

RICHARD WILHELM—FOUNDER OF A FRIENDLY CHINA IMAGE IN TWENTIETH CENTURY GERMANY

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1. Introduction

The attitude of Germans towards China around the turn of the last century had changed from the raptures of the Enlightenment when, to such thinkers as Leibniz or Chr. Wolff, China had seemed a paragon of virtue, reason, and good if strict government. As values shifted from moral idealism to materialism while self-assessment grew out of uncertainty into complacency, China appeared to an increasing number of Germans—and other Europeans—as a stagnating, backward den of iniquity and corruption whence the “yellow peril” crept forward.⁽¹⁾ In Germany, Sinophobia reached its

(1) See H. Gollwitzer, 1962. W. Stigl, 1978, p. 37, points at China's weakness, not backwardness, as the main cause for Western disdain at an age that worshipped materialism: Russia, backward but strong, was dreaded, yet respected.

shrillest after the murder of her minister to China, Baron von Ketteler, by a Manchu "Boxer" in 1900. It is the more astounding that a mere twenty years later the German China image had changed back again from vile to venerable: ever since the 1920s and 30s, Germans from all walks of life were united in fond affection for Chinese art, literature, philosophy, and religion, seeking "light from the East". In fact, the friendly disposition eventually survived Nazi racism as well as Hitler's renunciation of his alliance with Republican China in favour of Japan.⁽²⁾ This change had been brought about partly by the trauma of the First World War which made many in defeated Germany tumble off the high horse of materialist optimism. However, to a large extent the revival of a friendlier China image was due to the efforts of one man: Richard Wilhelm, who had gone to China in 1899 as a herald of Christianity but returned to Europe, twenty-five years later, as a harbinger of Chinese culture.

In order to put Richard Wilhelm's approach into perspective, we must briefly review the development of Christian missionary attitudes in China up to the First World War.

In the late eighteenth century, missionary enthusiasm went along with neo-Pietist "awakening" movements. The idea of overseas evangelizing among the white settlers and "poor heathen" natives of the newly acquired colonies, coming from England and America, spread over all of Europe, leading to the foundation of numerous mission societies by both the established Churches and free denominations. As for the German-speaking world, the *Herrnhüter Brüdergemeinde* had sent missionaries to South Africa as early as 1737. Individual Pietists and "awakened" Protestants kept contact with English "Evangelical Revival" circles, and many of the early German Protestant missionaries were trained in England. The first mission society in the German-speaking world, the *Basler Mission*, was founded in 1815, followed by a number of other societies. The Lutherans finally joined the movement as Germany entered colonial imperialism in the 1880ies. With growing German strength, a call for "German missionaries to German colonies" rang out in opposition to Anglo-American dominance of the field.⁽³⁾

(2) See W. Bauer, 1973, p. 8.

(3) H. Gründer, 1982, p. 42. For the Anglo-American dominance, see P. A. Cohen, 1978, p. 547.

Protestant missionaries entered China in the wake of the Opium Wars around 1840 motivated by religious, commercial, and political factors. In the earlier years, many of them were barely educated fanatics who, insensitive towards Chinese traditions, indiscriminately proselytized and then protected their motley flock: the phenomenon of “rice Christians” or “lawsuit-converts” who bullied their non-Christian Chinese contemporaries was extremely counterproductive of Western popularity in China.⁽⁴⁾ By the end of the century, however, a “modernized” missionary approach of secular professionalism had been formed. Missionaries advised Chinese reformist scholar-officials; translated or compiled books on Western science, technology, law, government...; taught; instructed; set up medical schools. Many Republican revolutionaries were educated in mission facilities, among them Sun Yatsen himself. The turn towards secular “cultural mission” was rationalized by the assumption that “Christianity was immanent in all of Western culture and that, therefore, the acceptance of any part of this culture was a move in the proper direction”,⁽⁵⁾ an assumption which had informed no less a thinker than Hegel.

Catholic missionary enterprise declined in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due to the dissolution of the Jesuit order, the Church's loss of popularity during the Enlightenment and French Revolution, and forfeit of wealth under Napoleon's secularization. In Germany, Bismarck's “*Culturkampf*” subjected Catholicism to a number of legal restrictions. In the early nineteenth century, a popular Catholic revival, partly influenced by the Pietist “awakening”, rose in France and renewed Catholic mission. France became the centre of Catholic missionary training and held jurisdiction over foreign missions, including those in China where French Catholics were active again by the 1840s. Assuming the benefits of the treaty of Tianjin 天津 (1858 and 1860), they entered as victors protected by gunboat diplomacy

Missionary arrogance and ignorance, both Protestant and Catholic, were among the causes for increasing Chinese anti-foreignism which erupted in the Tianjin Massacre of 1870 and reached its climax in the “Boxer” or *Yihetuan* 義和團 events of 1900. An example for provocative missionary attitudes is

(4) For foreign missionary activities in China, see the 7-vols. *Jiaowu andang*, 1974-1981; for mission-related xenophobia, see P. A. Cohen, 1963; Liao Guangsheng, 1987.

(5) P. A. Cohen, 1978. p. 573.

that of the “Steyl” patres particularly their bishop Johann Baptist von Anzer, an ardent German nationalist⁽⁶⁾ He arrived at Shanghai in 1879. Much against his purpose, he had to accept a French passport to go inland. He took up work in south Shandong in 1882.⁽⁷⁾ Repeatedly, he objected to French dominance, but Berlin did not attend to the issue until Bismarck’s dismissal when the “*Culturkampf*” abated and new political constellations at home entered Germany among the colonizing nations. Then, of course, Shandong became one of her “spheres of interest”.

In 1839, Rome had declared Shandong a vicarate apostolic entrusted to the Franciscans. In 1881, after tenacious negotiations, Steyl “obtained” the southern part, comprising Yanzhou-fu 兗州府 as the administrative centre, to which belong Qufu 曲阜 and Zouxian 鄒縣, the respective birthplaces of Confucius and Mencius; two other prefectures; and the sub-prefecture Jining 濟寧. This area had long been a focus of rebellion and anti-Christian agitation by secret societies, including the “White Lotus” *Bailian-she* 白蓮社, forerunners of the “Boxers”. But Anzer was not the man to be intimidated. He made it his personal ambition to reside at the centre of Confucianism in spite of constant vigorous protests entered by Chinese officials and population. In Confucius Anzer saw a mere idol of paganism. He knew how to put pressure on China in her times of inner and outer dilemma. His nationalist ambitions rose even higher once the Steyl mission was placed under the protection of Germany in 1890. Finally, in September, 1896, he could proudly entered Yanzhou.⁽⁸⁾

On 1 November, 1897, two Steyl missionaries were murdered at a mission post in south Shandong by members of the “Big Sword” secret society, *Dadaohui* 大刀會. The sad fate of the two priests was hailed by Germany: Jiaozhou 膠州 Bay was occupied on 14 November, 1897. In March, 1898, a treaty for the lease of the area was signed by the German Reich and China.

(6) V. Schmidt, 1976, p. 194, n. 281, mistakes bishop Anzer for the founder of the “Steyler Mission”. Zhang Yufa, 1987, pp. 150 and 878 (index), erroneously spells Anzer’s Christian name in French, “Jean Baptiste”. In Chinese sources, Anzer is 安策爾.

(7) J. Schrecker, 1971, p. 12, gives 1880 as the date of Anzer’s arrival; I follow H. Gründer, 1982, p. 260.

(8) On 19 Nov., 1900, the social-democrat August Bebel criticized Anzer’s step before the German Reichstag as “doubtlessly a provocation” of Chinese sentiments; H. Gründer, 1982, p. 274.

Troughout the following years, anti-German and anti-Christian incidents continued in Shandong. Anzer made matters worse by constantly calling for military retaliation and demanding financial indemnity of the Chinese officials. Disturbances also occurred in the Jiaozhou area and the adjacent neutral zone where German engineers had begun to carry out surveys for mining and railway construction. The population, ignorant about the significance of this work, were indignant about removals of ancestral graves and sales of their land and houses and also feared disruption of the flow of irrigation water by the railway dam.⁽⁹⁾ In Gaomi district 高密縣 of Laizhou prefecture 萊州府, angry villagers, supported by the “Boxers”, harrassed German engineers. Incidents continued throughout the spring and summer of 1899. A German appeal to the new Shandong governor Yuxian 毓賢 (known for his sympathies with the *Yihetuan*) was ignored. Against the intentions of General Tirpitz at the Berlin *Marineamt* (naval office with jurisdiction over Jiaozhou), the German governor of the leasehold, Jaeschke, dispatched “punitive” troops into the Rizhao 日照 and Gaomi areas. Tirpitz blamed most offences on the Steyl missionaries, warning Jaeschke not to be made into their “blind tool”.⁽¹⁰⁾ The German troops, at cross purposes with the rural population, began to “purge” the area. Richard Wilhelm, just arrived, was able to negotiate.

2. Wilhelm's early years

Born in Stuttgart on 10 May, 1873, young Richard grew up in a Lutheran Protestant home, yet not in the typical patriarchal atmosphere. His father, a painter of stained-glass windows, had died young, and the boy was brought up by female hands, enjoying cordial relations with his grandmother, mother, aunt, and sister. They were poor, and as a student of divinity at Tübingen University (1891-1895), Wilhelm knew the humiliation of poverty in a snug bourgeois ambience: once, in a borrowed coat, he entreated two of his professors about remission of fees, and one of them cuttingly showed his contempt.⁽¹¹⁾

In 1895, having passed his first theological state examination, Wilhelm

(9) See *Jiaozhou-zhi*, 1928, pp. 66-68.

(10) Tirpitz' letter to Jaeschke of 27 June, 1899, quoted in V. Schmidt, 1976, pp. 72-73.

(11) See S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 61.

was ordained at Stuttgart. For half a year, he served as a curate at Wimsheim, a quiet place in the Black Forest, then, at another village near Göppingen, under a minister keenly interested in German colonialism; in a letter home Wilhelm described the not very pious nature of it:

In our talks, we sail accross all the seas, visiting our German colonies—the pastor is much at home there and speaks of Rufiji River or the Uzambara area as if they were parts of Göppingen diocese—surveying their profitableness, topography, considering all that gold now said to be found in West Africa...⁽¹²⁾

Wilhelm's quiet country life was interrupted in early 1897 by his appointment to a curacy at Dorf Boll in the state of Wurttemberg as substitute for the ill pastor Theophil Blumhardt, brother of Christoph Blumhardt, another Protestant minister at the neighbouring parish of Bad Boll.

The Blumhardt family had brought fourth religious men for generations. One of their forbears, Chr. G. Blumhardt (1779-1838), had been a co-founder of the *Baseler Missiengesellschaft* (cf. supra). Christoph Blumhardt's father had been a Pietist visionary preacher among the poor regarded with suspicion by the official Church. The same was eventually to happen to Christoph himself whose understanding of animated active Christianity—as opposed to the doctrinaire stiffness of the established Church—would lead him into political commitment and land him in trouble with his superiors.

The Blumhardts' liberal religiosity had a lasting influence on Wilhelm's life-long reservations at organized religion. At the same time, the young curate enjoyed their hospitality, met other young people at their home,⁽¹³⁾ played tennis with Christoph's daughters, and fell in love with one of them, Salome (1879-1958). Her father would not have it. The girl was sent to a school of domestic science at Stuttgart. However, no shadows were cast on Wilhelm's cordial relations with the Blumhardts as the young man was prudent enough to obey.

When Theophil Blumhardt returned to his ministry, Wilhelm was assigned

(12) See S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 61. If not stated otherwise, biographical data for Richard Wilhelm come from this source.

(13) Among them the sisters Tuccia and Maria Bernoulli from Bale; Wilhelm befriended particularly the latter who was to become the wife of Hermann Hesse. See S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 71.

a curacy at Backnang and had to leave Bad Boll; but as long as Christoph Blumhardt lived, Wilhelm maintained an intimate correspondence with the older man, asking his advice and discussing religious and social problems with him. Apart from his duties as a curate, Wilhelm studied for his final examination which he passed in the summer of 1898. He was just beginning to feel at home in Backnang when he came upon a newspaper advertisement inserted by the *Allgemeiner evangelisch-protestantischer Missionsverein* (General Evangelical Protestant Mission Association) (A. E. P. M.)⁽¹⁴⁾, offering the post of a ministry at Jiaozhou. Encouraged by Blumhardt, Wilhelm applied, was invited to Berlin as a probationer, and selected. He went home to Stuttgart to pack up for London where the A. E. P. M. was sending him to learn English. On this occasion he paid an official farewell call to Salome, and as "chance" would have it, they met again. On 19 January, 1899, Christoph Blumhardt passed through Stuttgart and was met at the station by his daughter and Wilhelm. At last consenting to their engagement, he stopped to celebrate with them at the restaurant of his hotel. Later the same evening, Wilhelm was off to London where he arrived the following day.

He was accommodated at the Foreign Mission Club where he met English and American missionaries of all age groups and denominations. They bewildered him: on the one hand, he admired their worldliness, cosmopolitanism, and common sense, so different from his own dreamy provincialism; on the other, he was appalled at their narrow-minded denominational squabbles and their chauvinism, "claiming Jesus for for their flag".⁽¹⁵⁾

In mid-March, he returned to Stuttgart for a short reunion with his family. His ticket for China was booked, he was due to sail from Naples on the 4 April. His fiancée, chaperoned by her mother, went along to Genoa and Naples. On their way, they stopped at Zurich where Wilhelm met a number of "gentlemen affiliated with the A. E. P. M.'s Swiss branch. Here, the main thing was to dispel [their] vague suspicions regarding predominance

(14) Founded in Weimar by a group of liberal Protestants under the leadership of a Swiss pastor, the A. E. P. M. propagated the spread of "Christian ethics without dogmatism" and had mild, culturalistic German-nationalist leanings. Thus they considered it their "sacred duty" to take up work in Jiaozhou after the German seizure. Established in Shanghai in 1885 (cf. Zhang Yufa, 1987, p. 157), they invested the Rev. E. Faber in Qingdao 青島 in 1898.

(15) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 74.

of German national interests pursued by the Mission".⁽¹⁶⁾

3. Arrival in China

After an interesting voyage, he gleaned his first impressions of Chinese mass impoverishment, but also of the vitality of folk religion, at Hong Kong. A short quarantine at Wusong 吳淞 (because of a plague epidemic in Hong Kong) was followed by a few days at Shanghai, filled with courtesy calls. In mid-May, Wilhelm arrived at Qingdao.

Qindao was then a small village. There were hardly any Western style buildings yet. The young clergyman was accommodated at a Chinese fisherman's cottage shunned by the locals, for a man had killed himself in it. He lived there for almost a year. The Germans were fast constructing a modern town, and before too long, Wilhelm could move to more comfortable quarters.

On his arrival, Wilhelm did not know a word of Chinese nor anything about the people and their country. But from the start, his approach was marked by warm-hearted sympathy. During his first half year, the climate did not bother him, but then he, too, suffered from the "Qingdao disease" (probably what the Chinese call 水土不服) that killed so many German marines during the early days, and the Western doctors found him "unfit" for a lengthy sojourn. There existed none of the things Europeans were accustomed to. Apart from his duties as a Protestant minister (who had to hold services in a horse stable for lack of a more suitable locality), Wilhelm found that the fast growing German community was in need of German schooling for their children. He began to teach three minors in a private home, then taught five in an office room. To a friend he wrote,

As would have been expected, the circumstances are of course still quite primitive. However, the [German] government shows much prudence and energy, but the leading man is not the governor [Jaeschke] but the able deputy civil commissioner Dr Schrameier to whom the merit goes for most of what we have created here.⁽¹⁷⁾

During his first summer vacations, he made two inland trips to acquaint himself with the countryside around Qingdao. The first time, he went with

(16) S. Wilhelm, 1956, pp. 77-78.

(17) Wilhelm's letter to Hauff of 14 Oct., 1899, quoted in S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 86.

two Berlin missionaries; the second (after one of the Berliners had slapped a Chinese skipper) he preferred to go only in the company of his Chinese servant. In his letters home, there is none of the disdain for “backward” China. The country-boy in him delighted in the beauty of the land; the poor but well-kept mud cottages “which blend nicely into the landscape”; friendly village people who gazed in amazement at the “strange [foreign] animals”; womenfolk washing clothes by a river and coyly disappearing on his approach; pretty children and handsome youths who had “something touchingly pure about them”. In Jiaozhou town, he found a Catholic missionary and two German railway engineers, protected by ten German infantrymen mounted on mules who quartered in a Buddhist temple (as Wilhelm did not fail to notice, against the will of the local priest “who had wept at first”).

Much of his understanding of Chinese mentality he owed to Dr Ernst Faber, a pioneer of the A. E. P. M. who had served in Kuangdong 廣東 before he was transferred to Jiaozhou (cf. note 14). Faber had translated Chinese classical texts into German and compiled books in Chinese on German educational and economic organization.⁽¹⁸⁾ Some count Faber among the most eminent sinologues of the period.⁽¹⁹⁾ Wilhelm was attracted by the scholarly character of his predecessor. But in June, 1899, an epidemic of dysentery broke out which killed many Chinese and Germans, among them Faber who, in spite of the attentions of the physician in ordinary to Prince Heinrich (the Kaiser’s brother, in charge of the Jiaozhou squadron) succumbed to the disease on 29 September. Wilhelm fell ill as well and was at the brink of death for several weeks.

(18) Chinese sources are not consistent as to the rendition of Wilhelm’s and Faber’s names, nor that of the A. E. P. M.: The *Shandong shizhi ziliao* (4), 1983, p. 158, correctly attaches Wilhelm [Wei Lixian 衛禮賢] to the “基督教同善會” adding “(Weimar Mission)”. Zhao Zhenmei, Zhao Qian, 1987, p. 44, give us a new name in a quick-motion version of Wilhelm’s career: “結業後在武敦堡任耶穌新教會 (魏曉教會) 牧師” whereas they introduce Ernst Faber [Hua Zhi’an 花之安, romanized p. 44, “Faker”; p. 66, “Paber”] in a note on p. 67 as a member of the “同善會, (亦稱為 Weimar Mission)”. Zhang Yufa, 1987, p. 157, relying on a Japanese source, lists among mission societies active in Shandong, “[德國]同善會, General Union for Evangelical Protestant Missions of Germany/Weimer [sic!] Mission”; but in a list of mission schools, *ibid.* pp. 189-195, Faber and Wilhelm appear on p. 192 under their Chinese names as above, allegedly affiliated to a “Swiss” society, “瑞士同善會”.

(19) See *Jindai lai Hua waiguoren-ming cidian*, 1981. p. 132.

4. Alienation from missionary attitudes

After his recovery, Wilhelm decided to lay down his office as minister and devote himself solely to studying Chinese and deepening mutual understanding. Rigid church rituals had never seemed to him in keeping with the teachings of Jesus. In China, he found them totally inappropriate. Western forms of worship, he held, had grown in a distinct European cultural environment. If Chinese were to adopt Christianity, they ought to develop forms suited to their indigenous cultural and social traditions. From the start, he had sought contact with the Chinese population, even those “coolies” bullied, yet almost superstitiously dreaded, by most Westerners, and found them harmless folk who enjoyed a good joke and loved both their kin and friends:

None are friendlier, more true and loving [than the Chinese] if one meets them on a simple human level without demanding anything in return—be it money, exploitation of labour, or, more embarrassing in their opinion, their conversion to...some foreign institution for the sake of Everlasting Bliss.⁽²⁰⁾

But he was soon to realize that his views were opposed by most Europeans of his epoch. Even among other missionaries, Wilhelm did not always find friends of his attitude because many seemed to regard any Chinese who refused to enter the Church as a lost heathen. Wilhelm for one felt that “there are no heathens as such; a heathen is what we call a person different [from ourselves] in order to either convert him, or condemn him to hell.”⁽²¹⁾

Wilhelm was further alienated from the official Church when he had news from Germany that Christoph Blumhardt, after joining the social-democrat party and obtaining a seat at the Württemberg provincial diet as a labour representative, had been dismissed from his ministry. Wilhelm regarded this move as “indescribably ludicrous and pedantic...In our times, such doings no longer have God’s attestation”.⁽²²⁾ Consequently, he asked his superiors in Berlin for his relief from the Qingdao ministry. It was granted, and in April, 1900, a new pastor took over the parish. Soon after, Salome Blumhardt arrived in China. She and Wilhelm were married in Shanghai on 7

(20) R. Wilhelm, 1926, p. 22.

(21) R. Wilhelm, 1926, p. 22.

(22) S. Wilhelm, 1958, p. 100.

May, 1900. In Qingdao, a large new villa awaited them which they shared with the pastor and his wife.

The summer of 1900 was marked by the apex of the "Boxer" rebellion. After it became known that Ketteler had been slain in Peking, the German colonists in Qingdao lived in fear for some time and even organized a militia. But the *Yihetuan* never showed up. Wilhelm, now with more time at his hands, began to study Chinese in earnest, including the classics. He found a teacher, a Dr Li(?), who had studied medicine at a Presbyterian college. When two young Chinese called to ask for German lessons, Wilhelm began to teach them at his home; soon the number increased to fourteen. The sick came for help as well. An out-patient clinic was improvised with Dr Li practising; some patients were kept overnight in the servants' quarters. These were the modest beginnings of the future German-Chinese College, and the Faber Hospital respectively.

5. The Gaomi disturbances

With his teacher, Wilhelm took further trips, becoming more familiar with Chinese from all walks of life. It was Dr Li who told Wilhelm about the disturbances in the Gaomi area. He warned him of the harm done by German troops sent inland to curb alleged "Boxer" activities: when the villagers did not understand German commands to surrender all arms, or carried them out too slowly, the soldiers would fire at once. Wilhelm called these, "extremely regrettable conflicts of European and Asian mentalities":

As the German troops advanced, the villagers would shut the gates and begin to fire their antediluvian canons in the air like they used to when brigands were approaching. How surprised they must have been when the German artillery were not frightened off but answered the fire, and with what devastating success! Then, women and children tried to flee from a side gate. But the Germans, taking the women in their red trousers for Boxers, raked them with machine-gun fire. Meanwhile, another village in the vicinity had begun to shoot their mortars. The Germans withdrew to set that place ablaze. By the time they returned, the Boxers who had organized the first village's resistance had escaped whereas the native population had to bear the

(23) R. Wilhelm, 1926, pp. 30-31,

calamities of war. ⁽²³⁾

In spite of warnings by Western friends, Wilhelm decided to go and try to help. He made a point of travelling without military cover lest he should be mistaken by the frightened country people for an officer, and took Li with him, for his Chinese was still poor. Jiaozhou and Gaomi officials, informed of their arrival, provided them with carriages. On 6 November, they arrived at Gaomi, expected by the prefect who had arranged lodgings in a private house opposite his Yamen. Wilhelm reports,

I was of course aware of the enormous difficulty of the task [to convince the villagers to give up their resistance] and doubted whether I should be equal to it... However, the situation was very different from what I had anticipated. I was afraid...to come anywhere near the people who had always been described to me as stupid and cruel. In fact I found the main problem elsewhere. The German troops and their demeanour had struck [the people] with terror... I often heard it say that the Germans were now more dreaded than Dschugoliang [Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮]... ⁽²⁴⁾

Wilhelm and Li stayed several weeks. After initial reserve on the part of the local population, the two men were able to help. The village Shawo 沙窩 had been razed, and they were horrified at the devastation. In one of the few buildings left standing, they improvised a hospital. By and by, some locals returned to have their wounds dressed. Only after Wilhelm's wife joined them, the villagers would bring in their womenfolk who, along with children and elderly people, formed the majority of the wounded. In Gaomi, they also set up a hospital at a former temple. Wilhelm was able to persuade the reluctant inhabitants of one village to hand in their arms, at the same time negotiating with a German commander to be patient, thus preventing yet another raid.

The report Wilhelm wrote moved Jaeschke to hand him a sum of money for relief of the victims which Wilhelm and his wife distributed among the poorest. ⁽²⁵⁾ Later, the A.E.P.M. sent a physician, Dr Dipper, for the

(24) S. Wilhelm, 1958, pp. 108-9.

(25) According to Wilhelm, Jaeschke donated the money (2000 Marks) "out of personal kindness". Wilhelm, a child of his own epoch, after all, fails to notice a grotesque inequity: for two German priests slain accidentally (i.e. not on account of an official order), the Chinese had to pay with forfeiture of sovereign rights -- whereas for over a hundred Chinese slain and many more wounded or made homeless around

Gaomi hospital. A Chinese school with German language classes was opened at Gaomi, another at Shawo. For his good services, Wilhelm received a courtesy call from one of Yuan Shikai's 袁世凱 colonels,⁽²⁶⁾ and another by the Gaomi prefect in early 1901. Eventually, upon a report handed to the throne by Yang Shixiang on 6 May, 1906, the Emperor granted Wilhelm the honorary rank of a *daotai* 道臺 (circuit intendant).⁽²⁷⁾

6. School and hospital work

The following years were filled with school and hospital work. The Sino-German college in Qingdao grew. Soon, a new building was opened. Every month, Wilhelm had to set aside one week for the various schools and hospitals in and near Gaomi. In Jinan he discussed the fusion of the German-Chinese college, called after him *Lixian xuexiao* 禮賢學校,⁽²⁸⁾ with Qilu 齊魯 University; when invited to teach there, he declined, though regretfully, for he felt that his work in Qingdao was unfinished.

After China's educational reforms of 1902 culminating in the abolition of the civil service examinations in 1905, Western-style schools were in great demand. By 1905 the number of Wilhelms' Chinese students in Qingdao rose to over a hundred. Textbooks were also scarce. Over the years Wilhelm compiled German primers, grammars, etc., and even tried his hand at introductions to astronomy, zoology, and anatomy.

For lack of staff, Wilhelm's wife (who by and by gave birth to four sons) had helped teaching ever since 1902. Her sister Hanna and, later, yet

Gaomi, Jaeschke (having ordered the military action) was "kind" enough to "personally" pay a handful of money; cf. *Jiaao-shi*, 1928, pp. 67-68, which mentions "200 to 300" dead Chinese (the Germans lost not one man); J. Schrecker, 1971, p. 139, has "between 200 and 400".

(26) Under pressure from the Western powers, Yuxian had been replaced by Yuan as governor of Shandong in Dec., 1900. Yuan was succeeded by Zhang Renjun 張人駿 in Nov., 1901 who made way for Zhou Fu 周馥 in May, 1902. Zhou was transferred in 1904. In Jan. 1905, Yang Shixiang 楊士驥, Yuan's protégé, was appointed.

(27) Once again, Wilhelm appears inconsistent (unless he was surprised by the honour, which seems unlikely). Liberals and social-democrats had criticized Catholic missionaries and the German government for infringement of Chinese sovereignty; in 1900, Bebel had attacked assumption of Chinese ranks by Anzer etc, and demanded the Reich to oblige missionaries not to claim "the character of Chinese officials or having it bestowed"; cf. H. Gründer, 1982, p. 307. Although Wilhelm tended towards social democracy and must have known Bebel's stance, he accepted.

(28) Not to be mistaken for the Qingdao *Lixian Shuyuan* 禮賢書院.

another Blumhardt sister also came to Qingdao. In 1905, the women started the *Meiyi xueyuan* 美義學院 elementary school for girls with six students. Hanna, who had been taken under contract by the A. E. P. M. the year before, shared the leadership with a Chinese lady, wife of one of the Chinese college professors; Mrs Wilhelm and the wife of the Protestant minister were teachers. On 20 December, 1911, under the impact of the revolution, a secondary college for girls, the *Shufan xuetang* 洙範學堂, could be opened in a new building with financial support by some German industrialists.⁽²⁹⁾ Back in 1905, only a few of the girl students had unbound feet; some would unbind theirs under the influence of the school; in one case, a student had to be hidden from her indignant mother to protect her from the ordeal. Incidentally, the neglect of female education and low status of women is one of the very few instances of Richard Wilhelm finding serious fault with Chinese tradition.

7. Wilhelm leaves the missionary service

Qingdao had swiftly developed during these years. On 1 March, 1904, the port was officially opened; on 1 June, the railway to Jinan took up traffic, at first with only one train daily. Eventually the Reich became interested in operating a school for Chinese at Qingdao. In 1906 Wilhelm was summoned to Berlin for talks about a takeover of the mission college by the German government. Provided his dissociation from the A. E. P. M., he was offered directorship; the transition was projected for 1908. This would mean a major rupture in Wilhelm's life.

Throughout his affiliation with the A. E. P. M., Wilhelm had been reminded by some of its board members to baptise Chinese converts and establish Protestant congregations. But with increasing pressure, his reluctance had grown, in which his father-in-law had supported him: "Baptism", he wrote, "has become a mark of human power...[while] Christians of different denominations avoid or scorn each other."⁽³⁰⁾ Disgusted and ashamed by some of

(29) See H. Gründer, 1982, p. 317. Zhang Yufa, 1987, p. 193, in the list of mission schools (cf. supra, n. 18), fails to notice the difference between the two schools, placing the foundation of the Shufan college in 1905, again attached to a "Swiss" society.

(30) Ch. Blumhardt's Letter to R. Wilhelm quoted in S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 167.

the missionary practices he witnessed or heard of, Wilhelm stated:

As concerns the question of baptism, I have pointed out in my annual report [that it would harm the good relations with Chinese officials]... I have never attached major importance to it... In one case concerning a good-natured but somewhat pedantic and eccentric person, [denial of baptism] proved the only way... He had no sooner returned home than he would make tactless remarks, of course resulting in "persecutions" which I, being impartial, could easily put right... If he had been one of my "Christians", discord would have spread in the village while I should have been regarded as an interested party. In such a way, we might possibly win ten "Christians" [at the cost of] eternal enmity entering the village, but absolutely lose the hearts of all others for our cause...⁽³¹⁾

Later, during World War I, fuel was to be added to his exasperation, in retrospect as it were, by news of the abominable "coolie trade" to the European war theatre some missionaries found it not below themselves to engage in for profit.

Somewhat proudly, he would summarize in his memoirs:

I thought it wiser to confine myself to a simple life based on Christian principles; work through school and hospital; share the life of the people and have cordial relations with them; and leave it to the action of the Holy Ghost to create something out of this. In a civilized nation, a Church can only establish itself of itself, not under the leadership of foreigners—often of low upbringing and no tact—unless condemning itself to inferiority. I have, therefore, not baptised anyone in China; perhaps just for this, I came all the closer to the Chinese nature. And never was I in any fix for the sake of undesirable converts.⁽³²⁾

Considering all, he consented to leave the mission and become a civil servant. However, he did not leave the Church as some of his opponents claimed, nor did he become an alien who took on a Chinese national identity. In fact, he remained singularly true to the tenets of the "cultural mission"

(31) Letter to Dr Kind, quoted in S. Wilhelm, 1956, pp. 130-31.

(32) R. Wilhelm, 1926, p. 32.

approach, continuing to introduce “the best of German culture” to the Chinese; all he hoped to do in return was to learn about “the best of Chinese culture” as well, introducing it to the German-speaking world.

8. Chinese reform movements

The enormous changes towards which China was heading had their repercussions in the Qingdao college: students went on strike, and in 1908, when Wilhelm and his family returned from Europe, they found a number of the Chinese youths without their plaits. Evident among students was a keen new interest in world affairs, history, Western constitutionalism, etc., and Wilhelm helped translate German books on related topics into Chinese. At the same time he wrote on Chinese culture, social and political events for German-language newspapers such as the *Deutsch-Asiatische Warte* (later fused with *Tsingtauer Neueste Nachrichten*) and *Kiaotschoupost*, both appearing in Qingdao, as well as for *Der Ostasiatische Lloyd*, the most widely read German paper in China published at Shanghai.⁽³³⁾ It was in the OAL that his first translations of Chinese literary texts were to appear.

As we have seen, Wilhelm had always enjoyed little trips across the country. He also took his Chinese pupils along. He climbed Mt Taishan 泰山; visited Qufu where he was invited to the wedding of the 73rd descendant of Confucius; went on horseback, by boat, then by train. And often he walked up Mt Laoshan 勞山. He listened to monks and rikshah coolies who told him of sacred mountains, ghosts, and strange events. A selection of these tales he published.⁽³⁴⁾ Later he wove them, with good-natured affection, into some of his texts on China which make charming reading for one is never quite certain whether he he did not believe a good deal of them himself...

Apart from collecting ancient lore, he was an avid observer of China's reforms. To his friends belonged Timothy Richards, the heads of the 1898 reform, Kang Youwei 康有爲 and Liang Qichao 梁啟超,⁽³⁵⁾ the liberal social-

(33) For a study of the German press in China, see F. Kreissler, 1989, pp. 82-110; Wilhelm's contributions, cf. *ibid.*, p. 85, p. 88.

(34) Richard Wilhelm, 1913. Among the collections of Chinese fairytales he published, the best-known is Richard Wilhelm, 1914.

(35) Wilhelm's translations of two essays by “Liang Ki Tschau”, one on China's modernization, the other on Buddhist psychology, published in Germany in 1925 and 1929, cf. “Übersicht”, 1930, p. 106, 109.

democrat Zhang Junmai 張君勱 (known to his European friends as Carsun Chang), the educational reformer Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培, as well as Gu Hongming 辜鴻銘,⁽³⁶⁾ Sun Fo 孫科,⁽³⁷⁾ and other conservatives.

9. Wilhelm the sinologue

One of his few friends in the German community was Schrameier (cf. supra), like Wilhelm himself under attack by other European expatriats for paying too much attention to Chinese interests. It was him who, in 1904 in Qingdao, first discussed the idea of a German translation of the Confucian classics with Richard Wilhelm. From 1910 until the end of his life, Wilhelm devoted himself to this project. He found a sympathetic friend in Eugen Diederichs, the Jena publisher who over the years brought out Wilhelm's annotated translations,⁽³⁸⁾ most famous of all that of the Book of Changes ("I Ging" in contemporary romanization). (Wilhelm's son Hellmut (1905-1990), himself a renowned sinologue in the USA, continued research on the *Yijing*.)

Academic sinologues claimed that Wilhelm's work was not up to professional standards, also blaming him for having worked with Chinese help, which rings of jealousy of his growing fame (Legge, too, had consulted scholarly Chinese friends for his English translations of the Chinese classics); the former claim, though not unjustified at least for the early publications, was misdirected: it was less due to Wilhelm's lack of scholarship that references etc. (duly provided by him) were deleted in Diederich's editions than to the publisher's interest in their "readability".⁽³⁹⁾

(36) Wilhelm, R., trl., 1911, is a German translation of Gu's *The story of a Chinese Oxford movement*, 1909.

(37) Wilhelm's translation of a "Programme for China's economic construction" by Sun, published in 1929, cf. "Übersicht", 1930, p. 109.

(38) The classics Wilhelm translated (for details see bibliography) are: *Lunyu* 論語, 1910; *Laozi* 老子, 1911; *Liezi* 列子, 1912; *Zhuangzi* 莊子, 1912; *Mengzi* 孟子, 1916; *Daxue* 大學, 1920; *Yijing* 易經, 1924; *Lüshi chungqiu* 呂氏春秋, 1928; *Liji* 禮記, 1930; *Zhongyong* 中庸, 1930; *Jiayu* 家語, 1961 (trl. 1914-15).

It is remarkable how well Wilhelm's translations sold, even in the 1920s when the economic crisis hit the book trade; cf. correspondence file E. Diederichs/R. Wilhelm 1910-1930 in *Schriftlicher Nachlass R. Wilhelm*. After World War II, Diederichs moved to West Germany where they published most of the items in paperback impressions (cf. Bibliography) which illustrates their continued popularity in the German-speaking world.

(39) Cf. correspondence Diederichs/Wilhelm 1910-11 in *Schriftlicher Nachlass R. Wilhelm*; even as late as 1930, entire chapters were erased from Wilhelm's *Liji* translation.

Most fruitful for Wilhelm's studies of Daoist and Confucian classics were his encounters with Lao Naixuan 勞乃宣 (1843-1921) and a circle of Qing loyalists escaped from the 1911 revolution to Qingdao. Among them were Zhou Fu 周馥 (1837-1921), his son Zhou Xuexi 周學熙 (1866-1947), and grandson, Zhou Shutao 周 (?) who helped Wilhelm translate some of Kant's works into Chinese; there were former officials like Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1855-1939) and his brother; some of Li Hongzhang's 李鴻章 relatives such as his youngest son Li Jingmai 李經邁 (d. 1938); the secretaries of Zhou Fu and Li Hongzhang; and, as mentioned, Lao Naixuan. During their first winter as fugitives, these conservatives would meet at "gatherings to expel the cold" (*Xiaohan-hui* 消寒會), with dinners, exhibitions of Chinese art, discussions of social or scholarly issues (such as the abolition of the lunar calendar), etc. Wilhelm was the only foreigner admitted to the circle of "Old Ones in Qingdao"⁽⁴⁰⁾ who worried about the future of China's traditional culture and founded an association in honour of Confucius, the *Zun Kong wenshe* 尊孔文社 with its own pavillion built in 1914, for which the the Wilhelms sacrificed their tennis court. The group also published a journal.

Under Lao's guidance Wilhelm studied and translated the *Yijing* and other Confucian and Daoist classics. Their timelessness and humanism fascinated Wilhelm and opened new existential insights to him which he thought universal, thus intelligible to Europeans as well.

With the arch conservatives of the *Zun Kong* circle, he sympathized only insofar as they embodied the refined ways of a world fast sinking into oblivion; he did not identify with their schemes to turn back history and restore the Qing. Even his acquaintance with Puwei 溥偉, the (second) Prince Gong 恭親王 of the former imperial family, also stranded in Qingdao, did not shake Wilhelm's admiration of "Young China". If he was skeptical about China's modernization, it was on culturalistic grounds alone (cf. *infra*).

10. Second return to Germany

The outbreak of the First World War required more down-to-earth attention of him. During the siege of Jiaozhou by the Japanese, and the months following their swift victory over the Germans in November, 1914, Wilhelm

(40) R. Wilhelm, 1926, "Die Alten in Tsingtau", pp. 159-177.

helped Germans return to Europe (including his own wife and children) or stay in good spirits during internment; tried to maintain discipline among Chinese students; worked for the Chinese Red Cross...Still, the isolated situation of Qingdao permitted to continue his studies with Lao Naixuan.

In the summer of 1920, after the German community had been more or less dissolved, Wilhelm returned to Germany where he was hailed as a celebrity. In spite of the sinologues' reservations mentioned, his publications had been well received by the general public. As early as 1910, Hermann Hesse had reviewed Wilhelm's *Lunyu* translation as a work that not only allowed Europeans a glimpse of a different world, "forcing us for once not to take our own individualistic culture for granted" looking at it instead by a comparative approach, but also formed in the reader's mind a "strangely shining notion of a synthesis of both worlds".⁽⁴¹⁾ Now, after the cultural disaster of the War, a growing community of educated Europeans hoped for such a synthesis, and Wilhelm was invited by groups, clubs, universities, etc. in Germany, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere, to speak on China. In November, 1920, Wilhelm was invited to the opening session of Count Hermann Keyserling's "*Schule der Weisheit*" (school of wisdom) and in subsequent years submitted essays to the school's periodical *Der Leuchter*. He had met Keyserling in Qingdao in 1913 when the Count travelled India and China in search of "Light from the East".⁽⁴²⁾ A vaguely defined circle of rather elitarian composition, the school espoused the renewal of occidental "know-how" culture by ties with an oriental wisdom of "being".⁽⁴³⁾ Revered by some as a sage, ridiculed by others as mediocre and ludicrous, Keyserling called for more "soul" and less "intellect" and stood for natural philosophy and a universal culture. He so embodied the pessimistic *Zeitgeist* that he drew hundreds of eminent scholars into his circle,⁽⁴⁴⁾ among them the psychologist C.G. Jung whose later friendship with Wilhelm dates back to their acquaintance at the school's meetings. Wilhelm, who like so many others in those postwar years felt that the West with its "soulless" materialistic civilization was about to fall from cosmos back into chaos, found com-

(41) H. Hesse, 1910, p. 637.

(42) See H. Keyserling, 1913; 1921.

(43) H. Keyserling, 1948, p. 29.

(44) For a long list of celebrities, cf. G.E. Cooper, 1978, pp. 249-250.

fort at the School of Wisdom as he was about to lose his faith in a personified God but held on to metaphysics. Eastern wisdom had become his profession; universal culture had long been his concern.

During his stay in Germany, Wilhelm interested the A.E.P.M. in his plan for an "Orient Institute" he hoped to establish at Peking for which he had already won Chinese friends: an institution whose main objective was to be cultural exchange between scholars from all civilized nations in order to heighten international understanding (vaguely reminiscent of Leibniz' earlier idea for a world academy based in Peking).

11. Once more in China

In January, 1922, Wilhelm returned to China as an adviser to the German legation responsible for educational, cultural, and missionary affairs; his duties took him all over China. In the summer, he was invited to lecture at the German department of Peking University (*Beida* 北大). He renewed his friendship with Cai Yuanpei with whose reforms of Beida he was impressed:

The prevailing spirit here is extremely modern; notably in the social sciences, every conceivable theory is represented by some professor. There are [those] who propose far-reaching communism. But there are also others of quite moderate convictions. Any honest endeavour is being accepted within the university. [*Beida*] has furthermore... won pre-eminence by launching a renaissance of Chinese literature. All research has gained new impetus.⁽⁴⁵⁾

In addition to his professional obligations, Wilhelm attended meetings of Chinese societies such as the *Daode xueshe* 道德學社 and the *Sicun xuehui* 四存學會 founded in 1920 by Xu Shichang for the promotion of early Qing pragmatist Confucianism as a reconciliatory factor between tradition and modernity (Wilhelm lectured at the latter on "Intellectual currents in modern Germany").

Meanwhile, he tried to further the cause of the Orient Institute (*Dongfang xueshe* 東方學社). In fact, this was a modified version of an earlier project: In 1914, Wilhelm and two other Germans had projected a German

(45) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 277.

cultural institute in Peking, to be named after Richthofen.⁽⁴⁶⁾ But the War had prevented its realization, and in view of the resulting political shambles, “a German research facility designed to rival other Western nations was no longer envisagable” which is why Wilhelm now “proposed to entice international cultural cooperation at Peking”.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Wilhelm won Liang Qichao and Zhang Junmai for his project (who had set up the kindred “Lecture Association” *Jiangxue-she* 講學社, with the purpose of inviting Western scholars to China); among the founding members of the Institute were eminent scholars—and Qing-loyalists—such as Ke Shaomin 柯劭忞 (1850-1933), Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866-1940), and Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877-1927).⁽⁴⁸⁾ It was to be divided into a department of ethics and religion, and one of science (geography, history, art, etc.) which would also function as a mediator for Chinese students planning to go to Europe; an exchange agency for Chinese and Western scholars; and a press liaison office which was to launch into the media essays qualified to expel mutual misunderstandings.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Wilhelm was indefatigable in his quest for financial and academic support, carrying on an extensive correspondence with German associations, universities, and individual friends he hoped to win for cooperation.

In October, 1922, the German legation sent Wilhelm to meet the German scientist and philosopher Driesch and take him to Nanking where he had been invited by the Lecture Association on the initiative of Zhang Junmai.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Again, he was enthusiastic about the representatives of “Young China”, this time around Liang Qichao at Nanking:

Something quite new is forming. What happened in these few years is outright amazing. One is confronted with an entirely new world of the most modern intellectual life. All of them young people who

(46) Geologist and geographer Ferdinand von Richthofen (1833-1905) who had first come to China in 1860 with the Prussian Expedition; the Reich's interest in Jiaozhou was based on his research of its topography, and discovery of coal deposits in Shandong.

(47) F. Kreissler, 1989, p. 182.

(48) See S. Wilhelm, 1956, pp. 288-291.

(49) See F. Kreissler, 1989, p. 183.

(50) H. Driesch (1867-1941), biologist and voluntarist philosopher with ties to the School of Wisdom, replaced Zhang's Jena teacher Robert Eucken (1846-1926), too feeble for the trip. Zhang was Driesch's interpreter in China; in Feb. 1923, Zhang's lecture at Qinghua University on life philosophy (Eucken's "*Lebensanschauung*", *rensheng-guan* 人生觀) started the famous debate on Western materialism versus Eastern "inwardness", or "Science [vs. Metaphysics] Debate" (*kexue yu rensheng-guan* 科學與人生觀).

already accomplished enormous things. Here we must try and make contact.⁽⁵¹⁾

Together with Zhang, Driesch, and another scholar, Wilhelm compiled an English-German-Chinese dictionary of philosophy the proceedings of which were to go to a relief fund for German sinology students. That work fell “also within the scope of the Institute”.⁽⁵²⁾ Then he helped organize a relief association for Chinese students bound for Germany. In December, 1922, on the occasion of Beida’s 25th anniversary, he spoke on cultural administration before an audience of 1200 and was able to secure one million Marks for promotion of Chinese studies at Berlin University, rejoicing, “This is the first achievement of the Orient Institute.”⁽⁵³⁾ However, after its promising start, the project petered out. Lack of funds was one reason, but above all it wanted Wilhelm’s personal enthusiastic commitment.

12. Last years in Europe: the *China-Institut*

Wilhelm had accepted the new professorial chair of Sinology at Frankfurt University. He finally left China in the summer of 1924, travelling via Jinan, Qingdao (where he met Kang Youwei and consolidated his ties with the “Old Ones” and their Confucius Society for future cooperation), Shanghai, Fuzhou 福州, and Hong Kong.

Although he left with a heavy heart, Wilhelm was confident that the many friendships he had formed in twenty-five years should continue. As for the future of China, he predicted that the days of foreign colonialism were numbered. With sympathy he had observed attempts by Hu Shi 胡適 (1891-1962) and other liberal conservatives to reorganize Chinese intellectual traditions (*zhengli Guogu* 整理國故), but in spite of his own idealist neo-Confucian leanings which showed Zhang Junmai’s influence, even more radical tenets of the May Fourth Movement found his approval as long as they aimed at Chinese self-determination. He only regretted that with reformism, “the worst excesses of our mechanized civilization” were accepted in China, “all that is cheap and worthless”.⁽⁵⁴⁾

(51) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 282.

(52) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 286.

(53) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 282.

(54) S. Wilhelm, 1956, p. 187.

The West came to China in a singularly disagreeable fashion by bare force and exploitation... But what it brought was handy and useful... Youth ravenously rushed at [it], soon feeling ashamed... of anything Chinese... Be it dress or ideas, Western style was preferable... No longer conversant with the sophisticated skills of Chinese culture, they were in danger of becoming second-rate Europeans, because what they adopted were the most superficial aspects of Western civilization whilst they failed to notice that the ancient European *Kulturstaaten* were anything but ready to accept New China into their circle as a fully entitled member;

Japan, facing similar problems, had swallowed her humiliation, built strong military forces, and won at least polite Western respect (cf. supra n. 1!). But the Japanese psyche had grown rigid in the process, suffering serious damage. Luckily for China, faith in the superiority of Western materialism was shaken by the War and Versailles while the Bolshevist victory in Russia had ultimately proven the instability of capitalism. The new Chinese intellectuals felt solidarity with the struggling masses, at the same time examining their own traditions and those of the West for good and useful elements to be welded together in a cultural synthesis.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Two events crowned the short span left to Richard Wilhelm after his return to Germany. One was the publication of his *Yijing* translation after ten years of work at it; the other, the opening of the *China-Institut* in November, 1925, supported with German and (by Cai Yuanpei's intervention) Chinese government funds as well as by corporate and private patrons.

During his travels in China he had noticed considerable racial distinctions between Han Chinese in the north, in the lower Yangtze valley, and in the southern coastal provinces. As he saw it, the factor that unified them as a nation was Confucian culture. This culture with its secular ethics might indeed unify all the world. Confucian influence is evident in his discovery that the "secular" was the "sacred":

The God we were taught [to believe in] when young... can be called a reality no longer without misgivings. Even the most sophisticated dialectics... fail to convince us of such a God [and his alleged] univ-

(55) R. Wilhelm, 1926, pp. 349-351.

ersal love or omnipotence... Let us return to Earth where we find Man [人]. Behold! [here] we find Him[天]. In Man lies divine power to create new worlds... Man, not the individual, but the animated sum of humanity [仁]... is the measure and the mean. ⁽⁵⁶⁾

Already in his Qingdao days he had found a timeless, universal humanism in the Confucian texts he was translating, and now he hoped to teach the West about it. Through his ties with the *Europäischer Kulturbund* he aspired to expand the radius of his *China-Institut* worldwide. His guiding concept was to enhance knowledge about, and understanding of "a China as he saw and loved it, a China in which he believed and whose wisdom he... hoped would stimulate and renew [European] culture". ⁽⁵⁷⁾

The Institute organized and sponsored lectures and seminars on China held by scholars from China and Europe (in 1926, Hu Shi and Paul Pelliot were among the speakers); in cooperation with museums it showed Chinese art exhibitions; regular meetings of Chinese and German students took place; contacts with the new Sinology Institute at *Beida* were kept. The *China-Institut* published a journal, *Chinesische Blätter*, in 1927 replaced by *Sinica*; and a yearbook, *Chinesisch-deutscher Almanach*. By kind intervention of Sun Fo who stayed at Frankfurt for some time, the Chinese Ministry of Education granted funds for *Sinica*. In 1927, the head of the German-founded, Shanghai-based Tongji University 同濟大學, Ding Wenyuan 丁文淵, brother of Ding Wenjiang 丁文江, lectured at the Institute. When the poet Xu Zhimo 徐志摩 visited Europe, Wilhelm, who had met him in Peking, acted as his travelling companion. In 1928, an exhibition of "Chinese books and books on China" was held with contributions from many countries. The Institute attracted personalities such as the philosophers Martin Buber and Ortega y Gasset, the authors Gerhart Hauptmann and Hermann Hesse, and C. G. Jung, discoverer of archetypes in the human mind.

Jung invited Wilhelm to lecture on Chinese meditation at the *Psychologischer Club* in Zurich. He had found close correspondences between his archetypes of the "collective unconscious" and ancient Chinese ideas put forth in the Book of Changes which he knew by Wilhelm's translation. He was

(56) R. Wilhelm, 1927, pp. 320-321. Additions in square brackets mine. Above, I allude of course to H. Fingarette, 1972.)

(57) F. Lessing, 1930, p. 61.

fascinated by even closer corroborations when Wilhelm sent him his translation of “The secret of the golden blossom”, an esoteric tract on meditation practices Wilhelm gleaned from a Dao master with whom he had studied in China.⁽⁵⁸⁾ Jung wrote his “European forward” for the publication.⁽⁵⁹⁾

Over this cooperation they became friends. Jung held that Wilhelm had understood “the East” not only intellectually but had given himself completely, sacrificing his European personality in order to let his mind (“*Wesen*”) become a faithful mirror of the Oriental mind.⁽⁶⁰⁾ It might have been Jung’s assessment that prompted Wilhelm to call his memoirs “The Soul of China”—a name (and implicit claim) subject to criticism by his soberer contemporaries.⁽⁶¹⁾ It has been felt as a tragic trait in Wilhelm’s life that his “self-sacrifice” coincided with the moment in China’s history when many of her intellectuals chose to sacrifice their Chinese identity in order to curb the occidental peril:

Just when in China the call was heard, “Down with Confucianism, down with the old culture”, interest [in that culture] arose abroad. Is it characteristic of the human soul that we are never content with what we have but search for what we do not have?⁽⁶²⁾

Wilhelm was aware of a popular “China fashion” his Institute and publications had helped to start, and was unhappy about it. However, although his translations, particularly of the *Yijing* and *Lüshichunqiu*, are serious contributions to academic sinology still valid today,⁽⁶³⁾ his almost erotic affection for traditional Chinese culture did contain elements of idealist *Schwärmerei* so singularly suited to the trend of those times which, in view of the “Decline of the Occident”, turned from reason and materialism to theosophy, vitalism, and ultimately to the destructive irrationalism of the “Third Reich”. Wilhelm might have been more aware of dangerous chauvinist tendencies in the School of Wisdom. Hermann Hesse was, but even C. G.

(58) See Jung’s letters to Wilhelm of 6 and 26 April, 1926 in C.G. Jung, 1972, vol. I, pp. 89-91.

(59) See R. Wilhelm, trl. & annot., 1929.

(60) C.G. Jung, *Gesammelte Werke* XV, Zürich 1963, p. 72, quoted after W. Bauer, 1973, p. 33.

(61) See W. Bauer, 1980, pp. 7-8.

(62) See W. Bauer, 1973, p. 34.

(63) See W. Bauer, 1973, pp. 29-32 and 34-38.

Jung had “slipped” and briefly put his hope for cultural and national renewal into the upcoming fascist ideology.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Seen from today, many of Wilhelm’s views seem naive; his attitudes contradictory (e. g. his claim to have “shared the life of the [Chinese] people”); his pathos sentimental. He was, after all, a child of his own era in many ways. And he was a singularly (in those times, dangerously,) apolitical thinker. But he was not as naive as not to be aware and afraid of the accumulating evil in Germany, evidenced by his last letters to his sons and friends.⁽⁶⁵⁾ His lasting merit remains in his endeavour to induce a friendly China image in the German-speaking world and (through translations of many of his works) beyond, breaking new ground for a true dialogue between China and the West.

During his last two years, increasingly bedridden with a tropical disease contracted in the course of his 1922 voyage to China, he continued to work, made plans for another Institute at Nanking, taught at Frankfurt University, lectured (often against doctor’s orders) all over Europe, and was the *spiritus rector* of his *China Institut* which existed until the end of World War II but had lost its lustre after Richard Wilhelm, at the early age of 52, had succumbed to his illness in a Tübingen hospital on 1 March, 1930.

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(64) See A. Jaffe, 1968, in her chapter on Jung and Nazism, pp. 85-104. H. Gottschalk, 1960, pp. 67-91, denies Jung’s sympathies for the ideology and quotes him as calling it a “sickness which has befallen an entire nation”, p. 91; however, this does not contradict Jaffe who shows that Jung later regretted his “slip”.

(65) In fact, he apparently considered emigration to the USA around 1928-29; cf. letter M. E. Winkel to Salome Wilhelm, 19 May; 1930, in *Schriftlicher Nachlass R. Wilhelm*, No. 171.

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