

veloped short limbs, thin and weak bodies, and enlarged heads during their lactation period. Eight babies died because of this strange disease. After investigation, it was discovered that the disease was caused by poisonous milk powder made by a black-hearted and greedy manufacturer. Some people feed crabs, snakes and turtles with hormones and antibiotics, mix industrial alcohol with drinking wine, polish rice using industrial shortenings, and whiten bread flour with industrial brightening agents. For eight years, a manufacturer in Henan Province produced thousands of tons of cooking oil every month using materials containing carcinogens such as waste oil, oil extracted from left-over meals, or discarded argil that contained residual oils after its use. Producing poisonous foods is not a local or limited phenomenon, but is common all over China. This has everything to do with the single-minded pursuit of material gain that comes in the wake of the destruction of the culture and consequent degeneration of human morality.

Unlike the absolute monopoly and exclusiveness of the Party culture, the traditional culture has a tremendous integrative capacity. During the prosperous Tang Dynasty, Buddhist teachings, Christianity, and other Western religions co-existed harmoniously with Taoist and Confucian thought. Authentic Chinese traditional culture would have kept an open and tolerant attitude toward modern Western civilization. The four “tigers” of Asia (Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong) have created a “New Confucian” cultural identity. Their soaring economies have proven that traditional culture is not a hindrance to social development.

At the same time, authentic traditional culture measures the quality of human life on the basis of happiness from within rather than material comfort from without. “I would rather have no one blame me behind my back, than have someone praise me to my face; I would rather have peace in mind, than have comfort in body.” [97] Tao Yuanming (365-427 AD) [98] lived in poverty, but he kept a joyful spirit and enjoyed as a pastime, “picking asters beneath the eastern fence, gazing upon the Southern Mountain in the distance.”

Culture offers no answers for questions such as how to expand industrial production or what social systems to adopt. Rather, it plays an important role in providing moral guidance and restraint. The true restoration of traditional culture shall be the recovery of humility toward heaven, the earth and nature, respect for life, and awe before God. It will allow humanity to live harmoniously with heaven and earth and to enjoy a heaven-given old age.

Notes:

[1] Pangu was the first living being and the creator of all in Chinese mythology.

[2] Nüwa was the mother goddess who

created humankind in Chinese mythology.

[3] Shennong (literally, “The Heavenly Farmer”) is a legendary figure in Chinese mythology who lived some 5,000 years ago. He taught the ancient people the practices of agriculture. He is also credited with risking his life to identify hundreds of medicinal (and poisonous) herbs and various plants of that nature, which were crucial to the development of traditional Chinese medicine.

[4] Cangjie or Cang Jie is a fabled and legendary figure from ancient China, is said to have been the Yellow Emperor’s official historian, and the inventor of the Chinese characters. The Cangjie method of Chinese character computer input is named after him.

[5] From Tao-te Ching or Dao De Jing, one of the most important Taoist texts, written by Lao Zi or Lao Tze.

[6] Opening remarks from The Great Learning by Confucius.

[7] From Records of the Historian (Shi Ji, also translated as The Grand Scribe’s Record) by Sima Qian (145-85 BC), who was the first major Chinese historian. It documents the history of China and its neighboring countries from the ancient past to his own time. The pattern of Sima Qian’s historiographic work was unique and served as model for the official standard histories of the imperial dynasties for the next 2000 years.

[8] From Confucius’ Analects.

[9] *ibid.*

[10] *ibid.*

[11] Confucius said in The Great Learning he wrote, “Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy.”

[12] Dong Zhongshu (ca. 179-104 B.C.), a Confucian thinker during the Han Dynasty, said in a treatise Three Ways to Harmonize Humans with Heaven (Tian Ren San Ce), “if heaven remains, the Tao does not change.”

[13] The Journey to the West, known to westerners as Monkey King, written by Wu Cheng’en (1506?-1582?), is one of the renowned classical Chinese novels. It was based on a true story of a famous Chinese monk in the Tang Dynasty, Xuan Zang (602-664), who traveled on foot to what is today India, the birthplace of Buddhism, to seek for the sutras. In the novel, the Monkey King, Pigsy and Sandy were arranged by the Buddha to become disciples of Xuan Zang and escorted him to the West to get the sutras. They went through 81 dangers and calamities before they finally arrived at the West and achieved True Fruition.

[14] A Dream of Red Mansions, (Hung Lou Meng, also translated as The Dream of the Red Chamber), was written by Cao Xueqin (or Tsao Hsueh-Chin) (1715?-1763) in Qing (Ching) Dynasty. It is a tragic love story set

against the background of the decline of an aristocratic family. With this as its central theme, the novel unfolds a vast and moving panorama of social history. It also parades a memorable and dazzling cast of characters, with the central ones being Jia Baoyu and Lin Daiyu. Its wide-ranging and meticulous structure together with its literary merit in the form of exquisite language make it universally recognized as the epitome of the art of the classical novel in China.

[15] Outlaws of the Marsh (also translated as Heroes of Water Margins), one of China’s great classic novels, written in the 14th century by Shi Nai’an. A hundred and eight men and women band together to be outlaws of the marsh. Intrigue, adventure, murder, war, and romantic stories are told in the suspenseful manner of the traditional storyteller.

[16] Three Kingdoms, one of the most famous Chinese classic novels written by Luo Guanzhong (1330?-1400?) based on the history of the Three Kingdoms period (220AD-280AD). It describes the intricate and tense struggles for the throne among three powerful political forces: Liu Bei, Cao Cao and Sun Quan, and focuses on various great talents and bold strategies during that period.

[17] The Romance of the Eastern Zhou, a novel originally written by Yu Shaoyu in the Ming Dynasty, revised and rewritten by Feng Menglong at end of the Ming Dynasty, and was further revised by Cai Yuanfang in the Qing Dynasty. It covers a history of more than 500-years during the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BC) and the Warring States period (475-221 BC).

[18] The Complete Story of Yue Fei, was written by Qian Cai in the Qing Dynasty. It described the life of Yue Fei (1103-1142) from the Southern Song Dynasty, one of the most famous Generals and patriotic heroes in Chinese history. General Yue Fei distinguished himself in battles against northern invaders from the Jin nation. He was framed for crimes that he did not commit, sent to prison and executed, as Prime Minister Qin Hui attempted to eliminate the war party. Yue Fei was later cleared of the groundless charges and a temple was built in his memory. Four cast-iron figures were made for his tomb. With chests bare and hands bound behind their backs and kneeling before it, they represent those people who are responsible for Yue Fei’s murder. Yue Fei has become a model in Chinese culture of loyalty to the country.

[19] This quote comes from Abstract of Collected Taoist Scriptures (Dao Cang Ji Yao) compiled in the Qing Dynasty.

[20] See [8].

[21] From Mao’s speech at the Eighth Session of the Tenth CCP Plenary Meeting.

[22] Mao’s original words in Chinese used a pun: I am like a monk holding

an umbrella—no Tao (or Fa, pun for “hair”) nor heaven (pun for “sky”).

[23] Jie is the name of the last ruler of the Xia Dynasty (c. 21-16 B.C.), and Zhou is the name of the last ruler of the Shang Dynasty (c. 16 -11 B.C.). Both are known as tyrants.

[24] Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283 AD), a military commander who fought against the Mongolian troops to protect the integrity of the Southern Song Dynasty. He was killed on January 9th, 1283 for refusing to surrender to the Mongolians after being taken prisoner.

[25] From Mencius.

[26] From a very famous saying by Mencius, “Life, my desire; justice, my desire too. When I cannot have both of them at the same time, I will maintain justice at the expense of my life.”

[27] From the Communist Internationale anthem. The Chinese translation literally means: “There has never been a savior, and we do not rely on God either; to create human happiness, we rely entirely on ourselves.”

[28] Emperor Taiwu of the Northern Wei, alias Tuo Tao (r. 424-452 AD)

[29] Emperor Wuzong of the Tang Dynasty, alias Li Yan, (r. 840-846 AD)

[30] Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, alias Yu Yong, (r. 561-579 AD)

[31] Emperor Shizong of the Later Zhou Dynasty, alias Chairong, (r. 954-959 AD)

[32] A slogan used in the mid 1960s during the Cultural Revolution in China.

[33] The White Horse Temple, the first Buddhist monastery in China, was built in A.D. 68, the eleventh year of Yong Ping in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 AD).

[34] In the Dai language, the Beiye Scripture is pronounced Tanlan. Beiye is a subtropical plant belonging to the palm family. It is a tall kind of tree with thick leaves, which are mothproof and very slow to dry out. In ancient times when paper was not yet invented, the Dai’s ancestors imprinted letters or articles on the leaf. The letters carved on the leaf are called the Beiye correspondence, and the scripture on it, Tanlan (Beiye scripture).

[35] Xiangshan Park, also called Fragrant Hills Park, is located 28 kilometers (17 miles) northwest of downtown Beijing. Initially built in 1186 in the Jin Dynasty, it became a summer resort for imperial families during the Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties.

[36] From How Many Cultural Relics Were Committed To Flames by Ding Shu.

[37] Red Guards refers to civilians who were the frontline implementers of the Great Cultural Revolution. Most were youngsters in their mid-teens.

[38] The Summer Palace, located 15 kilometers (9 miles) from Beijing, is the largest and best-preserved royal garden in China, with a history of