

THE MAKINGS OF FRENCH « CLASSICAL » SOPHISTRY: RICHELIEU, DESCARTES, AND CORNEILLE.

21/07/2005
by Pierre Beaudry

[This report was spurred by considerations on French « classical education, » in comparison with Lyndon LaRouche's treatment of the same question : { *On the subject of education* }, EIR, December 17, 1999, which has been translated by this author into French and can be found in [ftp.ljcentral.net/unpublished/Pierre Beaudry/](ftp.ljcentral.net/unpublished/Pierre_Beaudry/)]

« The legacy of Cartesian and other expressions of mechanistic thinking must be buried with cat-like precaution, once and for all. » (Lyndon LaRouche, Morning Briefing Sat. July 9, 2005.)

□

“If you give me six lines written
by the most honest man, I will find
something in them to hang him.”
Cardinal Richelieu

1. L'ACADEMIE FRANCAISE : SOPHISTRY UNDER THE GUISE OF CLASSICISM

Lyndon LaRouche has many times demonstrated that the purpose of Classical education is not to master this or that science, this or that form of art, or this or that language : the purpose of Classical education is to master and improve on the cognitive { *epistemological gap* } which exists between man and animal, between man and God ; that is, the universal key that unlocks the domaine of Classical art and of discoveries of universal principles. However, that was precisely what was destroyed under the founding principles of the Académie Française, created under Cardinal de Richelieu and set up under the rules of René Descartes and Pierre Corneille, principally. Instead of fostering the creative process in the general population, that experiment in { *purification* } of the French language was

designed as a deliberate project of population control, using explicitly the {*catharsis*} method of Aristotle in opposition to the idea of the {*sublime*}. As a result, the nation-State Renaissance heritage of Louis XI and of François Rabelais was destroyed, and a new French imperial domination of Europe began to take hold during the first half of the 17th century.

Today, as a result of the Anglo-Dutch Liberal Central Banking System's adopting a legalist type of language based on this same Cartesian fallacy of composition, all European parliaments are incapable of discovering the natural law behind universal physical principles which would bring a solution to the current world-wide financial and economic crisis.

Contrary to the Classical Greek period of Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato, or to the Italian Renaissance of Nicholas of Cusa, Piero della Francesca, and his students, Luca Pacioli and Leonardo da Vinci, the Académie Française was established to prevent the French from accessing the ontological reality of the crucial domain of the {*epistemological gap*} between two axiomatically different species; that is, the complex domain of paradoxes and anomalies of axiomatic changes pertaining to universal physical principles imbedded in the universe as a whole, and more specifically reflected in the fundamental difference between the human species and the animal species.

The method of solving paradoxes and anomalies that Lyndon LaRouche developed in his paper {*On the subject of education*}, is based essentially on the unique form of human knowledge that he identified as "{*individual cognition*}." LaRouche distinguishes "cognition" from "knowledge" to mark the difference between the creative act of a discovery of principle and the act of acquiring knowledge by way of information. Cognition is not the result of information, or the result of sense perception, nor does it correspond to a deductive form of learning, as in the methods of training animals, or as digital computer programs function.

LaRouche has revived this idea of {*cognition*} (*cognoscere*) to mean what Cicero meant by the idea of "seeking to know", that is, the {*seeking to know*} by discoveries of principle as promoted by the Pythagorean friend of Plato, Archytas. For LaRouche, human progress is fundamentally based on the cognitive ability that only a human being is capable of, through the application of his discoveries of principle to technologies, which improve

the productivity of labor, per capita and per square kilometers. Thus, the act of cognitive thinking is precisely located in the axiomatic difference between man and animal.

As we shall demonstrate below, the axiomatic flaw of the Académie Française resides in the fact that it followed mechanical Aristotelian rules of rhetoric that killed the creative process itself. Instead of teaching language as the living word of morality and of the creative process, expressing the verbal action of man as created in the image of God, this evil institution imposed on the French language a thought police called « le bon français, » emphasizing nouns over verbal action. That institutional form of policing the language represented nothing else but the establishment of what LaRouche called a system of Euclidean types of postulates, theorems, and definitions of how to keep a population within the limits of the « rules of the game » of the oligarchy. Thus, the French language became codified as a « royal language», as the « perfect language » of the beautiful people, following a hereditary principle of being perfectly detached from human emotions, and from cognitive ideas. The French language became a means of grooming people like circus animals. Descartes was the explicit architect of this abomination that he called «*the gift of persuasion which confers at the same time royalty.* » How many pieces of legislation have been construed on precisely this sort of Cartesian principle, in Europe as well as in the United States ?

However, this concoction was not entirely the fabrication of Descartes. The policy was put forward by Cardinal de Richelieu and the codification was applied by Corneille to French theatre. To speak or to write anything in that so-called « classical French » fishbowl modality meant to articulate «*a clear and distinct language, which expressed just reasoning and proper thinking.* » This was the official government policy established by Richelieu in accordance with new rules of courtly conduct, and which was aimed at the purification of the « French race ».

The new Cartesian code of laws, elaborated in his {*Discourse on Method*}, established that the French language had to be precise, clear, simple, decisive, firm, pure, vigorous, in other words, rigid and cold. A good Frenchman was one who became «*passionate in his cold watchfulness* » (*passionné en sa froideur surveillée*), as the French statesman and historian, Gabriel Hanotaux put it. What had to be conveyed to others was not the content of one's ideas, but the fact that one had mastered the art of

hiding his lies within his eloquence, and thus, was showing off to his fellow listeners that he had mastered the art of watching himself and listening to himself speak. That kind of sophistry represented the death of creativity, and this is the reason why there has not been any true Classical music, no real poetry, or any potent Classical form of art in France, no true beauty, except in architecture, since Descartes and Richelieu. This sophistry was truly the result of what LaRouche called a conscious « Cartesian Flatland » concoction of human history in which the so-called « French classical period » of the first half of the 17th century would have achieved perfection, that is, the perfection of flatness, as opposed to accessing a creative process by means of which a society were able to make a transition to an improved state of general welfare.

<Footnote> [I take exception with architecture, because the French government ministry of « ponts et chaussées » (bridges and roads infrastructure) and city building was virtually the only domain of art where the beauty of the slow and persistent progress of labor was miraculously maintained from one century to the next. « *If it is beautiful, it is useful* », said a popular dictum about certain French buildings, bridges, and roads. A validatable proof of this can be made cognitively by simply considering the serene and useful beauty of {*Place des Vosges*} in Paris, built by the architects of Henry IV, who had imported a new brick imitation process from Holland, and compare that masterpiece with the insipid central rotunda of the Sorbonne, built approximately during the same period by Richelieu.

Ask yourself where the difference lies. As LaRouche emphasized in his paper {*On the subject of education*}, this sort of difference lies in a cognitive validatable discovery of principle, which is totally different from the Cartesian inductive and deductive proof by Q. A. D. In fact, the LaRouche validatable discovery of principle is anti-Cartesian and anti-Euclidean. The proof of validity resides essentially in the correlation, in the {*epistemological gap*}, between discoveries of principle and the increasing power of mankind over and in the universe. Consequently, this cognitive validatable discovery of principle is only communicable, and therefore verifiable and measurable, when it is socialized in this unique form of a growing physical economy, as expressed by the {*Place des Vosges*}.]

2. THE EVIL UNDERLYING ASSUMPTION BEHIND THE FRENCH ACADEMY : THE CONVERSION OF PROTESTANTS !

After the death of Richelieu in 1642, a considerable number of documents were found in his study, pertaining to theological and religious argumentations and debates on the subject of how to convert Protestants back to the Catholic faith. This hidden secret agenda of Richelieu was based on a fallacy of composition, a typical Venetian form of political lie aimed at restoring « religious unity » of the French population under the guise of attaining perfection through the purification of the language.

The book that Richelieu had been working on, secretly, for over twenty years, and that his will and testament was to make public only after his death, was called : { *Treaty on the Easiest and Most Assured Method of Converting Those who Have Separated Themselves from the Church* } (Traité qui contient la méthode la plus facile et la plus assurée pour convertir ceux qui se sont séparés de l'Eglise), first published Chez Antoine Vitré, in 1646.

Note that Richelieu did not call the Huguenots « Protestants » or « Reformed Christian Church », as was normally done in his time and later, but « separated Christians ». For Richelieu, Protestants were Catholics that had gone astray, that is, a part of the Catholic « flock of sheep » that had ventured stupidly away from the Roman Church. The Protestants were nothing else but a lost portion of « human cattle. »

This conversion work was Richelieu's secret passion and was obviously in direct opposition with his daytime policy of conducting a war in alliance with Protestant Sweden, and in favor of the German Protestant States, who were fighting for their independence from the Habsburg Empire. In other words, the way Richelieu dealt with the Protestants politically, was « jesuitically », that is, hypocritically. Since his policy of bringing the divided Christians to unity was his overriding purpose, he inevitably oriented towards repudiating the tolerant policy of Henry IV's Edict of Nantes. Furthermore, his secret policy was also a means of accommodating both Ultramontanism and Gallicanism, both of which assured the continuation of the interminable Thirty Years War.

Just to give a sample of Richelieu's jesuitical and legalistic accommodation between Ultramontanism and Gallicanism, consider the following statement which manages to say nothing, but with a lot of « grandeur » : « { *If the Kings are forced to respect the tiaras of the Papal Sovereigns, they also are forced to conserve the power of the crown, but*

there is no more difficulty in distinguishing the extent and the subordination of those two powers. In such matters, there is no more reason to believe neither the people of the Palace, nor those, who by excess of indiscrete zeal, claim to be openly the partisans of Rome. The reason is that we must listen to both sides so that it becomes possible to solve the difficulty, by men who are so knowledgeable, that they cannot fail by ignorance, and being so sincere that neither the interests of the State, neither those of Rome can win over reason.» (Richelieu, {*Testament Politique*}, quoted by Hanotaux, Op. Cit. p.231) This is a typical Richelieu exercise in mechanistic sophistry, which became known as the Cartesian « *triumph of reason over passion* ». »

The little known “converting policy” of Richelieu was of great significance, because it became the main reason that decided Pope Urbain VIII to send Mazarin to the King of France, in order to seriously work toward peace. In contrast with Mazarin, Richelieu was a priest and a bishop. This alone made a crucial doctrinal difference between the two men. While Mazarin was essentially a political man with an ecumenical view of religion, Richelieu was foremost a Catholic priest who could never separate his so-called “Catholic bias” from his political actions. When confronted with the sight of many contrary religions, Richelieu had no doubt that they were all false and that there was only one true religion, the Roman Catholic Church. The following arguments will demonstrate how successful his policy was meant to be.

First and foremost, the underlying assumption of Richelieu’s method was that everything he considered to be true had to be based on sense perception. As he put it himself : « *Truth is established by the senses and by the natural light.* » For Richelieu the only things that could be truthful had to be self-evident to his senses. So, he derived that in order for a religion to be truthful, it had to be « visibly » of a « unified » belief, otherwise it would be divided with a multitude of « particularisms, » and that would be sufficient to prove that it were not the « true religion. » The logic that Richelieu was following in his reasoning was that the only true Church had to be the one that existed the longest. The fallacy, of course, is that the religion that lasts the « longest » has to be the most « united ». This is the religious equivalent of Descartes’ fallacy that « the shortest distance between two points is the straight line. » Here is how Gabriel Hanotaux put it :

« Upon entering into the debate proper, the author (Richelieu) refers to the initial idea that the leaders of the Reform had declared, with repeated insistence, that they intended to establish a Church. Otherwise, - they recognized it themselves, - by destroying without rebuilding, they would have abolished Christianity. They have also recognized, ‘with no less determination’, that ‘outside of the Church of Jesus-Christ, there is no salvation’ . Finally, they proclaimed that ‘the Church must be visible’ otherwise, if it were invisible, it would be reduced to an obscure sect and without efficient proselytizing. » (Hanotaux, Op. Cit. p. 154.)

Then, Richelieu turned the argument of « visibility » against the Protestants, by arguing that it is {*indubitable*} (the term was made famously « à la mode » by Descartes) for anyone who wishes to see that the only true Church must be « visibly » the longest standing institution. Hanotaux points out that this is the key to Richelieu’s book :

« Here comes the master-argument by which will be grounded the demonstration destined to bring about the conversion of the « separated » flock : that is to say, the unique « antiquity » of the true Church : « {*The true Church having 1600 years of antiquity and having, from its very beginning, upheld the name of the Church of Jesus Christ, it is indubitable that all Christian society which is not part of that antiquity must put into doubt the goodness of its origin and must work seriously toward becoming enlightened on this question.* } » (Quoted by Gabriel Hanotaux, in Op. Cit. p. 155). Note that the argument is pure Aristotelian and Cartesian logic, pure mechanistic fallacy of composition. Following the same logic, one would also be right in assuming that since Satanism has lasted longer than Christianity, and its believers are most unified, it must be the true religion ! However, on this fine point, Richelieu would argue that Satanism could not be the true Church, because it is not « visible ».

And Hanotaux added : « If the Reform appears to have lived hidden and ignored, it was not {*visible*}, and, by separating itself after so many centuries, it has very imprudently destroyed the unity ; on the other hand, if its doctrine is not unified and is not taught by qualified authorities, how can it claim to be consecrated as the Church of Christ... » In fact, Richelieu points out that the Protestant churches of France, England, Scotland, Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, are all different churches, while the Catholic Church of France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, etc., are all of

the same and unique faith. Richelieu, then, draws the inevitable self-evident conclusion :

« {Our adversaries being obviously so divided on matters of faith that they cannot deny it, whether their divisions are fundamental or not, while the Catholics being so perfectly united on all the points of their belief that everybody maintains their agreement, (and) whoever wants to know how the scriptures, the Councils and the (founding) Fathers speak of the unity of the Church, calling it a body, a wife, a flock, how could he not prefer the communion of the Catholics to the communion of the adversaries ? } » (Quoted by Hanotiaux, in Op. Cit., p. 156.)

The specific use of the Cartesian {*methodical doubt*}, here, is the crucial point to be made. This is how Richelieu introduced the Cartesian {*malin génie*} (evil genius) in his argumentation against the Protestants ; such that, everything must be derived from a mechanical logic. Can there be any doubt about the reality principle of this logic ?

In his {*Méditations Métaphysiques*}, Descartes developed his so-called hypothesis of the {*malin génie*}, whose argument I summarize as follows : {*How do I know if reality is not just a dream ? Some dreams are so vivid that they could be taken for the real thing. I have every reason to doubt. Maybe reality is merely an illusion that an evil genius (« un malin génie ») has implanted in our minds and persuaded us to believe it is real, and what we think is real merely represents an illusion. }*

From the standpoint of mechanistic thinking, this Cartesian {*methodical doubt*} became the key entry point through which his entire system of sophistry of persuasion was introduced in the French education system. The point to be made is that this is how ideologies are created ; this is how what appears to be true, virtual reality, is made to take the place of reality, i. e. Descartes' own « philosophy ». Then, Descartes concluded cynically that, he was like a slave who is captive of this own {*malin génie*} « {*...when he (the slave) begins to realize that his freedom is but a dream, he fears that he might wake up, and conspires with his agreeable delusions in order to enjoy their abuse a little longer, thus, I chose to return to my old opinions without noticing it,...*} » René Descartes, {*Méditations Métaphysiques*}, Classiques Larousse, Paris, 1950, p. 32.)

So, Richelieu was taken over by the sophistry of his own {*malin génie*} and nowhere in his writings, did he show any universal (i.e. Catholic) intention to solve the crisis of the so-called « religious wars. » He could not see that the way to win over his so-called {*adversaries*} was to be generous with them, that is, to love those of the {*other faith*}. Why did he not use the principle of {*agape*} that Mazarin later introduced to achieve the Peace of Westphalia? We shall be in a better position to answer that question after looking at the nature of the Académie Française, itself.

3. THE « SUPERIORITY » OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE : THE RACIST-CHAUVINIST POLICY OF DESCARTES.

The consecrated internal joke of the Académie Française, at the time of Descartes, was characteristic of the chauvinist and racist nature of that institution. The joke went like this :

« The Spanish language is for speaking to God ; the Italian language for speaking to women ; the French language for speaking to men ; the English language for speaking to birds ; the German language for speaking to horses. »

The foreign policy of Richelieu was to make the French language « *for speaking to men* », the language of government and of international diplomacy. This is also how the Académie Française became the means of recruiting, unifying, and controlling French society to the ideology of the « bon français. » As the founding member and ideologue of the Académie, René Descartes put it : « {*The French language expresses itself according to the order by which things come naturally to the mind ; the French language is more correct than all other languages and more uniform in its pronunciation, and this is why it is called the language of men* (allusion to the Academie internal joke), *because it is more appropriate to the functions of reasoning, which must be quiet and without agitation...* } » (Gabriel Hanotaux, {*Histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu*}, Tome VI, Paris, Librairie Plon, 1947, p. 307.)

The Académie Française was founded in 1635, and immediately, any good Rabelaisian French was thrown out and replaced with what Descartes called the « bon français », that is, a system of sophistry that was based on two categorical imperatives of social control. The first imperative was to

purify the French language by eliminating the teaching of foreign languages, foreign history, especially the teaching of Latin and Greek, and the second imperative was to purify the language by throwing out unwanted words and ambiguous metaphorical meanings. The fundamental criterion of the whole system was that all ideas had to be « *{clear and distinct}* », which could only be achieved by a set of four rules : Those rules were : 1° The rule of self-evident clear and distinct ideas ; 2° The rule of Analysis ; 3° The rule of Synthesis ; 4° The rule of Formal Induction. The following description of the Rule of Formal Induction tells the whole story:

« *{4° The Rule of Formal Induction. A sufficient and ordered enumeration is then necessary to look for everything that is connected to a given question and to arrive at the intuitive perception of the long chains of reasons that we have unraveled. If the evidence is seized by the intuition, the order is indispensable to the discursive knowledge. Therein lies the whole secret of the method and, to apply it, it will be sufficient to know how to arrange things in ordered series in the manner of mathematical reasoning. }* » (L. Meynard, *{Descartes, Discours de la Méthode}*, Les Editions Foucher, Paris, Vol. I, 1960 , p. 60.)

Both imperatives of the Cartesian method were aimed at subverting the moral behavior of society by replacing the natural formation of anomalies and paradoxes and by codifying the language with rhetorical rules, based explicitly on Aristotle. In 1637, Descartes underwent a mystical sort of freemasonic initiation, in Holland, from which he ritualistically derived arbitrary rules of self-evident definitions of *{clear and distinct ideas}*.

Under this Richelieu coup d'Etat, every writer, school, publishing house, church and university, even every dictionary, had to establish these two categorical imperatives, and strictly abide by them, or else the writings would not be taught or published. For example, the word « valeur » (value) was reduced to having only two strict dictionary *{clear and distinct}* meanings : « price » for things, and « military honor » for human beings. In such a case, for instance, the French-Canadian expression « C'est bien de valeur ! » (It is just too bad !) would be unacceptable language and would be rejected by the Académie. Thus, the French language was polished and policed, not for communicating real ideas, but for the purpose of creating an artificial form of perfection in the expression and in the communication of nouns as opposed to verbal action.

During his acceptance speech at the Académie Française, Hyppolyte-Jules Pilet de Mesnardière, the personal physician of Richelieu, told his fellow directors what the intention of the Cardinal was. « { *This Académie* », said the doctor, was to become « *the first and most noble work of peace ... it was a universal prytanée (Jesuit academy) for letters and sciences.* } » This is confirmed by Richelieu himself, in his { *Political Testament* }, in which he established without any reserves whatsoever, that his Académie Française was going to be based on the teachings by the Jesuit Order in selected colleges all across France. Richelieu wrote :

« { *Since the knowledge of letters is absolutely necessary for a Republic, it is necessary that it should not be taught indiscriminately to everybody ; the commerce of letters would banish absolutely that of merchandise which fills the States with wealth ; it would ruin agriculture, the true wet-nurse of nations, and it would empty, in no time at all, the nursery of soldiers who grow up better through the rudeness of ignorance rather than through the politeness of sciences ... It is by these considerations that, in a well regulated State, the politicians wish to establish more masters in the mechanical arts than masters in the liberal arts of teaching letters. It seems to me, in reality, that when I consider the great number of people who have taken the profession of teaching letters and the multitude of children that we have to educate, that I see an infinite number of sick people who, having no other objective than to drink pure and clear water for their recovery, are pressed by an immoderate thirst which, by accepting all of those which are offered to them, the greatest part drink impurities and often served in poisoned vessels, which increases their thirst and their sickness, instead of appeasing one and the other. }* » (From { *Testament Politique du Cardinal de Richelieu* }, ({ *Des Lettres* }, 2^{ème} partie, section X ., in Gabriel Hanotaux, Op. Cit., p. 306.)

Since this Richelieu form of education was not for everybody, and was mostly detrimental to economics, the control of language, however, had to, somehow, have an impact on the general population. This is when the project of « The Cid » of Corneille became the crucial test-case for the consecration of the Académie Française.

4. THE CID OF CORNEILLE « HER MORALS ARE UNEQUALLY EQUAL »: « I KNOW IT'S PERVERSION, BUT IT RHYMES! »

In 1635, Pierre Corneille was recruited personally by Descartes into the {*Company of five authors*} to write plays for Richelieu and the Académie. A year later, France nearly lost the Thirty Years War to the Habsburg Empire, which had invaded the northeastern region of France, namely the town of Corbie. Pope Urbain VIII had begun a personal peace negotiation in Munster before he decided to send Cardinal Jules de Mazarin to Richelieu in 1639, with the ultimate intention of achieving peace. The recruitment of French subjects for a continuance of the war was down to a trickle and had become a severe national security question. Pessimism and corruption were so high that the war might have been lost by the French for lack of combatants. As Gabriel Hanotaux described in his history of Richelieu, the year of this invasion of Corbie was also the year when the Academy Française decided to use « The Cid » of Corneille as a propaganda play that would rally the French population to adopt the « willful impulse of sacrificing human lives for the French-Catholic cause ».

The general population knew it was being offered in sacrifice for « la grandeur » and resented the idea. Everyone could read through the « folie des grandeurs » of Richelieu who had no intention at all of helping the German cause against the Habsburg beastman, but wanted to trash the Austrian Empire and replace it with a « superior French Empire. » There was no patriotism involved in any of Richelieu's schemes; on the contrary there was a cunning and malignant decision to twist morality into sophistry and manipulate the population into an unjust war. (Richelieu would have probably said in his perfect French gongorism: « to twist moral souls into poisoned vessals. ») The experiment of « The Cid » was meant to demonstrate the triumph of a « malignant reason » by means of will power alone.

The project of the Académie Française was nothing short of a grandiose attempt at programming « behavior control » of an entire nation and for several centuries to come. The program was established by Descartes personally and was based on using the French language as a means of turning the population into an artificial intelligence capability to rationalize the objectives of the oligarchy and to entice French pride into agreeing that the French language was superior to all other languages, because it was the « {*most natural language for the human mind*} ». Thus, a French Empire was justified. Moliere was to be used to ridicule the abuse of silly court manners, Racine was to be used to profile blind Kantian morality of {*reason over passion*}, and Corneille was to be used to do the opposite, that is, to

convince the masses of people that *{passion over reason}* is allowed and morally acceptable. This artificial opposition was used to convince people that human life was ruled on these two opposite poles of magnetic attraction. The whole game of life was presented as a conflict between emotion and reason, but with the added sophistication that the so-called « truth », that is, the victory of one over the other, was not determined by morality, but by rhetorical eloquence, that is, by manipulating public opinion. The logic was that an ordered language had to produce an ordered mind, and an ordered mind had to produce the necessary authority that reflected « la grandeur ».

The subject of « The Cid » was chosen as the social experiment to test the morality of the general population : will the spectators be convinced that Chevalier Rodrigue should marry Chimène, his lover, despite the fact that he had killed her father in a duel? Will the population accept this play on the basis of such a perversion ? In other words, the question is : can a moral sentiment be subverted and replaced by a well phrased argument made by a convincing and loving woman ? In a way, the role of Chimène represents the seductive feminine variation of the role of the Venetian character, Iago, in Shakespeare's Othello. The difference is that it is the spectator who is being deceived. « I can convince you that snow is black, » said Bertrand Russell. The quarrel over « The Cid » of Corneille was not merely over a moral question. It was also a quarrel over the rhetorical manipulation of public opinion. However, that quarrel was so violent and lasted such a long time that, even after four years of Corneille writing nothing for public consumption after that play, he was busy polishing his Cartesian rules. One of the founders of the Académie, Guez de Balzac, confirmed, at the time, that « *{he (Corneille) no longer writes anything ... He only speaks of rules. }* »

The original story of « The Cid » came from a Spanish author, D. Guillen de Castro, which the Venetians had used as a similar test against the Spanish population, and which was first published in Latin, in 1592, the year that Thomas Torquemada began his purge of the Jews in Spain. This was a carefully crafted play, which had a built-in sophistry experiment of the lie in the sense of Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate, or of synarchist, Alexander Kojeve and Leo Strauss.

The lying experiment was as follows. Corneille identified the issue himself, in the Notice to the reader of the 1648 edition. He wrote :

«{ *Here is what history lent to D. Gullien de Castro, who has put these famous events in the theatre before I did. Those who understand the Spanish language will discover two circumstances: one, in which Chimène, unable to hold back her love and her recognition of the qualities she found in Rodrigue, regardless of the fact that he had killed her father (estaba prendada de sus patres), went on to propose herself to the King this generous alternative, either that he give him to her in marriage, or that he punish him according to the law ; the other, that the marriage should be in accordance with popular demand (a todos estaba a cuento).* }» (Pierre Corneille, {*Le Cid*}, Paris, Les Classiques Hatier, 1959, p. 15 .)

Thus, the choice is not between {*passion or reason*} alone, but most of all between {*passion or reason*} and {*public opinion*}. That is the evil subtlety here. The added dimension that « {*the marriage should be in accordance with popular demand* } » (« que le mariage se fit au gré de tout le monde »), was the clincher, the decisive factor of immorality, which depended entirely on the acceptance by the audience. If the audience rejected the play, then, it meant that it was not yet « politically » ready for public consumption. If, on the other hand, the audience richly applauded the decision of Chimène to marry Rodrigue, regardless of the patricide they have committed, then the population had taken the bait, and had swallowed it, hook, line, and sinker. In such a case, the population would be deemed ready to be seduced by any other form of some similar deception. This point in case has been confirmed by the observations of one of the founding members of the Académie, Georges de Scudéry, who reported on the question of morality to Richelieu in the following manner:

« {*And now, if it is alleged in defense (of the play) that this passion of Chimène has been the main enjoyment of the play, and that which brought about the most applause, we will say that it is not because she was good, but because she expressed herself very eloquently.* } »

Scudéry wrote an extensive critique against {*The Cid*}, not because of its perversion of morals, but because the play « {*shocked the rules of dramatic poetry.* } » For example, Scudéry criticized the fact that « {*The Cid never showed scenes where virtue is rewarded and vice is punished* } », and therefore failed to adhere to Aristotle's rule of verisimilitude. The fact that « {*we see a perverted girl speak only of her follies, while she should be speaking of her misfortune ; she woes the loss of her lover , while she should be concerned only with the loss of her father ; she loves what she* »

should hate »... « her vice seems to be rewarded, virtue seems to be banned from the conclusion of the poem ; it is an education in evil, an invitation to succumb to it ; and therefore, these remarkable and dangerous defects are directly opposed to the primary rules of drama.} »
(George de Scudéry, {*Observations sur le Cid*}, [Document électronique] Institut Nationale de la Langue Française. P. 80.)

In other words, the spectator is invited to go through the {*catharsis*} of enjoying just as much dramatic pleasure represented by evil actions as by virtuous actions, providing that the dramatic action maintains a level of credibility. It doesn't matter if generous deeds are perverted into criminal acts, as long as the {*purgative violence*} is displayed in a credible way. Thus, French theater became the domain where all perversions were permitted under the condition that they be performed within the bounds of probability and approved rhetorical eloquence. All dramas containing sublime actions aimed at improving the morality of the citizen were, of course, to be excluded.

Therefore, the 1637 representation of « The Cid » of Corneille established a paradigm shift within the French population. The general acceptance of the play sanctioned a new level of oligarchical permissiveness in Europe, and a new degree of police control of the population. The play was the biggest hit of the century. It was initially played three times before the Queen and the King, and Richelieu, himself, gave its blessings twice at his personal Hotel. Corneille immediately received a pension of 1,500 pounds and his father was elevated to the rank of nobleman. Coming out of the theater du Marais, in Paris, after the royal approval was given, one could hear people comment: « {*So what if it is perverted, it rhymed so well!*} » Richelieu had acquired the proof that the people of Paris could be made to accept the new Cartesian code of moral conduct, that is, of « {*reasoning justly and thinking clearly*} » on any perverted topic that one might chose provided it was well spoken and was confirmed and embraced by royalty. Thus, the evil genius of the « bon français » came out of the bottle.

Corneille was so infatuated with his success that in the 1648 edition of his play, he threw caution to the wind and flaunted his sophistry openly in the Notice to the reader. After buttressing his argument by quoting four stanzas showing how don Guillen de Castro had used this same sophistry without being reprimanded, Corneille added :

« {*Unless I am mistaken, this is how Chimène acted in my play, before the King and the Infante. I say before the King and the Infante, because when she is alone, or with her confidante, or with her lover, it is a different matter. Her morals are unequally equal, to speak the language of our Aristotle, and they change depending on place, people, time and circumstance, while maintaining always the same principle.*}» <footnote> (Pierre Corneille, {*Le Cid*}, Paris, Les Classiques Hatier, 1959, p. 17 . The reader should note that the Notice that this writer is quoting from is his own schooldays edition of 1959, which means that the same sophistry has been regurgitated year after year, in every French speaking school around the world, and has not changed in over 300 years !)

Gabriel Hanotaux confirmed that the function of Corneille at the Académie Française was precisely to enforce the rules of Aristotle to French Theater for centuries to come. Hanotaux noted :

« Corneille, himself, accepted to submit each and every one of his plays to the scrutiny of an {*examination*} concerning the {*morals*}, the {*rules*}, and the {*language*} ; moreover, Corneille saw fit to write and publish soon after, his three {*Discourses*} on the {*Dramatic Art and Tragedies*}, - sincere studies which have become the law of French Theatre during several centuries ; and finally, from that moment on, Corneille agreed to conform with the greatest scruples to these famous rules attributed to Aristotle, and that he had to apply them, from then on, to the dramatic arts, and with good French common sense. » (Gabriel Hanotaux, Op. Cit., p. 329.)

However, there was, in the Académie Française, an excluded poet by the name of Jean Chapelain, who probably played a crucial role in the quarrel of {*The Cid*}. Chapelain was a secretary of Louis XIII, and an original member of the Académie. The interesting thing about this virtually unknown Chapelain is that he was not chosen by Richelieu, but had been selected by King Louis XIII himself, who had given him the task of writing up the first and official royal report on the views of the Academy on the subject of {*The Cid*}. This official document entitled {*Les sentiments de l'Académie sur le Cid*} (1637) is surprisingly unavailable at the on-line at the Gallica Bibliothèque Nationale, in Paris, and has, so far, proven to be, unobtainable. Furthermore, the official court gossip about Chapelain is that he is a « mundane and precious poet with no inspiration », whose principal poetic work is {*La Pucelle*}, « a cold and boring poem about Jeanne

d'Arc ». Just those tidbits of information should be enough of a teaser to seriously look into the matter more closely.

One glance at the first two pages of {*La Pucelle*}, which can be found as an electronic document of the CNRS, and which has been put out by the Institut National de la Langue Française (InaLF), is enough to make you realize that Chapelain, who took twenty years to compose this unfinished poem, was a most forceful defender of the idea of the {*sublime*}, and was writing what he called « heroic poetry » to rekindle the idea of beauty and courage in the soul of France, against the Corneille perversities.

One further interesting aspect of Chaplain's {*La Pucelle*} is that it was a source of inspiration for Mazarin's Peace of Westphalia, and was also a literary source for Lazard Carnot's famous poem {*Ode to Enthusiasm*}, which, itself, is a rare pearl of French poetry, and had been, itself, a source of inspiration for the French troops who followed the {*Organizer of Victory*} during the liberation war of the French Revolution.

ODE TO EHTHUSIASM

by Lazard Carnot

Sublime soaring of generous souls,
Enthusiasm, love of Beauty!
Principles of noble flames,
Enlighten me with your torch.
O ray of divine essence!
It is from your celestial origin

That I wish to derive my songs:
Already my voice has sprung forth,
Purify, expand my thoughts,
Give life to my accents.

You are not raving drunkenness,
You are not cold reason:
You go further than wisdom,
Without exceeding its region.
Delicate instinct which anticipates,

Both the council of prudence

And the calculations of judgment,
Instructed by simple nature,
Your course is always quick and sure,
And your guide is sentiment.

THE MAIDEN

by Jean Chaplain

[...]

Souls of the prime bodies, fathers of harmony,
Messengers of decrees from infinite essence,
Legions which follow the eternal standard,
Who played in this great work such a grandiose role;
Celebrate with me, here, the warring maiden.
Elevate my singing to the sound of the trumpet,
Just inflame my spirit, dispose of my project,
And inspire my song to give life to my task.
August successor of this august prince,
By whom was once increased this Frankish province,
When by his vengeful arm, through hundreds of good blows,
Has fought the damned English, and won him to the ground;
Magnanimous Henry, glorious Longueville,
From frivolous virtues, to church, to asylum,
The pillar of the State by Dunois was restored,
Hero, whose great exploits shall not be forgotten;
Living source of honor, who, always clear and full,
Expand my yearning vein with crashing flows of hope,
And make my days flourish, in this honest pastime,
That fortune tried to snatch from my noble desire;
Those truthful songs of mine, from my sacred Parnass,
Learn of his great designs, of his war for his race,
And see, with their success, how far the human heart
Can sustain the efforts of merely mortal hands.
See, within the tempest of fatal injustice,
The splendor of your blood from royal origins,

And contemplate in awe, by which brilliant attempts,
The heavens had prepared to produce all your feats.
[...]

Both Chapelain and Carnot similarly called upon God's divine source of creativity, to inspire them and give them the courage of Jeanne d'Arc, to elevate their voices and their minds to the task of saving the nation, and of immortalizing, in a language form, the discovery of the sublime that sustains the power of reason in times of great crisis. Chaplain also called upon the sublime spirit of the heroic Captain Jean Dunois, who fought against the English along side of Jeanne, to put Charles VII on the throne of France.

Even after Jeanne had been taken prisoner by the English, Dunois continued Jeanne's work and successfully won back the cities of Chartres, Saint-Denis, Meulan, as well as the provinces of Normandy and of Guyenne. In recognition for these victories, he was made duke of Longueville. Chapelain had addressed this sublime opening segment of his poem, ending with { *The heavens had prepared to produce all your feats* }, to Henry II of Orleans, Duke of Longueville, the great grandson of the original companion of Jeanne, and the principal negotiator of Mazarin at the congress of Münster in Westphalia.

CONCLUSION

After Richelieu had died in 1642, King Louis XIII refused to continue paying Corneille a pension. Though Corneille later managed to get a personal pension from the notorious royal treasury swindler, Nicholas Fouquet, he lost that pension also, as soon as Jean-Baptiste Colbert got Fouquet convicted for having looted the Treasury. In 1663, Colbert had become so upset with the Académie Française that he created, in explicit opposition to it, the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres for the study of ancient and modern languages, philology, archeology, and history. In 1666, Colbert also founded the Académie des Sciences, which included Leibniz and Huygens, among other international scientists.

As LaRouche demonstrated in his Toledo Cadre School presentation (Morning Briefing, July 18, 2005), the « Cartesian Flatland » system of history, disguised in the fallacy of the perfectly polished flat plane of the « bon français », is the actual destruction of the individual human creative power to intervene and change the universe as a whole. As he showed,

anyone who makes up capricious laws and rules of language, in order to regulate the social interactions of a people, as Associate Justice Antonin Scalia or René Descartes did, violates natural law by destroying the very human capability of discovering the principle of natural law itself.

However, the acknowledgment of this Cartesian mental disorder is not sufficient to force a change in the victimized population as a whole : what is required is a moral change in the population itself, which will be induced forcibly by the historical circumstance of the great financial and economic collapse of today. Although there is no guarantee that the victimized population will respond morally to the collapse itself, there does exist one condition under which one can hope to save this world from a pending new dark age, and Lyndon LaRouche has provided the answer to that question. As LaRouche asked : how was it possible that the whole people of Greece adopted the folly of going to the Peloponnesian Wars ? Are we not doing the same thing today by launching an unstoppable and unwinnable war against terrorism?

This question requires that another underlying question be asked, and that is : What happened to the Greek population that they allowed the whole of their civilization to disintegrate ? The answer to that question is simple : they poisoned themselves with *{sophistry}*. Greek civilization was destroyed when the leadership of Athens reflected the sophistry of the people who put them in power. So then, what sort of defense does a population have against *{sophistry}* ? LaRouche gave a longer answer in his memo on « The Pericles Syndrome:» THE CASE OF A VICE-PRESIDENT'S MASS-INSANITY. In a nutshell, he demonstrated that the only way to inoculate a society against the disease of self-corrupting sophistry, is to provide the educational means for such a people to discover and apply the principle of natural law, *{agape}*, and from it, sustain a lasting development of new self-generating discoveries of principle. As Rabelais proved the same point, in promoting his peace strategy of generosity against his rivals: « *{Such is the nature of gratuitousness. Time, which gnaws and fritters all things away, only augments and increases the value of benefits. For one good turn freely done to an intelligent man grows continuously by his generous thoughts and remembrances.}* » There is no better guarantee of economic peace for the whole world than this benevolent Peace of Westphalia policy of the *{Advantage of the other.}*

FIN