

were sent to labor camps. [46]

Religions are a way for people to remove themselves from the secular world and cultivate themselves. They emphasize “the other shore” (the shore of perfect enlightenment) and “heaven.” Shakyamuni used to be an Indian prince. In order to seek mukti [47], a state in which one can obtain peace of mind, higher wisdom, full enlightenment, and nirvana, [48] he gave up the throne and went to a wooded mountain to cultivate by experiencing hardships and toil. Before Jesus became enlightened, the devil brought him to the top of a mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in all their splendor. The devil said, “If you will bow down and worship me, I will give you all these things.” But Jesus was not enticed. Yet the political monks and pastors who formed united fronts with the CCP made up a series of deceptions and lies such as “human world Buddhism,” and “religion is the truth, and so is socialism.” They claimed that “there is no contradiction between this shore and the other shore.” They encouraged Buddhists and Taoists to pursue happiness, glory, splendor, wealth and rank in this life, and changed the religious doctrines and their meaning.

Buddhism forbids killing. The CCP killed people like flies during the “suppression of counter-revolutionaries.” [49] The political monks thereupon cooked up the justification that “killing the counter-revolutionaries is an even greater compassion.” During the “War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea” (1950-1953) [50], monks were even sent directly to the front line to kill.

Take Christianity as another example. In 1950, Wu Yaozong [51] formed a “Three-Self” Church, which followed the principles of self-administration, self-support and self-propagation. He claimed that they would break away from “imperialism” and actively join the “War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea.” A good friend of his was imprisoned for over 20 years for refusing to join the Three-Self and suffered all kinds of torture and humiliation. When he asked Wu Yaozong, “How do you regard the miracles Jesus performed?” Wu answered, “I have discarded all of them.”

Not acknowledging Jesus’ miracles equates to not acknowledging Jesus’ heaven. How can one be counted as a Christian when one does not even recognize the heaven Jesus ascended to? However, as the founder of the “Three-Self” Church, Wu Yaozong became a member of the Political Consultative Conference standing committee. When he stepped into the Great Hall of the People [52], he must have completely forgotten Jesus’ words. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.” (Matthew, 22:37-38) “Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that

are God’s.” (Matthew, 22:21)

The CCP confiscated the temple property, forced monks and nuns to study Marxism-Leninism in order to brainwash them, and even forced them to labor. For instance, there was a ‘Buddhist workshop’ in Ningbo city, Zhejiang Province. Over 25,000 monks and nuns were once forced to work there. What is more absurd is that the CCP encouraged monks and nuns to get married so as to disintegrate Buddhism. For example, just before the March 8th Women’s Day in 1951, the Women’s Federation in Changsha city, Hunan Province ordered all nuns in the province to decide to get married in a few days. In addition, young and healthy monks were forced to join the army and were sent to the battlefield to serve as cannon fodder! [53]

Various religious groups in China have disintegrated under the CCP’s violent suppression. The genuine elites of Buddhism and Taoism have been suppressed. Among those remaining, many returned to secular life, and many others were undisclosed Communist Party members who specialized in putting on kesa robes, [54] Taoist robes or pastor’s long gowns to distort the Buddhist Scriptures, the Taoist Canon and the Holy Bible and to look for justification for the CCP’s movements in these doctrines.

Destruction of Cultural Relics

The ruination of cultural relics is an important part of the CCP’s destruction of traditional culture. In the “Casting Away of the Four Olds,” many one-of-a-kind books, calligraphies and paintings that had been collected by intellectuals were committed to flames or shredded into paper pulp. Zhang Bojun [55] had a family collection of over 10,000 books. The Red Guard leaders used them to make a fire to warm themselves. What was left was sent to paper mills and shredded into paper pulp.

The calligraphy and painting mounting specialist, Hong Qiusheng, was an elderly man known as the ‘miracle doctor’ for ancient calligraphy and paintings. He has mounted countless world-class masterpieces, such as Song Emperor Huizong’s [56] painting of scenery, Su Dongpo’s [57] painting of bamboo, and the paintings of Wen Zhengming [58] and Tang Bohu [59]. Over several decades, most of the hundreds of ancient calligraphy and paintings that he had rescued had become a first class national collection. The calligraphy and paintings that he had spared no pains in collecting were labeled as ‘Four Olds’ and were committed to flames. Afterwards, Mr. Hong said in tears, “Over 100 jin [60] (50 kilograms) of calligraphy and paintings; it took such a long time to burn them!” [61]

“While worldly matters come and go, Ancient, modern, to and fro, Rivers and mountains are changeless in their glory And still to be witnessed from this

trail. ...” [62]

If today’s Chinese people were still to remember some of their history, they would probably feel differently when they recite this poem by Meng Haoran. The famous mountain and river historical sites have been ruined and have disappeared in the storm of the “Casting Away the Four Olds.” Not only was the Orchid Pavilion, where Wang Xizhi [63] wrote the famous “Prologue to the Collection of Poems Composed at the Orchid Pavilion,” [64] destroyed, Wang Xizhi’s own grave was ruined as well. Wu Cheng’en’s [65] former residence in Jiangsu Province was demolished, Wu Jingzi’s [66] former residence in Anhui Province was smashed, the stone tablet that had Su Dongpo’s handwritten article The Roadside Hut of the Old Drunkard [67] was pushed over by the “young revolutionists,” [68] and the characters on the stone tablet were scraped off.

The essence of Chinese culture has been inherited and accumulated over several thousand years. Once destroyed, it cannot be restored. Yet the CCP has barbarously destroyed it in the name of “revolution” without sorrow or shame. When we sighed over the Old Summer Palace, which is known as the “palace of palaces,” being burned down by the Anglo-French Allied Forces, when we sighed over the monumental work of the Yongle Encyclopedia [69] being destroyed by invader’s flames of war, how could we have anticipated that the destruction caused by the CCP would be so much more widespread, long lasting and thorough than that caused by any invaders?

Destruction of Spiritual Beliefs

In addition to destroying the physical forms of religion and culture, the CCP has also used its utmost capacity to destroy people’s spiritual identity formed by faith and culture.

Take the CCP’s treatment of ethnic beliefs for example. The CCP considered the traditions of the Hui Muslim group to be one of the “Four Olds”—old thought, culture, tradition, habit. Therefore, it forced the Hui people to eat pork. Muslim peasants and mosques were required to raise pigs, and each household had to furnish two pigs to the country every year. The Red Guards even forced the second highest Tibetan living Buddha, the Panchen Lama, to eat human excrement. They ordered three monks from Temple of Bliss located in Harbin city, Heilongjiang Province, which is the biggest Buddhist temple built in modern times (1921), to hold a poster board that said, “The hell with sutras—they are full of shit.”

In 1971, Lin Biao [70], the Vice Chairman of the CCP’s central committee, attempted to escape China but was killed when his plane crashed in Undurkhan, Mongolia. Later, in Lin’s Beijing residence at Maojiawan, some Confucian quotations were found. The CCP then started a frantic movement of

“Criticizing Confucius.” A writer pen-named Liang Xiao [71] published an article in The Red Flag, the CCP’s banner magazine, entitled “Who is Confucius?” The article described Confucius as a “madman who wanted to turn history backward,” and a “deceptive and shrewd demagogue.” A series of cartoons and songs followed, demonizing Confucius.

In this way, the dignity and sacredness of religion and culture were annihilated.

Endless Destruction

In ancient China, the central government only extended its rule to the county level, below which patriarchal clans maintained autonomous control. So in Chinese history, the destruction, such as the “burning of books and the burying of Confucian scholars” by Emperor Qin Shi Huang [72] in the Qin Dynasty (221-207 BC) and the four campaigns to eliminate Buddhism between the fifth and tenth century by the “Three Wus and One Zong,” all were imposed from the top down, and could not possibly eradicate the culture. Confucian and Buddhist classics and ideas continued to survive in the vast spaces of society. In contrast, the campaign of “Casting Away the Four Olds” by teenage students incited by the CCP was a nationwide grass-roots movement with “spontaneous enthusiasm.” The CCP’s extension to every village through village-level Party branches controlled the society so tightly that the CCP’s “revolutionary” movement extended without end and affected every person on every inch of land in China.

Never in history had any emperor eradicated from people’s minds what they considered to be the most beautiful and the most sacred, using slanderous and insulting propaganda in addition to violence, as the CCP has. Elimination of belief can often be more effective and long-lasting than physical destruction alone.

Reforming Intellectuals

The Chinese characters embody the essence of 5,000 years of civilization. Each character’s form and pronunciation, and the idioms and literary allusions composed of combinations of the characters, all express profound cultural meanings. The CCP has not only simplified the Chinese characters, but also tried to replace them with Romanized pinyin, which would remove all cultural tradition from the Chinese characters and language. But the replacement plan has failed, thus sparing further damage to the Chinese language. However, the Chinese intellectuals who inherited the same traditional culture were not so fortunate as to be spared destruction.

Prior to 1949, China had about two million intellectuals. Although some had studied in Western countries, they still inherited some Confucian ideas. The CCP certainly could not relax its