

## Hylozoism Rules China OK?

Brian Van der Linde

The Chinese liberalisation theory is surely the most arrogant contemporary form of the Occidental supremacy myth. A good cross-section of the most tunnel-visioned media employees are camped out in that country's major cities ready to pounce on any sign of what they regard as teleological adoption of Western institutions. Even the Libertarian Alliance has jumped onto the bandwagon by exhibiting David Ramsay Steele's "No Computer Science Without Striptease" (*Free Life*, Vol.1 No.1) as a prognosis worthy of respect.

This author may as well have written science-fiction about liberalisation in the Crab Nebula for all his negligence in analysing recent Chinese history and its interaction with Bolshevik pseudo-philosophy. Since the latter labyrinthine subject would require a book to explain thoroughly, I will content myself with exploding the main misconceptions of today's pretence Sinologists.

### Deng the Dictator

Media darling Deng Xiaopeng, whose supposed purge as a "capitalist roader" in 1966 is so stupidly taken literally, is an obvious place to start. The truth is that this lifelong Leninist - who fawned before every party line his mentor Zhou Enlai ever endorsed, from the Great Leap Forward to the cynical sacrifice of Liu Shaoqi - only fell from grace by adopting the aims of the Miyamoto delegation. This was a Japanese communist party attempt to reverse the Sino-Soviet split and form a common front against NATO. It fell foul of Mao Zedong's twin obsessions with a USA-USSR secret alliance to conquer Manchuria linked to Kuomintang infiltration of the Chinese Communist Party. Deng was not so much purged as sacrificed to the forces which for five years overthrew the second largest Bolshevik party on earth.

The restoration of Deng by more circumspect Zhou Enlai cronies such as Li Xiannian and Ye Jianying was due to the need of these insecurely restored tyrants to pacify certain populist forces. Those urban youths threatened with relocation to rural hellholes had naively adopted Deng as a mediator during the Tien An Men demonstrations. His home province of Szechwan was in open armed revolt following a drought-induced famine. The Deng - Zhou Ziyang - Hu Yaobang triumvirate owe their pre-eminence solely to their ability to prop up party dictatorship.

This dictatorship has been fully implemented only in the past nine years. The 1946-8 Kuomintang capitulation was engineered by the desertion of war-sick conscripts in rural areas, whilst all professional troops defended Manchuria from the Soviet Union. This resulted in a weak state where local party cadres - often ex-Kuomintang - were only loosely united by adherence to the 1954 constitution defining China as a "people's democracy" rather than a "dictatorship of the proletariat". It was disputes over methods for introducing dictatorship which caused the party leadership to destroy itself in the mid-1960s.

### Three Competing Ideologies

The orthodox Leninist theory of uneven development postulates post-revolutionary struggle between advanced and backward 'forces of production'. Party dictatorship is essential to mediate between these opposing forces. Abram Deborin's modification allowed the self-proclaimed representatives of the advanced forces to declare qualitative superiority over their 'Menshevik' opponents, justifying their liquidation. These two forms of rationalised schizophrenia were the basis for the Liu-Mao split.

A third element regarded Lenin's "State and Revolution" as a serious manifesto for government - yet it was merely a confidence trick designed to gain support from Social Revolutionary Party members for his coup attempt. Its precursor was Shliapnikov and Koliontai's Workers Opposition movement, founded at the 10th Russian CP Congress.

This group had called for a separation of powers between party, Soviets and trade unions, compulsory periods of manual labour for party personnel and people's militias to replace the armed forces.

Lenin's method for repressing this third clique was by transferring it to remote, dangerous areas. These included those occupied by the still embryonic Chinese Bolsheviks. These seeds of heresy eventually reaped a far greater harvest than their Russian parent plant. This was due to greater concern over party elitism in a country ruled for centuries by a similar Confucian ideological elite. Here are the true roots of the ultra-denigrated 'Gang of Four (Five)'. Their advocacy of 'revolutionary committees' to share power with party cadres, and their praise of the 'Fa Chia' legalist tradition in opposition to the Confucian system, must surely be regarded as a step closer to true pluralism than the orthodox Leninist restoration which overthrew them.

Those who take the opposite view point largely to the supposed economic liberalism of Deng and his cronies. Their phasing out of the 'communes' and relaxation of certain price controls have led to a misunderstanding of the political strategy behind these moves.

The whole disaster of the 'communes' derived from the Soviet Union's attempt to bring about the economic subordination of its allies via the enforcement of an absurd degree of production specialisation. This attempt inevitably came unstuck in a giant country already self-sufficient through internal trade. Mao's response was to label Khrushchev as 'revisionist' and revert to Deborin's theories of how 'socialist relations of production' could bring about qualitative leaps to self-sufficiency (socialism in one country) and surpass capitalism. But this claptrap was itself taken to extremes Deborin never envisaged. It was synthesised with hylozoist beliefs of the 'Tao' religion. According to this all nature is self-sufficient unless prevented from being so by human volition - or by counter-revolutionaries, as Mao interpreted it.

Some regions were consequently prevented from indulgence in trade in order to impose self-sufficiency, and labelled 'communes'.

These 'communes' should be regarded as artificial feudal institutions rather than socialist. They have no connection with Marx.

### **Deng Is No Liberal**

That these communes largely collapsed in the mid-1970s when the prohibition on grain-stockpiling converted a drought into a famine, should not necessarily be regarded as a vindication of free market economics. A total collapse of the economic infrastructure was only prevented by the light industry-based collectives, not by private ownership. These collectives were not 'freely entered into' - in Libertarian parlance. Their formation was a prerequisite for the receipt of state-allocated machinery, in accordance with Liu's 1962 programme for linking mechanisation and collectivisation.

The only valid claim of Deng and his associates to economic liberalism lies in their defence of these collectives against the demands for their nationalisation by Zhang Chunqiao and Wang Hongwen. This was instrumental, for Deng, in preventing support for their comparatively pluralistic political position gaining support outside of the cities. The difference between Deng and his opponents is one of greater cynicism, not greater liberalism.

### **Not Liberalism, but Bukharinism**

Yet it is a misunderstanding of Deng's reasons for the relaxation of price and wage controls that has primarily promoted the liberalism myth. This policy is a resurrection of the programme of Nikolai Bukharin, from the 14th Russian CP Congress, on which occasion hired rural labour was re-introduced. Deng's catch-phrase of "get rich" is an echo of Bukharin's exhortations to the 'kulaks' (the standard Bolshevik word of abuse for successful farmers). Bukharin's long-term goal was no free market economy but implementation of Lenin's dictum of 'dictatorship of proletariat *and* peasantry.'

This idea had originated with the crucial need for the peasantry to be coaxed into the production of surplus harvests in order to feed their city-based rulers. It relied on stimulating class-conflict between impoverished rural elements and the 'kulaks' in which the former

would supposedly identify with Bolshevism. Realising that this scheme was simplistic, Bukharin advocated extending the supposedly temporary incentives granted by the New Economic Policy. These had been used as a means of exacerbating wealth differentials, with Bolshevik party membership to be granted as a vehicle for revenge for those who lost out comparatively.

The objective of Bukharin and Deng to create an impoverished rural stratum depends on the highly illiberal prohibition of migration from the countryside to cities. This was made clear to those peasants who went on 'crusades' to Beijing and Shanghai during the 1979-80 period. Secondly, the need to increase party membership in rural areas is emphasised as essential to the survival of Chinese Bolshevism.

Bukharin's policies were abandoned in the Soviet Union due to their failure to provide a source of investment for heavy industry in its isolated economy. This scenario is largely ruled out for China by the mammoth American and Japanese investment, although resentment of foreign bank demands for loan interest could still inspire a retreat to policies eventually prevalent under Stalin's aegis.

Stalin requisitioned the programme of Bukharin's rival Preobrazhensky for the reduction of rural areas to subject colonies of the cities via the militarisation of society. The three centuries of Czarist subordination of the North Asian peoples to the requirements of their armies were instrumental in enabling the original Bolsheviks to achieve all their drives for domination. The abandonment of militarism by the Chinese in the 18th century has so far rendered absolute Stalinism (or Deborinist-Preobrazhenskism as it could more accurately be termed) impractical.

### **Lin Biao's Traditionalism**

The prospects for a military alternative to the current neo-Bukharinist regime can best be understood via analysis of Lin Biao's failures. Lin regarded militarisation as achievable only by the utilisation of the elitist tradition of Confucianism. He attempted to elevate the People's Liberation Army to the status of an overt elite, recruited

from the most intelligent of the population and replacing the CP as the effective rulers - to which end Beijing was occupied between 1965 and 1970. The provinces were to be colonised by means of army-dominated revolutionary committees drawn from the local masses rather than by party cadres allocated from Beijing. "Collectivist thought" was eulogised as the new supreme virtue, and 'Mao-Zedong thought' was concocted to indicate that the senile party chairman really held the 'mandate of heaven'.

Yet Lin only had the loyalty of one quarter of his own army. He lost support on two counts. The tradition of peasant insurrectionary bands - of whom the 2nd century Yellow Turbans are the best known - proved to be far from defunct. Certain radical infiltrators into the revolutionary, committees' movement distributed arms to the peasantry and brought about the destruction of Bolshevik rule throughout most of the country.

Second, Lin's foreign policy objectives became insufferable to an army he was increasingly committing to a suicidal war against the 'revisionist' Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had been excoriated by Mao ever since spurning his demand for a joint war against the capitalist states in 1957. This, incidentally, provoked the struggle for influence with the 'Third World' states that China so decisively lost. Suslov's absurd theory that the 'Third World' was the primary source of surplus value in the world economy and could thus potentially bring the capitalist states to their knees, proved more appealing to African and Asian dictators than Mao's sermons on how marvellous thermonuclear war would be. Lin's desperate attempt to reverse the losses took the form of the 'countryside surrounding the cities on a world scale' doctrine. This apparently proposed that the entire western world is a pile of concrete and factories, which can be starved into submission by the collective power of the peasant economics. Chinese leaders who had actually visited Europe soon decided this was the silliest sketch they had ever been in, and had a good laugh arranging for Lin's plane to be blown up.

### **Militarism for China**

China may seem to have become a good

United Nations member believing in peaceful coexistence, but it should be remembered that only a decade ago Li Xiannian was pronouncing the inevitability of world war. Of more concern, the imbeciles who control NATO foreign policy are going overboard providing advanced weapons to the regime on the pretext of containing Vietnamese aggression.

The possibility of the military dominating in China has merely been shelved pending transformation of the nature of the armed forces. This is seen by the stress - in the vaunted 'four modernisations' - laid upon developing electronic and laser weapons. A centralised professional army is being evolved to replace the antiquated militia which proved ineffective in the late 1960s in resisting the forces threatening the survival of Chinese Bolshevism.

These forces were centred on the revival among provincial party radicals such as Wang Li and Hsiao Hua of the old philosophy of Mo-Tze (Mohism), which stresses that holders of the 'mandate of heaven' are obliged to prevent the exploitation of the masses. Its championing of egalitarian and puritan ethics against elitism, corruption and irresponsibility proved a powerful weapon by which urban party members forcibly relocated to the countryside could gain revenge upon the leadership. In combination with the writings of Ku Yenwu (1613-82) it also manifested hostility to intellectuals under the influence of foreign ideas.

### **"Cultural Revolution"**

By initially sacrificing Deng and his ilk the CP merely demonstrated their lack of 'heaven's mandate', opening the floodgates for the red guards to denounce all party cadres. Their power was only restored after violent conflicts lasting until the late 1970s in provinces such as Fukian and Szechwan. It became necessary to conduct a cover-up for the benefit of the outside world - the legend of the "cultural revolution" was born.

The term 'cultural revolution' originated in the first decade of the century. It was used by Alexander 'Bogdanov' to give a pseudo-scientific basis to the mystical neo-chemist

and quasi-Rosicrucian elements with which the early Bolshevnik party was riddled (these were only eradicated by Lenin splitting the party countless times). It was kept alive by followers of Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and Gorki; the heresy spread to China by the same process as the "workers' opposition" (see above). This is how Chen Boda, Yao Wenyuan and Jiang Ching came to spout verbiage about 'the evolution of the total man under socialism and the creative urge to destroy' in 1960s Shanghai. Yet it is absurd to brand these three as the arch-villians responsible for the collapse of stable government in China. Chen Boda was so uninterested in attempting politicisation of the Chinese peasantry that he was purged in 1970, becoming obsessed with the 1871 Paris Commune and desiring to lead Shanghai into a similar romantic conflagration.

Fellow scapegoats Zhang Chunqiao and Wang Hongwen had more relevant concepts of "cultural revolution". They identified the rigid Confucian system derived from Hsiu-tsu as the basic obstacle to Bolshevisation and targeted the local people's courts which implemented it for eradication. Ironically their demands for progressive legalism - derived from the ancient "fuchia" - have been adopted by the 1982 constitution with its centralisation of the legal system. While the regime's apologists focus on such cosmetic gestures as the introduction of defence lawyers, it should be noted that such crimes as counter-revolutionary activity, embezzlement of wealth, and the sabotage of socialist property have now been given legal underpinning. This renders the persecution of individuals more routine and strengthens state control over property.

It is at last time to explain why Steele's thesis of the erosion of Chinese Bolshevism by the expansion of private property is nonsense.

### **China's Future not Steele's**

The fundamental attitude of the Chinese people towards inanimate objects is hylozoism: invisible sentient life is regarded as co-determinate with all forms of matter whose interactions with humans is governed by metaphysical laws visibly manifested by holders of the 'mandate of heaven'. It follows that property can never be solely disposed of



by the individuals but is subject to a balance between material and spiritual forces and the apparent holders of divine favour, whether these be Deborinist psychopaths or devious neo-Bukharinites. Chinese Bolshevism can only be violently destroyed; it can never be bypassed by hypostatized 'market forces'.

In place of Steele's neologism of "catallaxy" the decisive concept is the Chinese idea of 'Tuan'; the blind egoist striving which brings about chaos whenever the 'mandate of heaven' is eclipsed. This may be the golden calf of libertarianism, but has always been the dirtiest word in the Chinese language.

No doubt the more obstinate libertarians will accuse me of playing with words, but how else can it be explained either that Mao's 'communes' gained critical acceptance or that state economic control has been accepted in China longer than anywhere else on earth (from the 1st century BC in the river valleys). China's initial emergence as a major civilisation was only achieved by the Sui-T'ang (589-907) dynasties' programme of state grain warehouses and canal building. Without the internal trade generated by this scheme China would have remained a conglomerate of smaller and poorer states. Furthermore the "New Laws" programme of Wang Anshih (1021-86), with its clear advocacy of progressive taxation and public works schemes easily predates any of the Occidental thinkers proposed as founders of state-socialist politics.

### **Japan and India**

If extreme libertarians persist in arguing that a burgeoning 'black market' will eventually so corrupt the Chinese that their entire philosophical tradition will be swept aside, they should consider the examples of two neighbouring countries.

Japan, a society with similar concepts of property to feudal Western Europe, found a genuine desire to liberalise stultified by the anti-liberal immigration laws of the USA and Australia, resulting in vicious expansionism rather than any "catallactic" rave-up. How is a vastly more xenophobic country confronted by even more rigid prohibitions on labour mobility expected to succeed where Japan failed? In addition it is surely pertinent to ask

Steele to explain why his beloved 'market forces' have proved so ineffective in liberating the Indian peasantry from the Hindu caste-system.

The upshot of this is that hypostatized concepts, with no tangible existence beyond the calculations of merchants, shopkeepers and other middlemen, cannot be expected to transform entire geopolitical monoliths. To postulate "no computer science without striptease" is perhaps valid as far as a tiny urban elite are concerned, but it is how well the Chinese peasantry resist Bolshevik oppression which ultimately counts.

So long as the conformism-resistant sentiments of the 'Tao' religion survive, the prospects for the overthrow of Bolshevism will remain potentially strong. It is essential that the CP becomes split again, by an issue more substantial than the resurrection of Mohism or various Bolshevik heresies, in order to prove that they are not genuine holders of the 'mandate of heaven', thereby escalating peasant insurrection into the sort of 'justified revolt' which destroyed the Shang dynasty in 1027 BC.

In this respect the chief ground for optimism would be the reading of Marx which Steele cavalierly dismisses. The whole point is that China has been starved of Marx's more lucid philosophical works in favour of the obscurantist outpourings behind which Engels hid his own perverted doctrine. If the translations of works such as the *Grundrisse* have the same effect on Chinese intellectuals as they have had upon their Occidental counterparts in the last thirty years then all hell should break loose. Mao may have known what he was saying when predicting "the right will not rule long". A major Marxian revolution against Marxism would change the course of world history, not just that of China.

Until that time, those of us who genuinely desire the liberation of the thousands of inhabitants of Chinese concentration camps and the countless millions tied to China's soil owe it to these people to try to analyse their recent history rather than exploit them as a means of scoring ideological points.

### **Free Life**