

Helga Zepp-LaRouche in Dialogue With Dr. Patrick Ho

The following brief dialogue between Patrick Ho and Helga Zepp-LaRouche immediately followed Dr. Ho's presentation on April 14.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: Thank you very much, Dr. Ho. Patrick, I think this was very enlightening. I think you have given us a very rich picture. I have only one observation to make. The reason I suggested this conference in the first place was—I think that you, when you say “Western Civilization,” are referring to the way Western Civilization is today, whereas I was trying to say that there are these two traditions, the oligarchical tradition and what I call the republican tradition for the common good. And I think it is very important to somehow make that distinction, because we want to reject the values of this present system. If you just say “Western Civilization,” it doesn't do justice.

Patrick Ho: Helga, you are absolutely right, because nowadays what is generally meant by “modernization,” is actually “westernization.” A lot of people in the East take the two terms to be equivalent to one another, meaning modernization is westernization, and that is the only way of getting modernized, which is not

true. But at the same time we should not reject westernization as throwing out the baby with the bathwater. There is something good in it, and what we really need is to combine the eastern virtues with the western virtues and come up with something that can transcend both of them and rise up and be better than the two put together in summation.

There is a lot of room where we can learn from one another, and I think, in the future we will be seeing one trend, because for the last two hundred years the world has been dominated by a small fraction of human civilization—that is Europe and North America combined. But now, with the emerging economies and the emerging powers from the developing nations in the East, from China, from India, from Brazil, the Middle East countries, ASEAN countries, African countries—we'll be hearing more and more about civilizations that we have not paid any attention to before, and we'll be learning more and more about the needs, the requirements, and the aspirations of other peoples that we have never known to have existed before, have not listened to before, have not paid any attention to before—but they will be playing a more and more important role. As a humanist, I welcome this change. This is the



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Dr. Patrick Ho and Helga Zepp-LaRouche, April 14, 2017.

ultimate democratization of—humanization of—humanity, and is the platform of the world which is a shared future of humanity, because ultimately we are in the same boat. We share a common destiny. There is only one planet; that is planet earth. There is no planet B.

Following a question from the audience as to the nature of the oligarchy, a further exchange took place:

Zepp-LaRouche: Thank you for that, because I think . . . in Western history, up until the Fifteenth Century, there was nothing but oligarchy. You always had a small elite trying to keep the people backward, trying to exploit their privileges, and when the German philosopher Nicholas of Cusa emerged, he was the first one to develop the idea of the representative system, and the idea that the state was devoted to the common good.

In France at that point, you had Louis XI: During his twenty-year reign the living standard of the population doubled, and you had the beginning of the modern nation-state, which had the idea that you need science and technology to improve the living conditions of the people. Since the Fifteenth Century in Europe you always had a back and forth, where sometimes you had a government which was for the common good. In the recent period I would say Adenauer and de Gaulle were mild expressions of that tendency. You had backlashes

like Nixon, where, despite the fact that he opened the door to China, he was a terrible step back, because he tried to undo the Civil Rights movement—he was going back to the Confederacy.

So you had these struggles, and you could always measure very clearly whether government is devoted to the progress of civilization, or does it represent the oligarchical system. With these went also very clear philosophers, thinkers, and scientists, and there was a struggle over these ideas.

To Dr. Ho: Maybe some other time we will be able to get into the depths of this, but my modest understanding was always that Daoism was more linked to the backward tendencies in European history, and also the idea of complacency, to merely concentrating on one's own internal development. That's why I always thought that Confucius is really, absolutely the corresponding figure to Plato, to Cusa, to Leibniz, and to Schiller.

I think that if we want to get out of this crisis, then we need to develop a more active dialogue among these positive traditions, *and then move to the future*—joint space exploration, going to a completely different way—because we must define the present from the standpoint of the future, if we are going to find solutions. Obviously you cannot exhaust this, but I think this is the kind of dialogue we should deepen.

Dr. Ho: We'll do that next time!

Zepp-LaRouche: Okay!