superficially Confucian, emperors. Those Jesuits who had contributed so much through their inspired commitment to the evangelization of China were mostly gone. Those who remained were, to a great extent, more interested in appeasing the (Taoist-Buddhist) prejudices of the court, in order to retain their already reduced status, than they were in combatting those prejudices.

The Emperor K'ang Hsi had been rightfully praised for both his dedication to Western science and his openness to the Christian/Confucian ecumenical alliance. The Jesuits of the following period, however, turned to propitiating K'ang Hsi's successors, who did not share his views of science or religion.

A new comprehensive text on China was published in 1735 by the Jesuit Father Jean Baptiste DuHalde, *Description de l'Empire de la Chine*. DuHalde had never traveled to China, and his text was generally considered to be uncritical at best, conceived more towards the purpose of defending the Jesuits as an institution than to advance the understanding of China. DuHalde's work, rather than the more competent writings of Ricci and his followers, became the primary source used by the Enlightenment figures.

Much of DuHalde's four-volume work was dedicated to detailed descriptions of the structure and working of the government (including 350 pages of verbatim imperial edicts and announcements). He ascribed the peace and prosperity of China to the emperor's paternalistic role towards the people, and to the respect accorded farmers. Wrote DuHalde:

Agriculture is in great esteem; and the husbandmen, whose profession is looked upon as the most necessary one in a state, are of considerable rank, for they are preferred to merchants and mechanics, besides having large privileges.

However, this "esteem" took the form of glorifying the primitive state of agricultural labor, rather than as a commitment to uplift the livelihood of the peasantry. This is evident in a passage in François Quesnay's *Despotism in China*, which drew heavily on DuHalde's work. Quesnay reports glowingly of the Emperor Yung Cheng ordering each province to choose a farmer who had done well in all aspects of his work: "This estimable farmer is

elevated to the degree of Mandarin of the eighth order, and he enjoys nobility and all the prerogatives attached to the rank of Mandarin." Those familiar with the dark days of the Cultural Revolution will recall that this was precisely the approach of Mao Zedong, who elevated workers and peasants to the rank of Politburo members, to glorify the role of menial labor, regardless of education. One worker went on to become a member of Madame Mao's Gang of Four, which instigated the mad "mass movements" that destroyed the country.

## Christian Wolff

Christian Wolff has gone down in history as the person who carried on the work of Leibniz in the realm of philosophic inquiry. That this is an absurd notion is demonstrated by the fact that Wolff was also known as the "German Newton," a far more accurate characterization. The young Wolff was a friend and correspondent of Leibniz, and later became the self-styled "systematizer" of Leibniz's philosophy, a process of stripping Leibniz of any living ideas and placing the quartered corpse in pre-arranged coffins. The concept of *monads* did not fit into Wolff's systematization, and was therefore simply left out!

In the words of historian Julia Ching, who admires Wolff:

Wolff inherited Leibniz's vision of a universe of harmony, but he tended to reduce it from the very complex pluralistic model drawn from infinite calculus, to the more systematically rationalistic and sometimes dualistic model in part derived from a clear and distinct Cartesian and geometrical understanding.<sup>23</sup>

Wolff's writings are so pedantic and vacuous that one is tempted to dismiss him entirely. However, he is described by Kant as the "greatest of dogmatic philosophers," and Hegel said that Wolff "defined the world of consciousness for Germany and for the world in general, in the same sense in which we may say that this was done by Aristotle."<sup>24</sup> Wolff became the primary influence on German education throughout the Eighteenth century before Kant.



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23. Julia Ching and Willard G. Oxtoby, *Moral Enlightenment: Leibniz and Wolff on China* (Nettetal: Institut Monumenta Serica, 1992).

24. *Ibid.*

Despite this reputation, Wolff was not even the originator of the concepts associated with his name. Antonio Conti, the Venetian who created the myths concerning the works of Sir Isaac Newton, began a correspondence with Wolff shortly before the time of Leibniz's death, just as he later established a friendship with the keeper of the Leibniz papers. Conti had offered himself as the "mediator" between Newton and Leibniz on the dispute over Newton's plagiarism of the calculus developed by Leibniz. Conti's intent was to convince Leibniz to accept the decision of the Royal Society. Conti later went to France to build an attack on Leibniz's *Monadology*, and brought Montesquieu and Voltaire into his orbit, creating the French Enlightenment as an Anglophile opposition to Leibniz under the direction of Venice. Wolff played an early role in this Venetian gameplan, as would Voltaire and Quesnay later in the century.

We need only look at Wolff's work in regard to China, to recognize the role he played in destroying the Leibniz tradition in Europe. Wolff became famous as the leading Sinophile of his age. His speeches and writings on China never even mention Leibniz—the best known China expert in Europe—despite Wolff's claim to being the foremost expert on Leibniz! The reason is clear: he was not in the least bit interested in the philosophic ideas of the Chinese people, but only in using an idealized picture of the Chinese system of government and ethics as a model to "prove" the viability of oligarchical policies in general.

The two primary concepts promoted by Wolff were to become popularized later in the century as "Deism" and "Enlightened Despotism." Wolff was fixated on the ethical system of the Chinese and the political structures of their government. He never mentions Chu Hsi, nor attempts to address any of the metaphysical issues which were the primary subject of the voluminous publications of Leibniz and the Jesuits in China. His referenced sources were in fact very limited, primarily the translations of a few of the texts of Confucius and short excerpts from other Chinese philosophers, together with the 1735 DuHalde book and others that depended on DuHalde. He chose to side with the enemies of Leibniz on the fundamental question at the center of the "Rites Controversy"; namely, whether or not the ancient Chinese philosophers believed in God. Wolff writes—in direct contradiction to Leibniz, and without any attempt at proof: "The ancient Chinese knew no Author of the Universe and had no natural religion, even less a revealed one."<sup>25</sup> From

this he proceeded to assert that the Chinese had learned morality entirely from nature (without any form of Divine guidance) and lived by that morality far better than the Christian nations of Europe. This became the battle cry of the Deists, who across Europe held up the Chinese as the proof that Christianity and religion in general were quite unnecessary. "Reason" alone, they said, was adequate to guide the individual and the nation to the truth.

But what was their notion of "reason?" Wolff writes:

Any series of thoughts carried on by the operations of the mind can be distinctly explained by formal syllogisms, just as the gait of a human being is explained by static laws of motion and rest.<sup>26</sup>

Since no fundamental discovery, nor any creative thought, can be expressed as a formal syllogism—which is capable only of deductions within a given axiomatic structure—Wolff was therefore denying the mind's capacity to discover new, higher systems of axioms when confronted with contradictions in the existing body of human knowledge. But this is the very quality of mind which distinguishes man from the beasts, which defines man as *in the image of God*. Wolff's mechanism is totally alien to the discoveries of the Christian Platonist Leibniz and his Renaissance forebears.

Not surprisingly, Wolff also comes down on the Taoist side of the controversy between Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-ming. Although Wolff was either unfamiliar with, or simply chose to ignore, the Sung Confucians of the Chu Hsi school, his interpretation, whether or not influenced directly by any follower of a particular school, was the same as that of the Taoist-tainted perversions of Wang Yang-ming. For example: Wolff, to his credit, does argue against those who define reason as derived only from sense perception, correctly claiming that such a view leaves man as not fundamentally different from the beasts. But he then asserts the following concerning those who elevate their minds to the "rational" level: "They determine their good actions by their free will and need no Superior to persevere in the good, because they know the intrinsic difference between good and evil, and they are able to explain this to others." The knowledge of good and evil is simply programmed in, as in Wang Yang-ming's *liang chih*. Wolff's rejection of the need for a "Superior" is, in fact, the rejection of universal truth, of Chu Hsi's *Li*, and is an invitation to the depravity of moral relativism which characterized both the European

25. Christian Wolff, "Discourse on the Practical Philosophy of the Chinese" (1721), in Julia Ching and Willard G. Oxtoby, *Moral Enlightenment, op. cit.*

26. Christian Wolff, "On the Philosopher King and the Ruling Philosopher" (1730), in Julia Ching and Willard G. Oxtoby, *Moral Enlightenment, op. cit.*

Enlightenment and the Chinese “Enlightenment” of the late Ming under the influence of Wang Yang-ming.

Wolff pointed to two aspects of Chinese society which he was to hold up to his students (including the young Frederick the Great, and Frederick’s friend Voltaire) as models to be emulated: one was the educational system; the other was the role of the Emperor as a “philosopher king.”

Wolff described the Chinese educational system according to his own acknowledged belief in Aristotle’s division of the soul into two parts, the sensitive and the rational. The Chinese, he said, were aware of this division, and correctly divided the schools accordingly into two parts, called the “schola parvulorum” (*hsiao hsue*) and the “schola adultorum” (*ta hsue*). The infant school was intended to address the inferior part of the soul, providing only practical education. Select youth, however, were sent to the adult school to develop their minds, rather than just their physical skills.<sup>27</sup>

It is true that Chinese education did tend to degenerate in this direction, but this was a total perversion of the intention of those who designed the educational system. The term “*ta hsue*” comes from the Confucian classic of that name (usually translated *The Great Learning* or *Learning for Adults*), which was chosen by Chu Hsi as a central text for the Confucian canon, and “*hsiao hsue*” was the title of a book written by Chu Hsi himself as a guide for children before they could comprehend the classics—certainly not as a “practical education” course for the inferior classes. In fact, the Sung Dynasty in the time of Chu Hsi (Twelfth century) was the era of the first mass printing of books in the world. Most of the books were either Confucian classics, or technical books on agronomy, hydraulics, and related technologies for agriculture. Educational policies of this renaissance era were oriented toward expanding the number of farmers capable of reading these books, while also encouraging the best students to continue their studies to prepare for the strenuous classical exams demanded for obtaining a government position.

Wolff’s Aristotelian form of education was in fact not that of the Confucians, but that of the Legalists, who selected an elite to be provided with a “classical” education, in accordance with their view of Natural Law as the law of power over the peasant masses, while the peasants were denied any training beyond the physical skills needed to perform their duties in the fields.

The second aspect emphasized by Wolff, was that of the role of the emperor as a “philosopher king.” In a lecture presented in 1750 entitled “The Real Happiness of a People Under a Philosopher King Demonstrated,” Wolff returns to the Chinese emperors of deep antiquity—the semi-mythical rulers of the Third millennium B.C.—who, he asserts, “settled that model of government wherein it now excels over all other models in the world.” He rejects the Renaissance notion of the nation-state, based on an educated citizenry, in favor of the model of a feudal state which treats the population as children who will never grow up.

Wolff simply ignores the crucial issue in Confucianism, as to when one should *not* serve a prince who fails in his duties. Nor does he address the importance of the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven.” The idea of the “Mandate,” central to Confucius’ own writings, holds that the qualities of leadership are ultimately tested within the development of the physical economy. “If there shall be distress and want among the people within the empire, the title and honor which God has given to you will be taken away from you forever,” said the ancient Emperor Yao to his successor Shun. Wolff seems oblivious to the recurring periods of chaos and collapse in this supposedly “perfect model of government” established four thousand years ago.

Although Wolff did not declare himself to be a Deist, his views were so clearly anti-Christian (and atheistic, in fact) that he became the center of a European-wide controversy that dramatically affected the subsequent developments of the Eighteenth century. In 1721 he presented a lecture at Halle called “The Practical Philosophy of the Chinese.” His glorification of Confucianism, which he misportrayed as atheistic, provoked an outcry from numerous quarters. One of the Pietists at Halle said of Wolff: “It is a poor philosophy for a Christian thinker to hold which has nothing more to recommend it than that it displays a certain similarity to the teachings of a heathen philosopher.” When King Frederick William I of Brandenburg-Prussia eventually ordered Wolff out of town within forty-eight hours, all of educated Europe lined up for or against Wolff. The Jesuits, in a move that clearly demonstrated that they had deserted the position of their own China missionaries, defended Wolff and his distorted view of China, and even had his speech printed in several languages. In the process, the Crown Prince Frederick (later Frederick the Great) became one of Wolff’s defenders. The King ultimately relented and cleared Wolff of the charges in 1736. Wolff then became highly influential in the court, and the Crown Prince (and later King) had all of Wolff’s writings translated into French and forwarded to his friend Voltaire. Freder-

27. Donald F. Lach, “The Sinophilism of Christian Wolff,” in *Discovering China: European Interpretations in the Enlightenment*, ed. by Julia Ching and Willard G. Oxtoby, Library of the History of Ideas Vol. VII (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1992).

ick the Great was later to write his *Anti-Machiavelli*, describing his notion of the “Enlightened Despot,” based on the writings of Wolff and Voltaire.

## Voltaire

Wolff, when severely attacked as a Deist, attempted to defend himself by making pseudo-criticisms of the Chinese that were intended to appease his Christian attackers. Voltaire, however, did not feel such a compunction to cover his rear.

Voltaire was far better read in the Chinese literature than Wolff. He accepted the Jesuits’ analysis that the Chinese believed in God. But he drastically modified their notion of God in order to serve his own purposes—those of the libertine, in the service of his Venetian sponsors. Like his mentor Pierre Bayle, who had revived Manichaeism and other Oriental cults in order to attack Christianity, Voltaire glorified and distorted Confucianism as a foil to argue for the uselessness of Christianity. He lauded the Chinese for believing in a Supreme Being, without the “superstitious” concepts of Heaven and, especially, Hell (obviously anxious that he not be held accountable!). He praised Confucianism for having no dogma—which he viewed as the scourge of Christianity—without ever mentioning the crucial role and importance of the Rites, which certainly constituted a kind of “dogma,” in the Confucian worldview. The learned Voltaire could not have been ignorant of these Rites; he chose to ignore them because they were inconvenient. In fact, Voltaire portrayed Confucius as the perfect Deist, who believed in a Supreme Being but rejected all “superstition.” He had a portrait of Confucius facing him on the wall opposite his desk, with the following poem attached:

Only from wholesome reason does he interpret,  
Without dazzling the world, enlightening the spirit.  
He speaks only as a sage, not as a prophet.  
Nonetheless, he was believed, and even in his own country.

Voltaire’s intention was also to target the emerging development of the nation-state, as it had been championed by Leibniz, Colbert, and others. Like Wolff, he praised the Chinese form of government as “completely founded on paternal powers.” While he denounced Bud-



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dhism and Taoism as mere superstitions—equating them with Christianity in the West!—his actual purpose is revealed by his argument that Buddhism and Taoism were necessary for the commoners, whose “ignorant minds demand a coarse food.”<sup>28</sup> He pointed out that the paternalistic Emperor was careful to keep the priests of Buddhism and Taoism under tight control—a policy Voltaire recommended towards Christianity by the “Enlightened Despots” of Europe.

However, despite Voltaire’s pretension to despise Buddhism, it is instructive to quote a lengthy passage from one of the primary gurus of Chinese Buddhism, Tsung-mi (A.D. 780-841). Tsung-mi was regarded as the last patriarch of both the Hua Yen school and the Ch’an (Zen) school, both distinctly Chinese versions of Buddhism which developed out of the interaction of Indian Buddhism with Taoism. Tsung-mi’s *On the Original Nature of Man* was written as a negative response to an essay of the same name written by Han Yu, the only significant Confucian scholar of the T’ang Dynasty. Tsung-mi writes in defense of Karma and Reincarnation as the origin of man, rather than Heaven:

Why does Heaven decree that there should be so many poor and so few rich, so many base and so few high born, so many unfortunate beings and so few fortunate ones, and so on? If the allotment lies in Heaven, why is it so inequitable?

Moreover, how can we explain that there are some of high status who have done no good deeds; that some are rich yet without virtue, while others are virtuous and yet are poor? That some benevolent men die early in life, while tyrants live to a ripe old age? If these are based on the will of Heaven, then Heaven gives prosperity to those who offend and destroys those who conform to the Way.

If calamities, disorders, and rebellion are dependent on the will of Heaven, then for the sages to have established teachings which blame man, and not Heaven, or find fault not with Heaven, but with its creatures, was wrong indeed.<sup>29</sup>

This classic Buddhist sentiment, rejecting the world as evil and full of suffering, was a response to the Confucian belief that the world was created by a loving God, who granted man the power, through reason, to master the laws of nature and of human development. Voltaire shared with the Buddhists this disgust for the Christian/Confucian concept of the basic goodness of man and the world, and expressed it most viciously in his diatribe

28. Arnold H. Rowbotham, “Voltaire Sinophile,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, Vol. 47, No. 4, December 1932.
29. *The Buddhist Tradition in India, China, and Japan*, ed. by Theodore DeBary (New York: Vintage Books, 1972).

against Leibniz's notion that God had created the "best of all possible worlds." He may well have found inspiration for his *Candide* from such Buddhist sources.

## François Quesnay

Leibniz had studied the "natural theology" of the Chinese, focussing on the metaphysics of Confucius, Mencius, and Chu Hsi, to the purpose of demonstrating coherence with the Renaissance Christian concept of man, as defined by the capacity for creative thought to bring about change in the universe. Wolff, on the other hand, ignored metaphysics altogether in favor of a Cartesian rationalism, denying that the Chinese even had a theology, but only a set of ethical codes derived from nature. François Quesnay was to take this a step further, claiming for the Chinese the discovery of codified laws for both ethical conduct and economic policy which derived directly from Natural Law—some of his students credited him with "filling out" the details of the Natural Law for society discovered by the Chinese. Thus, the concept of Natural Law had been transformed from "laws of creation," into nothing but static rules of conduct and social organization. (This followed from Pufendorf, who accepted as "natural," the setting of laws and customs by those in authority. Leibniz specifically criticized Pufendorf for asserting Natural Law to lie not "in the nature of things and in the precepts of right reason which conform to it, which emanate from the Divine understanding, but . . . in the command of a superior."<sup>30</sup>) Thus, Quesnay's view followed that of Wang Yang-ming, in rejecting the Universal Principle (*Li*) of Heaven in favor of the unrestrained "innate knowledge" of the rulers.

Quesnay was a physician in the palace of Louis XV when he formed the circle of economists known as the Physiocrats during the 1750's. Like Wolff, he had been deeply influenced by the Venetian Antonio Conti. He opposed the mercantilists' promotion of manufacturing and trade, arguing that the land was the only source of



The Granger Collection, New York

wealth. The lunacy of his method of argument is demonstrated by his division of all nations into different "types"—such as, "agricultural nation," "commercial nation," "pastoral nation," "fishing nation," and so forth. He concluded that, "Agricultural nations alone can establish fixed and lasting empires under a general and invariable government, subject directly to the immutable order of Natural Law."<sup>31</sup> He insisted that an economy functioning according to Natural Law will tend toward a state of economic equilibrium [SEE Box, p. 50].

Quesnay's 1767 book *Despotism in China*, begins with a strained effort to provide a positive meaning to the term "despot." A good despot, he argues, is one who is not an arbitrary usurper of power, but one trained as a philosopher who governs according to Natural Law. It was Quesnay who first coined the term "Enlightened Despotism," which he derived from his vision of China:

The Constitution of the government of China is based upon Natural Law in such an irrefutable and so emphatic a manner that it deters the sovereign from doing evil and assures him in his legitimate administration, supreme power in doing good; so that this authority is a beatitude for the ruler and an idolized rule for the subjects.

That this requires passive subjects is considered a blessing, not a problem:

There are no people more submissive to their sovereign than the Chinese, for they are well instructed concerning the reciprocal duties of the ruler and his subjects.

Quesnay held that the natural order dictates perpetual rural backwardness for the majority of the population. It is not surprising that he has great disdain for the average Chinese, even while praising the glory of the state. The Mandarin elite, he said, protected themselves from superstitions by following strict codes of conduct, overseen by a Tribunal which ruled against any appearance of heterodoxy. Quesnay writes: "By this severity the Chinese scholars have protected themselves from the stupid superstition which reigns among the rest of the people"—Quesnay is referring to Buddhism and Taoism. But, he argues, there is nothing that can be done to uplift the mass of the people subject to these superstitions, since they are naturally lacking in intelligence:

There have always been, in all kingdoms of the world, reasoners whose minds do not extend beyond paralogism or incomplete argument; this is a defect in mental capacity common not only in metaphysics, but also in tangible things, and extends even into human laws.

30. G.W. Leibniz, "Opinion on the Principle of Pufendorf (1706)," in *Leibniz: Political Writings*, 2nd. ed., ed. and trans. by Patrick Riley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

31. François Quesnay, "Despotism in China," in Lewis A. Maverick, *China, A Model for Europe* (San Antonio: Paul Anderson Co., 1946).



# Venetian Economics: Roots of Quesnay's Physiocrats, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx

The seedlings of academia's currently generally accepted economic dogmas, such as those of Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, Karl Marx, and their successors, were planted in France during the first half of the Eighteenth century, under the direction of an internationally very influential Venetian abbot of that century, Antonio Conti. The leading figure of this concoction of fake economic theory, called the Physiocratic dogma, was Conti asset and founder of the dogma of "free trade"—*laissez faire*—Dr. François Quesnay. The entirety of the British East India Company's Haileybury school in political-economy, including Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, James Mill, John Stuart Mill, and so on, are all rooted in the dogmas of Quesnay *et al.* Marx, too. Virtually everything taught as "economics" in universities today, and virtually everything still accepted as "economics orthodoxy" by most governments and other institutions, is an offshoot of this same pseudo-scientific fustian.

## Three Theories of 'Surplus Value'

By the Eighteenth century, modern European experience (i.e., since A.D. 1440) had established two facts, beyond plausible objection, from the successes which the "commonwealth" revolution had wrested, despite political set-backs, from the oligarchical reaction: First, that the wealth of nations, *per capita* and *per square kilometer*, had been increased in a manner exceeding all earlier experience of barbarism and feudalism; and, second, that this growth was rooted in the benefits derived from a margin of produced surplus product, representing gains in output, relative to the prior investment in the production yielding this enlarged output. . . .

The three principal varieties of metaphysical kookery devised by anti-commonwealth doctrinaires to address this matter of marginal surplus are, in succession:

1. The Physiocrats' attribution of "surplus" to a biological epiphenomenon of the feudal ownership of rural property. The adoption of the Physiocrat Quesnay's dogma of "free trade" (*laissez faire*).
2. The British East India Company's revision of the Physiocratic dogma, to define "surplus" as an epiphenomenon of Adam Smith's "Invisible Hand,"

an epiphenomenon of merchants' truck and barter in opium, slaves, and other items of "exchange value." Smith *et al.* adopt the "free trade" dogma of Quesnay as a central feature of their doctrine (although the pre-1963 British Empire imposed "free trade" only upon its victims, not upon itself).

3. "Materialist" Karl Marx's revision of the Physiocrats, Smith, and Ricardo, to define "surplus" as a biological epiphenomenon of the "horny hand of labor." Marx defends the British East India Company's taught dogma of "free trade" as the "scientific" basis for capitalism. . . .

The Eighteenth-century French Physiocrats were a new costuming adopted by that feudal party which had been the core of the Venice-led opposition to King Henri IV. This party had been known as that Seventeenth-century Fronde which had organized civil wars in France against Cardinal Richelieu, against Cardinal Mazarin, and against Minister Colbert. It must not be assumed that these Physiocrats meant that only agricultural and mining *labor* were productive; for Quesnay *et al.*, agricultural labor (e.g., serfs) were no better than "talking cattle" with human form; it was the land itself which yielded the surplus product, a product which belonged, therefore, to those noble creatures to whom God had allotted feudal ownership of the title to that land.

Like the Cecil party of Francis Bacon *et al.* in England, the French feudalist opposition to Henri IV was under the direction of Venice's Paolo Sarpi, and was

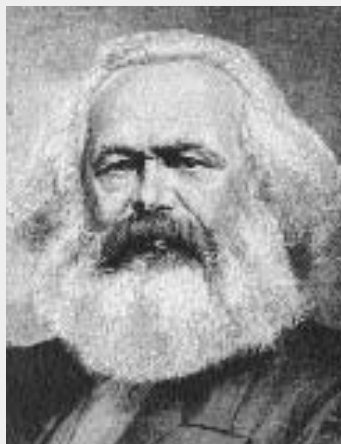


Adam Smith

Prints and Photographs Division, The Library of Congress

closely allied to the House of Orleans in France and to the English monarchy. This openly pro-Venetian feudalist faction, including the House of Orleans (through 1815) was, like Conti assets Montesquieu, Voltaire, Quesnay, and Berlin's adopted Maupertuis, a key ally of London during the reign of

Louis XV, and as partner of British foreign service's Jeremy Bentham in the deployment of the Jacobin Terror of Robespierre, Danton, and Marat, later. The English/British and French "Enlightenment" were direct outgrowths of the influence of Sarpi, and Antonio Conti's



Karl Marx

Prints and Photographs Division, The Library of Congress

salon was the leading Eighteenth-century continuation of Sarpi's influence in London, Paris, and Frederick "the Great's" Berlin. . . .

The distinctive feature of the influence of Paolo Sarpi, and such followers as Antonio Conti, Giammaria Ortes, *et al.*, is their founding and promotion of a form of neo-Aristotelean doctrine known as *empiricism*. This development was colored strongly by Sarpi's pretensions and reputation as a mathematician. Sarpi was the actual founder of the doctrine of mathematical causality typified by Galileo Galilei, René Descartes, and Isaac Newton; Galileo's famous treatises, including some of his fraudulently claimed earlier discoveries, were extensions of the principles of his mentor, Sarpi. Conti's salon is famous for the Europe-wide apotheosis of a relatively obscure English practitioner of black magic, Isaac Newton, as the "English Galileo," and the introduction of the mechanistic algebraic methods of Sarpi, Galileo, Descartes, and Newton to sundry aspects of social theory. Sarpi is, in fact, the "natural" father of the English, French, and German Enlightenments of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries.

The economic doctrines of Quesnay, Giammaria Ortes, Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, and Karl Marx, are prime examples of this introduction of "Newtonian methods" to social theory.

—Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.  
*"Why Adam Smith Is Worse Than Karl Marx"*

But even those of a superior intelligence have little to contribute as human beings, since in the end man is nothing more than a consumer of the wealth provided by nature. "Man," he writes, "is by himself bare of riches and has only needs." The role of the "Enlightened Despot," then, is to do nothing which is not in accord with Quesnay's version of Natural Law. This requires strict controls over the ignorant masses in regard to conduct, but in matters of economic policy, God has ordained *laissez faire*:

Natural policy with respect to commerce, then, is free and extensive competition, which secures for every nation the greatest possible number of buyers and sellers, in order to assure to it the most advantageous price.

Quesnay had adopted this notion of God-ordained free trade directly from his Venetian associates. He was to pass it on to Adam Smith, who came to France to meet with the eminent Physiocrat, long before Smith wrote his *Wealth of Nations*.

Taoist ideology emphasizes the concept of "no action" (*wu wei*)—meaning that no action should be taken which is not in keeping with the cosmic force, the Tao. This Taoist concept of the Tao corresponds more to Quesnay's conception of "Natural Law," than does the Confucian concept of the Middle Path (which is also referred to by the term "Tao"). The concept of *laissez faire* is precisely the Taoist "no action." Quesnay makes this clear: "The sovereign authority can and must institute laws against proven disorder, but must not encroach upon the natural order of society."

Quesnay also exposes his Venetian training in regard to the question of population, in which he precedes Malthus by several generations (Malthus' work on population would later be plagiarized from the Venetian Giammaria Ortes). China, of course, is his prime example:

In spite of their industry and sobriety and the fertility of the soil, there are few countries that have so much poverty among the humbler classes [as China]. However great the empire might be, it is too crowded for the multitude that inhabit it. In Europe, it is thought that a large population is the source of wealth, but this is to take the effect for the cause. It is wealth that multiplies both wealth and men, but the propagation of men always exceed the wealth.

Alms are of no use, since they divert the natural wealth derived from the land away from the necessary equilibrium. Overpopulation is, then, the root of crime. This is true, writes Quesnay, both in good and in bad states, because "propagation is limited by nothing but subsistence, and always tends to increase even further; there are poor everywhere."

Having absolved himself of any responsibility for

poverty or crime, Quesnay cleverly parlays the problem into a justification for colonialism (another Venetian lesson Adam Smith took home with him from Paris): “In order to prevent overcrowding in a well-governed nation,” he writes, “there is no recourse but that of colonies.” On this account, China has proven to be a failure, he asserts, having allowed the Europeans to take over a number of countries and islands that could have been easy targets for the Middle Kingdom. Quesnay adds in pontificating tones: “This is to fail in a duty that humanity and religion prescribe.” This Enlightenment view of humanity and religion was to be realized in the following century, when British gunboats carried merchants and missionaries together up and down the Chinese coast, selling Bibles and opium from the same sack.

The Physiocrats’ dream of a France ruled on the model of “Oriental Despotism” was to go up in smoke in the French Revolution—the Chinoiserie craze died out to the cries of anarchy and terror. The British friends of Quesnay, including, in particular, Adam Smith, continued the tradition, but the British argued that the source of wealth was not the land, as the Physiocrats had argued, but trade and usury. China became an object of ridicule, rather than a model of peace and prosperity. Within fifty years, the British would be softening up the Chinese people with dope, and preparing to take advantage of one hundred years of stagnation in Chinese technology to overpower them with the Royal Navy.

### III.

## The ‘New Enlightenment’: The Devilish Dialogues Of Hans Küng

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Bertrand Russell, who toured China in the 1920’s, must be considered the father of the modern Venetian policy toward China, and of the modern use of China as a model for the rest of the world. This “New Enlightenment” as I have chosen to describe it, targeted Sun Yat-sen<sup>32</sup> and, in a different but connected way, Japan. The

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32. Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1867-1925), the father of the Chinese Republic established in 1911, advocated with his “Three Principles of the People” an alliance between the republican tradition in the West associated with Alexander Hamilton and Abraham Lincoln, and the Chinese Confucian tradition. His polemics against the British imperial policies and the cult of free trade, especially in his book *The Problem of China*, are perhaps the most perceptive and devastating exposure of British methods and ideology in the Twentieth century before LaRouche. See Michael Billington, “The British Role in the Creation of Maoism,” *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 19, No. 36, Sept. 11, 1992.

British certainly wanted to prevent any form of a Meiji influence in China—in particular, the List/Hamilton “American System” influence that had facilitated the rapid emergence of a modern industrial state in Japan. Sun Yat-sen represented precisely that Hamiltonian tendency, and was consciously dedicated to a Christian/Confucian ecumenicism as the basis for realizing that economic policy.

Russell and others launched or supported various projects in China to destroy Sun’s influence, including that of the Chinese Communist Party, culminating in the 1949 revolution and later, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The ten-year nightmare of the Cultural Revolution can be regarded as the fruition of virtually every declared commitment Russell made concerning China policy: the return to the Legalist/Taoist form of government, the psychological and physical breakdown of the family, the destruction of science and education, the glorification of rural backwardness, the adoption of forced birth control policies, to name just a few.

Perhaps no other regime in modern history so thoroughly epitomized the Venetian ideal of “Oriental Despotism” than China during the Cultural Revolution, such that all schools were closed, and the entire population, including even most of the previous political leaders of the Communist Party, were forced to live at the level of the lowliest peasant. Meanwhile, the Venetian apparatus promoted the Maoist frenzy of the Cultural Revolution throughout the rest of the world.

With the death of Mao Zedong, and the popular outpouring of revulsion against the Cultural Revolution within China, the same Western apologists who had previously supported the Communists, moved rapidly to direct the emerging cultural paradigm shift into controlled channels. That required providing the Chinese with an artificial model of the West based on British free-trade economics and moral relativism (a process for which the British had gained a great deal of experience in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries), while at the same time diverting any Confucian revival into the Chinese equivalent of that British moral relativism—such as the “Three Religions” policy of Wang Yang-ming’s school of Taoist-influenced pseudo-Confucianism.

### Maoism in Louvain

In 1974, at the peak of the last phase of the Cultural Revolution, and three years after Henry Kissinger “opened up” China, a conference was held in Louvain, Belgium, called “Christian Faith and the Chinese Experience.” The sponsors included the Lutheran World Federation,



UPI/Bettmann

*Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who was both a Confucian and a Christian, founded modern China according to the republican principles of the American Revolution. His ecumenical ideas have been especially targeted by the British/Venetian oligarchy.*

the Jesuit organization Pro Mundi Vita, the U.S. National Council of Churches, and France's Action Populaire. Chairing the conference were Dr. Julia Ching, the China scholar (and Wang Yang-ming biographer) quoted above, who works closely with the Catholic theologian Hans Küng, and Canon David Paton, Anglican head of the China Study Project in England.

Reading the transcripts of this conference, it becomes clear that most of the participants were little interested in Christianity nor in China, but were launching a broader mission to promote Maoism in its most grotesque form throughout the rest of the world. The same institutions behind this conference were at the center of the growing radical environmentalist hysteria of the 1970's, sponsored by the British Royal Family's World Wildlife Fund and the various U.S. Eastern Establishment foundations, aimed at driving the world back to pre-Renaissance levels of population and standard of living.

To promote Mao's Cultural Revolution required denouncing virtually everything that Christianity and Western civilization had contributed to history, a task eagerly pursued by the participants. Mao was portrayed as, variously, the new St. Paul, the new Moses leading his people to the promised land, or the second coming of

Christ. An opening essay circulated at the conference, signed by the Jesuit Pro Mundi Vita organization as a whole, quotes Joseph Needham,<sup>33</sup> the foremost British China scholar and himself a confessed Taoist (as well as a lay brother in the Anglo-Catholic Church):

The Chinese society of the present day is, I think, further on the way to the true society of mankind, the Kingdom of God if you like, than our own. I think China is the only truly Christian country in the world in the present day, in spite of its absolute rejection of all religion.

In fact, most of the priests and ministers of the churches in China, both Chinese and foreign, were either in prison or in labor camps at the time. Even those who had signed up with the Communist Party-run "Three Self Patriotic Movement" during the first wave of repression in the 1950's did not escape the scorn and persecution of the Red Guards.

It is not the case that the participants of the Louvain conference were ignorant of this fact, nor of the torture, mass killings, and forced labor across the country. Although the full, gruesome details were not made known until late in the 1970's, many refugees had already crossed into Hong Kong with horror stories, and many of the participants had traveled in the mainland on one of the tours arranged after Kissinger's diplomatic missions. Despite the "Potemkin Village" aspect of the tours, people did see much of what was going on, but chose to support it anyway.

For instance, Donald MacInnis, the director of the China Program for the National Council of Churches in the U.S., who spoke fluent Chinese, spent three weeks in China the month before the conference. Seeing all the schools closed and the students sent out to work with the peasants, he told the conference:

There is a new social milieu that makes it right and proper for educated city youth to serve by the millions in labor assignments on frontier people's communes, and for the able-bodied elderly to perform volunteer neighborhood tasks.

MacInnis reported having an "overwhelming response, a renewed sense of hope for the future of

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33. Joseph Needham, a British biologist turned China scholar, devoted his life to compiling a massive hoax, called *Science and Civilization in China*, in which he portrayed the mysticism and alchemy of the ancient Chinese as the source of their rich scientific tradition, while dismissing Confucianism as an authoritarian hindrance to progress. A Communist at Cambridge in the 1930's, he was deployed to establish relations with Mao Zedong, and became an ardent supporter of Mao and a primary British intelligence channel to China until his death in March of this year. See Michael Billington, "Obituary: The Taoist Hell of Joseph Needham, 1900-1995," *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 22, No. 17, April 21, 1995.



AP/Wide World Photos

*As the Red Guards rampaged through China on behalf of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution, Hans Küng's colleagues in the West called for Christians to practice Maoist "animosity and hostility."*

mankind." The final reports of the workshops called the school closings and the forced labor a "profound and inclusive educational revolution." The superlatives about the Maoist heaven rivaled those of Quesnay. Another workshop report said:

We noted the success of the new China in achieving a more ample and more equitable distribution of the goods and services basic to human existence, the growing self-reliance and sense of national dignity and universal self respect, a sense of common purpose and a communal life style, . . . a significant improvement in public and private morality, in short, a society making significant observable progress in solving its own—and indeed humanity's—most urgent and seemingly intractable problems.

The speakers continually returned to the universal applicability of the Maoist experiment, especially in regard to Christians in the West, who they urged to "reconsider their own worldview and ethic in the light of this 'sign of the times,'" and to Third World nations, who they urged to follow Mao. For Christians to learn from Mao included learning to hate. The workshops concluded: "Animosity and hostility, such prominent features of Maoist ethics, are not antithetical to Christian love. . . . Animosity is that which gives a dynamic or animating element to love." It is not surprising that the reputed founder of Liberation Theology, Gustavo

Gutiérrez of Peru, was one of the speakers, acknowledging his great debt to Mao: "The Chinese experience and the theories it is developing are in one way or another part and parcel of every contemporary revolutionary process."

Gutiérrez also refers positively to a concept of "puerile hatred" toward the "dominating classes and their exploitation of the dispossessed." Gutiérrez had studied psychology at Louvain University, writing a dissertation on Freud's psychic conflicts.

As to Confucianism, the Gang of Four had recently unleashed the "Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius" cam-

paign, and the conference participants marched in step to the new, politically correct line. The workshops concluded that Mao had launched the campaign against Confucius in order to prevent "a possible resurgence of a class society dominated by the educated elite. . . . This seems to be China's contribution to worldwide anti-authoritarianism."

The fig leaf of Christianity in all of this was the argument that God is the "Lord of History," a phrase repeated almost as often as "a sign of the times." The "Lord of History" is used to imply that everything that happens is God's work, since He determines all that is, and therefore, the Maoist era must be seen as God's plan—not in the negative sense of a lesson to be learned from the failure to carry out God's will on earth, but as a positive lesson to be emulated by all.

As the Pro Mundi Vita opening essay reports, quoting a priest who had lived in China, "If the Chinese have indeed created a society with more faith, more hope and more love than the 'Christian' West, they deserve not only attention but allegiance. As apostles of Christ, we must follow where the spirit blows." The same Jesuit essay, explaining the changes taking place in Christian thought, refers to Teilhard de Chardin as the "world's most intellectually influential Catholic" and the "acknowledged religious genius of the century."

The Jesuit Teilhard, who spent many years in China, hated the Chinese. Writing in the 1920's, he considered the Chinese to be "primitive people beneath their varnish of modernity or Confucianism." Only when he got to Tibet and studied the Tantric Buddhism of the lamas did he decide that "we could perhaps learn from the mystics of the Far East how to make our religion more 'Buddhist,' instead of being over-absorbed in ethics—that is to say, too Confucianist." He claimed to have learned through his experience in China primarily that some races are less able than others to contribute to the building of the world, and that there exists in the world a "right of the earth to organize itself by reducing, even by force, the refractory and backwards elements."

## Hans Küng

The existentialist Catholic theologian Hans Küng has now become the leading theoretician for the "New Enlightenment" Sinophiles. Küng has become the central figure in a movement which proposes "ecumenical alliances" between the world's religions, by reducing all religions to the level of primitive, Earth-worshipping paganism of a Taoist variety, while eliminating the idea of the nation-state altogether.

Like those at the Louvain conference, Küng insists that "it is no longer necessary to be oriented against Mao and the Chinese Revolution in order to live as a Christian." Küng's work has centered on shaping the post-Mao era ideology into a New Age mode, while still maintaining a good word for Marx, Mao, and Liberation Theology. China is only a secondary target, however; Küng's primary focus is the attempt to indoctrinate the West with Taoism.

In 1988, Küng co-authored with Julia Ching a book entitled *Christianity and Chinese Religions*, in which they review, one at a time, the "Three Religions" of China.



*Hans Küng (center) with students at Tübingen University. Despite his claims to be a Christian theologian, Küng seeks to submerge the Christian Platonic tradition of the West in a swamp of mindless New Age Taoism.*

Küng goes beyond the common effort to pervert Confucianism—that of merging it into a syncretic amalgam with Taoism and Buddhism—choosing instead to openly embrace Taoism. The Tao of Taoism, he asserts, is Heidegger's "Being,"<sup>34</sup> and it is the basis for uniting East and West. He quotes the Nazi Party ideologue Heidegger: "Tao; if only we will let these names return to what they leave unspoken, if only we are capable of this. . . . All is Way."<sup>35</sup> Küng continues:

Being as the Way, the Way as Being. . . . One might ask, are Taoism and the modern Western philosophy of being then reconciled at the highest level of speculative philosophy? Are East and West united in the philosophical harmonious heights? . . . There is in my view a possible structural parallel in the concepts of Tao, being, and God, a parallel that could be of the greatest significance for an understanding of the absolute that bridges the cultures and religions.

34. Martin Heidegger, whose philosophy has infected nearly every strain of modern philosophy, left and right, religious and secular, was not only a Nazi Party member, but actively rallied German students and intellectuals behind the Hitler movement. His supporters, including those within the Church, go to hysterical extremes to portray his philosophy as somehow divorced from his Nazi beliefs. See Helga Zepp-LaRouche, "The Case of Martin Heidegger," *Fidelio*, Vol. IV, No. 1, Spring 1995.

35. Quoted from Heidegger's *On the Way to Language*.

The current head of the German Bishops Conference, Karl Lehmann, also wrote in defense of Heidegger, suggesting that the word “God” can be read in place of Heidegger’s word “Being.” We can assume that he would also concur with Heidegger (and Hans Küng) that Being is the Taoist Tao; and we have thus a reflection of the crisis in the German Catholic Church.

Küng sees the world divided into three “river systems”: the prophetic religions of the Semitic cultures, the mystic religions of India (including Buddhism), and the religions of wisdom and the sage in China. He seeks to synthesize these three “river systems” into a “world ethos,” while embracing Taoism as the closest approximation of that world ethos as a whole. Confucius was an elitist, writes Küng, and the Taoists “saw through the central Confucian virtues of humanity and uprightness as aristocratic categories of a conservative and patriarchal ethic.”

The appeal of Taoism as a *world model*, Küng asserts, rests to a great extent on its embrace of the occult. He defines religion in keeping with the tradition of William James’ *Varieties of Religious Experience*: “Today’s specialists would to a large extent agree that religions are grounded in an experimental unity of knowing, willing, and feeling.” The current boom in the popularity of the occult, says Küng, is not “backward-oriented nostalgia, but could be a post-modern longing for a new, recognizable continuity between humanity and nature, rationality and spirituality, science and mystery, cosmic consciousness and authentic life.” In praise of his fellow Taoist Carl Jung,<sup>36</sup> Küng writes that with the exception of Jung,

until now hardly any empirical research has been done to test the factual reliability of divination. This is especially regrettable. . . . The existential source of the yearning for divination is to be taken seriously. . . . Magic and religion to this day exist simultaneously alongside and within each other, just as religion for its part has in no way been superseded by science.

The call by the Louvain conference for the West to become *Maoist* is not fundamentally distinct from Küng and his circle’s call for the West to become *Taoist*. In both cases, the notions of science and the nation-state developed in the Christian Renaissance are scrapped, in favor of mystical earth worship and variations of Oriental Despotism. Such radical environmentalism finds support

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36. Para-psychologist C.G. Jung practiced Taoist divination, using the ancient Chinese *I Ching* (*The Book of Changes*). He wrote the introduction to a translation of the *I Ching* by occultist Richard Wilhelm, and reported “proof” from his own “scientific experiments” that the method works. See Michael Billington, “The Taoist Perversion of Twentieth-Century Science,” *Fidelio*, Vol. III, No. 3, Fall 1994.

amongst certain Taoist-influenced Chinese, including the Ch’an (Zen) Buddhists and the Lamaists of the Tibetan school. (This is one of the primary reasons why Taoism is promoted as a “World Religion” in the numerous international “Unity of Religions” conferences sponsored by the British royalty. When the Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey visited China in September 1994, he lectured the Chinese that they must at all costs prevent the country from developing to the level of energy throughput of the advanced sector, supposedly to prevent inevitable environmental disaster.)

Hans Küng’s version of the fascist “Third Wave”<sup>37</sup> is similar: “China has the opportunity to learn from the negative experience of the highly modern states and mitigate in its own development the immanent destructive forces of modern science, technology, industry and democracy.” Küng projected his adoption of Taoism by proclaiming that “Asian theology is finding itself in opposition to developments that declare technology and industrialization to be national goals but actually only benefit the ruling elite.”

## The Revival of Buddhism

Küng is lying that Asian theology is “finding itself” to be on the side of radical environmentalism—rather, Küng is himself in the forefront of a Western intervention, on behalf of the oligarchy, to impose just such a fascist ideology upon the various cultures of the Asian world. It is this which motivates his effort to undermine Confucianism, and in particular to subvert the teachings of Chu Hsi in favor of those of Wang Yang-ming, as well as his praise for Taoism. In keeping with this, Küng has taken special interest in the efforts to bring about a revival of Buddhism in China. A revived Buddhism is expected to provide the World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly the World Wildlife Fund), and the related institutions of the European monarchies, with “gatekeepers” for the nature reserves (both ideologically and literally), with the intention of locking up Third World nations against development, while also creating various cult structures capable of providing the cannon-fodder for British intelligence-controlled terrorist destabilizations of Asian nations.

Küng also promotes the continuing work of the Dalai Lama, head of the more extreme versions of hesychastic Tantric Buddhism, as practiced in Tibet and Mongolia.

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37. Alvin Toffler’s “Third Wave,” the latest faddish euphemism for the destruction of industrial society, functions as the Bible for the zombies who goose-step to Newt Gingrich’s Conservative Revolution. See “Phil Gramm’s ‘Conservative Revolution in America,’” *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 22, No. 8, Feb. 17, 1995, Special Report, pp. 20-73.

The Dalai Lama is a life-long asset of British-intelligence operations in Asia, while functioning throughout the world as an ally and promoter of the rabidly anti-growth and anti-human World Wide Fund for Nature, run by the British Royal Family.

In the dialogue “Buddhism and Christianity” in his collection *Christianity and the World Religions*,<sup>38</sup> Küng has unrestrained praise for the teachings and the practice of the two main schools of Mahayana Buddhism in China, Zen (Ch’an) and Pure Land (or Amida). He compares them to the Reformation and the Enlightenment in the West, which he considers to be the greatest eras of Christian history. Writes Küng:

Alongside all the outrages of “Christian” imperialism and colonialism, is there not also a history of tolerance, of freedom of conscience, that made an epochal breakthrough, from the Church’s standpoint, in the Reformation “freedom of a Christian man” and, for society as a whole, in the religious freedom of the Enlightenment (though the decisive impulses for this came from outside the Church)?

Küng compares Zen (Ch’an) to the European Enlightenment, explaining that Zen replaced the older, more scholastic forms of Buddhism, which were “overly rational,” requiring years of arduous study before achieving enlightenment. Zen provided “sudden enlightenment,” whereby the student needs only to realize that he already contains the Buddha-image inside him, to become instantaneously enlightened. This makes enlightenment “accessible to the masses,” without the need to be uplifted from their state of ignorance.

Küng proceeds to compare the Buddhist Pure Land sect to Protestantism. Pure Land Buddhism teaches that enlightenment is not dependent entirely on oneself, but one can get help from the Amida Buddha, primarily by repeating the Buddha’s name over and over—provided that this is done in good faith. Küng compares this “paradigm of faith” to Martin Luther’s rejection of good works as a means to gain salvation, in favor of “faith alone.”

Küng is not entirely wrong in these comparisons. The Venetian forces who created both the Reformation (Cardinal Gasparo Contarini and his circle—who led the Catholic Counter-Reformation as well) and the Enlightenment (such as the above-mentioned Abbot Antonio Conti), were indeed drawing on a number of Oriental sources, including the atheistic Buddhist variety, in structuring ideologies to attack the Platonic/Christian vision of man created *in the image of God*. Küng’s identification

of some aspects of these parallels is accurate. The problem, of course, is that Küng is on the side of the Venetians, arguing that Christians must abandon their faith on the basis of an examination of Buddhism. Christians’ lives are “too bent on success and achievement,” says Küng, subject to the

fatal Western individualism that, by invoking the self and self-fulfillment (of the individual, the nation, or the church) has had a highly destructive impact on communal life, on Western economies, politics, and culture, even on philosophy and theology.

Küng leaves no room for doubt that he is denouncing the very process of creative development in the individual, and in the nation-state, which defines mankind’s existence as superior to that of the beasts: “Christians have been only too one-sided,” writes Küng, “in their readiness to quote—and carry out—that one verse of *Genesis* to ‘subdue the earth.’”

Küng elsewhere calls for an end to the “blind faith in progress,” and for an “epochal paradigm change” to “post-modernity, where the absolutized forces of the modern period (science, technology, industry) will be increasingly relativized for the sake of human welfare.” Christianity, and all religions, must “maintain a critical distance from technological and scientific developments.” He praises some of the most extreme Buddhist activists for their efforts to stop the development of science and technology in Asia, such as Sulak Sivaraksa in Thailand. Sulak, Küng says, is trying to “set in motion social and political improvements on the basis of authentic Buddhism.” Sulak, in fact, insists that peasants have no need of machines, fertilizer, or any other technology, but should be “allowed” to return to the primitive methods of antiquity, to live happily staring at the backside of a water buffalo in mindless, backbreaking toil—the ideal Enlightenment “noble savages.”<sup>39</sup> Küng writes, “Here, prophetic Christianity meets social reform-minded Buddhism.”

## The Defamation of Nicolaus of Cusa

Having dismissed the pursuit of science as part of man’s purpose on earth, Küng is prepared to embrace two fundamental Buddhist tenets: rejection of the reality of the physical universe, and the rejection of the intellect as the means to salvation. He goes further to identify these Buddhist concepts with Christianity! Küng says that the original Buddhists had replaced the gods of Hinduism with

38. Hans Küng, *Christianity and the World Religions* (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

39. See “Anglo-Americans’ Jacobin in Thailand: A Profile of Sulak Sivaraksa,” *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 19, No. 24, June 12, 1992.



the concept of *nirvana*, or emptiness, as the Ultimate Reality. Although *nirvana* originally meant the extinguishing of all thoughts and emotions, and escape from the suffering of life (while denying the existence of a soul), Küng argues that under the Mahayana doctrine, *nirvana* took on a “positive term of value, a name for the Absolute that has no attributes,” and thus it “expresses the deepest reality, the Absolute, what Christian theology calls ‘God.’” Elsewhere, Küng argues that *nirvana* is the same as the Christian Heaven, both being a “positive final state.”

The problem here is not that Küng tries to locate a positive interpretation within the Mahayana Buddhist teachings, nor even that he tries to relate them to Christian concepts. The problem is that Küng identifies precisely those aspects of Buddhist thought which reject the necessity, or even the possibility, of scientific discovery, of the active use of the Divine Spark of reason, and equates those aspects with the God of Christianity.

Since, especially, the time of Nicolaus of Cusa and the European Renaissance, the Platonic/Christian notion of man *in the image of God* is properly defined by the capacity of man to progressively discover the purpose and the lawfulness of the wonders of nature, to master those laws and apply them to the further transformation of nature and the further perfection of mankind, in keeping with that injunction of *Genesis* 1:28 for man to have dominion over nature, which Küng so despises, and Christ’s call for man to “Be perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect” (*Matt.* 5:48). Küng attempts to solve the obvious contradiction between this Renaissance notion and his own thesis by distorting Nicolaus of Cusa himself. Küng turns the architect of the Renaissance and the founder of modern science into an anti-scientific Zen mystic!

Cusanus took Plato’s concept of the Idea as the perfect, infinite reality behind the ephemeral, limited objects of our senses, and united this with the Judeo-Christian concept of man *in the image of God*, owing to his creative intellect. He defined the source of scientific discovery, as man’s capacity to hypothecate the infinite reality underlying the finite objects and events in the physical universe. Man was thus able to transcend the finite through the exercise of reason. Cusanus called this the “contracted infinite,” since it was less than the absolute infinite of God, but is “contracted” from that absolute infinite. This was to be the concept which guided Johannes Kepler in his hypothesis concerning the harmonies of the universe, as it was also the genesis of Leibniz’s concept of the *monad*, and of Georg Cantor’s discovery of the mathematical transfinite in the Nineteenth century.

Surprisingly, then, Hans Küng writes that the meta-



Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa, whose philosophical works initiated modern science in the Renaissance.

physics of Cusanus “set a standard for intellectual creativity still valid today.” How can Küng reconcile this embrace of Nicolaus of Cusa, the founder of modern science, with his call for man to “maintain a critical distance from technological and scientific developments,” let alone his more egregious New Age nonsense? Using the “Delphic” method commonly used by the Venetians against their enemies, Küng takes one aspect of Cusanus’ thought, misrepresents it, ignores the rest, and then adopts this false construct as an ally of his own view.

Küng quotes Cusanus from *On Learned Ignorance*<sup>40</sup>:

From the standpoint of negative theology, there is nothing in God but infinitude. Accordingly, he is knowable neither in this world nor in the world to come, since all creatures, which cannot comprehend the infinite light, are darkness in comparison with him. Rather, he is known only to himself.

Küng praises the “negative theology” of Cusanus as essentially equivalent to the Buddhist “emptiness,” the Void, as an expression for the ineffability of God. Similarly, he refers to Cusanus’s notion of the “coincidence of opposites” in God, implying that this concept reaffirms that God is unintelligible to the human intellect, accessi-

40. Cf., William F. Wertz, Jr., “The Method of Learned Ignorance,” *Fidelio*, Vol. IV, No. 1, Spring 1995.

ble only through a mystical submission to “emptiness” (which, he says, is also its opposite, “fullness”). Here, Küng ends his representation of Cusanus’ thought—there is no mention of Cusanus’ extensive development of the meaning of the Trinity, in which Cusanus locates man’s capacity to know God by rising above the level of sense perception, or logical reasoning, to the level of creative intellect.<sup>41</sup> Instead, Küng wanders into what he calls a “melancholy sidelong glance” at the history of the Jesuits’ mission to Asia:

It is strange to think what might have happened if Christian theologians had not always buried their own tradition of negative theology beneath their prolix tomes, but had taken it more seriously. How many controversies over doctrines, dogmas, and definitions might have been spared over the centuries! How much more deepened understanding might have been applied to foreign religions just when new continents and peoples were beginning to be discovered! And how might the conversations with Japanese Buddhists have gone, if the first Jesuit missionaries had cited, not Scholastic proofs for the existence of God, but the penetrating analysis of the experience of God as detailed by Cusanus, whose writings they could have been familiar with?

(Apparently, according to Küng, Matteo Ricci should have oriented toward the Zen monks, and not the Confucians!)

Even without reviewing the affirmative theology of Nicolaus of Cusa, it can easily be shown that Küng’s use of the phrase “coincidence of opposites,” is the opposite of that intended by Cusanus. Far from meaning that God was unintelligible to man, Cusanus counterposed his method of “coincidence of opposites” to the linear, impotent logic of Aristotle. Aristotle’s deductive and inductive logic, based on mechanically putting together data from empirical sense perceptions according to a fixed set of axioms, was indeed incapable of even approaching the infinite truths of God (which Aristotle argued did not exist in any case). To Aristotle, for instance, the primary method of proof was the “law of contradictions,” whereby any concept which is not consistent with a fixed axiomatic structure is thereby “proven” false. Thus, there can be nothing new, no change, no revolutionary transformation of the axioms of knowledge. But Cusanus demonstrated that all scientific knowledge takes the form of the overturning of existing knowledge, through the hypothecating of a higher *type*, a higher set of axioms,

41. See *Toward a New Council of Florence: ‘On the Peace of Faith’ and Other Works by Nicolaus of Cusa*, ed. and trans. by William F. Wertz, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: Schiller Institute, 1993).

which will subsume the seemingly contradictory events at the lower state of knowledge. The only bounding of this process of human self-perfection is the perfect knowledge of God, in whom all opposites coincide. It is precisely the intellect (which the Zen Buddhists—and Küng—wish to extinguish), that is capable of receiving the “Divine illumination of faith,” and is thus “led by this light to believe it can attain the truth.”<sup>42</sup> This is how man participates in the unfolding creation of the universe.

Cusanus even demonstrates that according to Aristotle (and, by inference, Hans Küng), not only is man impotent to discover anything fundamentally new, but even God is rendered impotent. In “On Beryllus,”<sup>43</sup> Cusanus complains that Aristotle believed that “the Composer-Intellect made everything out of the necessity of nature.” God, however, argues Cusanus, “is absolute and superexalted, since He is not a contracted origin such as nature, which acts out of necessity, but rather is the origin of nature itself, which is therefore supernatural and free, because He creates everything through His will.” This, of course, is also the source of man’s free will, which, as we shall see, Küng confuses with the anarchistic rejection of Universal Truth in favor of the unfettered passions of the individual.

Cusanus identifies the reason for Aristotle’s failure to comprehend the relationship of mankind’s creative intellect and the Will of God: Aristotle lacked the notion of Christian love, or *caritas* (*agapē*, charity), the Holy Spirit of the Trinity which connects God with his creation, and which is the “Divine illumination” that guides our intellect.

It is thus particularly revealing that Hans Küng denigrates the concept of *caritas*, while repeatedly and intensely defending *eros* and libertine sexuality. He complains that Christian charity doesn’t sell: “Christian *caritas* was often not very convincing because it was not very human.” He disparages the “later Christian theologians . . . [who] not only distinguished between *eros* and *caritas*, but found them mutually exclusive,” thus, complains Küng, “lowering the status of eroticism and sexuality.” The primary culprit in this “prudery” of the Church, says Küng, is St. Augustine:

Bourgeois Western Christianity was and is vulnerable to a kind of Stoic-Gnostic-Manichaeic hostility toward the body, sex, and women. This antagonism was passed along to Western Christianity above all by the older Augustine (sexual pleasure allowed only for the purpose of procreation) and medieval and modern popes. . . . This rigor-

42. Nicolaus of Cusa, “On the Gift of the Father of Lights,” in William F. Wertz, Jr., *Toward a New Council of Florence*, *ibid.*

43. Nicolaus of Cusa, “On Beryllus,” in *ibid.*

ous/prudish sexual morality . . . repressed and suppressed all unself-conscious joy in the sensual, the corporeal, the sexual.

Nowhere does Küng demonstrate his conscious intent in regard to his campaign for sexual libertinism more than in his extended argument in defense of the perverse sex cults which dominate the most extreme forms of Tantric Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism. Küng refers particularly to the Tantric Buddhism practiced in Tibet called Shaktist Tantrism. While admitting that these practices are very far from Christianity, he argues for their acceptance and insists that we must learn from them. The Tantric cults generally revived the yoga practices of Hinduism, finding salvation not so much in concentration of the mind but in bodily exercises. Küng specifically builds a case for the sexual practices of these cults, linking this to the feminist movement in the West:

A Christian evaluation of this Eastern “occult doctrine” should not have its source in prejudice against the body and sex. . . . The highly positive meaning of the female principle in Shaktist Tantrism—we see here the emergence, as in Marian piety, of a primal need for the female archetype [!]  
—can make Christians aware how much the feminine has been repressed and suppressed in Christian teaching and ecclesiastical practice, how thoroughly Christianity has become a patriarchal religion. This will challenge Christians to “re-read” their own traditions, their rigid linguistic codes, their ground-in prejudices and practices. . . . If Christians continue to use the name “Father” for God, then they must become conscious of the one-sidedness of such symbolic language. . . . All of Shaktist Tantrism may not simply be written off as a sexual cult or even as sexual dissipation. In many cases, these are profound religious systems and practices, which affirm sexuality as a creative force of human life and attempt to incorporate sexual communication, as the deepest form of human communication, into religion. . . . The linking of yoga and sexuality in (originally Hindu) Tantrism aims not at the mere satisfaction of temporary “needs,” but at the sublimation of sexuality: at salvation and union with the Absolute. Furthermore, we should not forget that these cults come from the socially disadvantaged classes and thus seek to give religious expression not just to lay piety generally, but to the often suppressed strata and dimensions of humanity. . . . Hence we should not deny that authentic religion can be found in these cults that are so alien to Christianity.

Küng’s support for perversions amongst “disadvantaged classes” is typical of the policies of “Liberation Theology,” whereby the rituals of a pseudo-church (an “autochthonous” church) are created (by Western sociologists, anthropologists, and “Liberation Theologists”) out of the primitive practices of a backward, oppressed population, in order to assure that they will remain backward, while also creating deep emotional control mechanisms

through sex, drugs, etc. This has been seen over and over again in Ibero-America (e.g., the Sendero Luminoso in Peru, the Zapatistas in Mexico), where Küng and his associates have played a leading role in the creation of controlled armed terrorist insurgency movements—all under the cover of supporting “indigenous movements.” These movements are then used for drug trafficking and political destabilization against nations targeted by the Club of the Isles.<sup>44</sup>

## Küng’s War Against Christianity

Hans Küng is not interested merely in subverting Confucianism and the religions of China, of course; he is in the forefront of the effort to destroy Christianity, along with any religion which professes a belief in one God, one Truth. This is particularly clear in the dialogue “Islam and Christianity,” which appears in the same collection *Christianity and the World Religions* as his dialogue “Buddhism and Christianity.” Examining Küng’s dialogue with Islam helps to place the “New Enlightenment” efforts to distort Confucianism and Christianity in a more universal context.

Küng identifies two primary differences between Islam and Christianity which he believes can and should be resolved. First, Islam rejects the Trinity—although he concedes that the Koran doesn’t discuss the actual Trinity, but takes objection only to the idea that the man Jesus of Nazareth can also be God. On the Christian side, says Küng, Christians refuse to acknowledge Mohammed as a prophet, or, worse, they condemn him for various heresies. Küng’s proposed “solution” can be simply summarized as follows: we (Christians) will drop our belief in the Trinity, and acknowledge that Christ was just a man, although chosen by God as a prophet to deliver the Word. We (Christians) can then easily concur that Mohammed was similarly chosen as a prophet.

While clearly heretical from the standpoint of Christianity, Küng’s “offer” to Islam is less a concession than a ploy to induce Muslims to join with him in rejecting that which does in fact unite Islam and Christianity—the belief in the existence of one true, universal creator God, self-subsisting and absolute. His intent is to create an apparent theological justification for radical environmentalist attacks on scientific progress, and support for the terrorist operations associated with “Liberation Theology,” by both Muslims and Christians.

Both Islam and Christianity, Küng says, believe that God’s word is intelligible to man, and has been historically

44. See “Terrorist International at Work: The Chiapas Model,” *Executive Intelligence Review*, Vol. 22, No. 14, March 31, 1995, Special Report, pp. 10-63.

rendered concrete in the world; Christians look to the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels, whereas Muslims consider the Koran to be the word of God. These are Küng's targets, insisting that man must not be subject to any such absolutes. He then asks rhetorically: "What should a person follow as his guide? What should he base his life on? How is God to be understood? How do I recognize him? What is his will, and how do I carry it out?" He answers that there is no law, only praxis: "The will of God is carried out through service to human beings. . . . Serving our fellow men and women takes priority over complying with the law." As we saw in the case of the 1974 Louvain Conference, this decoupling of action from universal lawfulness is the prescription for Maoist revolutionary terror, all to the purpose of "serving the people." Thus, says Küng, "The Sharia [Islamic Law] exists for the sake of man, and not man for the sake of the Sharia. Man is therefore the measure of the law. And so might it not be the function of *conscience* [emphasis in the original] here and now to distinguish which parts of a religious system are just and unjust, what is essential or dispensable, constructive or destructive, good law or bad?"

We thus arrive back at the Enlightenment, at Wang Yang-ming's *liang chih*, the "innate knowledge" which requires no exercise of the intellect and reason, no "investigation of the principle in things" as demanded by Chu Hsi, to know the truth. Each and every individual is "free" to determine what is good for *him*, while the very existence of Truth, beyond what each individual *believes* the truth to be, is denied. And, although Küng goes to great lengths to appear to be making concessions to Islam, no Muslim—not even those who believe that the literal form of the Sharia requires interpretation from the standpoint of the development of modern society—could ever accept Küng's advocacy of the unrestrained individual will against the teachings of the Koran. This is the same point identified by Pope John Paul II in the passage quoted earlier, as the crucial source of the crisis of civilization since the Enlightenment. In fact, the Pope was certainly addressing his remarks, at least in part, to the followers of Hans Küng. Küng is himself unrestrained in his attacks on John Paul II, whom, he says, is attempting to "restore the medieval/Counter-Reformation/anti-modern paradigm to the Church (while applying a veneer of modernity), on the model of Catholic Poland, which has known neither the Reformation nor the Enlightenment."

## The Trinity, Without Cusanus

How, then, does Küng justify calling himself a Christian? The answer is that he creates his own definition of what he chooses to call Christianity, which is an eclectic collection of various gnostic heresies.

It is important to note first that Küng makes absolutely no reference, in the entire section on Christianity, Islam, and the Trinity, to Nicolaus of Cusa. But, as we saw above, in the section on Buddhism in the same book Küng calls Cusanus the "standard for intellectual creativity still valid today." He therefore certainly knows that Cusanus not only wrote voluminously on the Trinity, but that his exposition on the meaning of the Trinity was the basis for his leadership of the Council of Florence in 1439 which united the Eastern and Western churches and launched the Renaissance. Küng must know also that Cusanus created and led a movement for peace based upon an ecumenical alliance of religions, with a primary focus on Islam, as described in his "On the Peace of Faith," in which the Trinity again is the center of discussion.<sup>45</sup> Beyond that, Küng must know that Cusanus wrote an extensive study and critique of the Koran, in which, although he is intensely polemical in defense of Christianity, he nonetheless praises and embraces the core truth of the Islamic belief in the One God.

Since Cusanus clearly dedicated much of his life to the questions being addressed by Küng, it is astonishing, to say the least, that Küng ignores what the man he considers to be the "standard for intellectual creativity" has to say on these issues. The following passage from Cusanus' "Prologue to an Examination of the Koran," which directly refutes the thesis of Küng presented just above (as well as the thesis of the pseudo-Confucian Wang Yang-ming discussed earlier) may explain his sudden memory lapse:

Because our intellectual spirit is not itself the Good that it desires, because that Good is not in it—for were the Good in the intellect, then it would be intellect, just as in our knowledge the known is our knowledge—therefore, our intellect does not know what that Good is. The intellectual spirit in its nature desires to comprehend that Good. For although it can be lacking to no thing which is, since to be is good, nevertheless, unless the intellect understands it, it is without it and can find no rest.<sup>46</sup>

Küng denies the Trinity by simply defining it to be something else altogether—a collection of three distinct things, a threesome, rather than a triune Unity. He identifies these three distinct entities as: God; the man Jesus of Nazareth; and the Holy Spirit, which is God's power at work in the world. Küng writes: "In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is primarily viewed not as an eternal, intradivine hypostasis, but as a human, historical person concretely related to God." Gone is the notion of the two natures of Christ, both God and man, such that any man,

45. William F. Wertz, Jr., *Toward a New Council of Florence*, *op. cit.*

46. *Ibid.*

through the imitation of Christ, can rise above the senses and logical ratiocination to the level of the intellect, and thus pursue the Good, as the intellect desires.

To retain his claim to being a Christian, Küng and his co-thinkers re-interpret the history of Christianity: “For Jesus himself,” Küng writes, “the central problem was this: In the face of the coming Kingdom of God, how to overcome legalism by fulfilling God’s will in love? For the Christian Church, however, the central issue shifted over the course of time, to the person of Jesus and his relation to God.” Neither Christ himself nor the Gospels, he claims, considered Christ as the begotten Son of God, the Divinity, the second person of the Trinity—this was introduced only by the Greeks, who had absorbed the influence of Plato and imposed his thought onto the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. “What the New Testament unquestionably has in mind is not a relation of parentage [between God and Jesus], but an appointment, in the Old Testament sense, conferring legal status and power. Not a physical divine sonship . . . but God’s choosing Jesus and granting him full authority. . . . With the spread of Christianity to the world of Hellenistic thought, there was an increasing tendency to put Jesus, as the Son of God, on the same level of being as the Father.” This same Platonic influence, says Küng, introduced the notion of the immortality of the soul, which “is neither an Islamic nor a specifically Jewish or Christian idea.” Both the divine Jesus and the immortality of the soul supposedly derive from what Küng describes as the “dualism” of Plato and the Greeks, referring to Plato’s belief that the intellect is superior to feeling and sense perception. Küng not only condemns this attempt to distinguish between man and the animals, but he insists that the man Jesus was a man of feeling and praxis, not of intellect. The emergence in Christianity of the “taste for philosophy and aesthetics, for polished language and harmonious articulation of doctrine, is Greek,” writes Küng. “Greek, too, is the intellectualization of belief through dogmatizing, high-flown speculation, and sterile, abstract mysticism.”

Another spokesman for the “New Enlightenment,” Leonard Swidler, editor of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* and Professor of Catholic Thought and Interreligious Dialogue at Temple University, concurs with Küng that the Greeks imposed abstract rational thinking onto the Church, whereas the real Jesus was more concerned with praxis, with what to do, rather than what to think, with ethics rather than doctrine. Swidler endorses a widespread racist Venetian slander against Judaism, by denying the intellectual tradition of the followers of Moses, and portraying “Jesus the Jew” as an existential pragmatist “untainted” by the later rationalism of the

Greeks. In this, says Swidler, Jesus was like the Taoists: “The Semitic emphasis (of Jesus) corresponds to the Asian’s concern with the Way, which is so deep that it even provided a name for the whole Asian religion and way of thinking and living: Taoism.”<sup>47</sup>

The real Christians, according to Küng and his associates, were those who were cut off from Greek influence, especially when the Roman Empire sacked Jerusalem in the Second century A.D. They moved east into Syria, Persia, and Arabia, and, says Küng, never diluted their “pure” version of Christianity with the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, or any of the Greek “taste for philosophy and aesthetics.”

Küng is here attempting to revive various heresies from the era of the early Church, just as the leaders of the Enlightenment revived old heresies as weapons against the Renaissance. Cut off from the influence of Greek philosophy, these Central Asian sects, praised by Küng, developed forms of gnostic Christianity—including Manichaeism and Nestorianism—that would later be easily manipulated by the Venetians, in their fostering the Mongol hordes of Genghis Khan which destroyed China, and much of the Christian and Islamic world as well.

It is thus appropriate to conclude by quoting Hans Küng from his dialogue with Taoism, in *Christianity and Chinese Religions*, in which he openly adopts the gnostic (Taoist) view of a dual nature to God, one side good, one side evil. Küng specifically joins with Voltaire in ridiculing Leibniz for his contention that God has created the best of all possible worlds. Küng accuses God of responsibility for all the horrors of the world:

Does it not seem more than justified to go beyond complaint to accusation, an accusation that cries out to Heaven . . . which is responsible for order and harmony in this world?

He adopts the *yin/yang* of Taoism to impute an evil side to God:

Is there perhaps a tension of polarity in God himself, just as in Chinese thought there is a polarity that permeates everything?

As we head today into the Third millennium, enmeshed in economic and political crisis, we must hope that mankind can put aside this superstition—that evil must be accepted as a Divine principle—so that we can begin the ecumenical process of economic development of our entire planet and beyond—a process which is wholly good in the eyes of God and man.

47. Leonard Swidler, “What Christianity Can Offer Asia—Especially China in the Third Millennium,” Ching Feng, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Hong Kong).