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Ch'an

The Indian monk Bodhidharma, who traveled to China in around 520, is seen as the first patriarch of Zen Buddhism. He called his sect in China 'Ch'an', based on the word Dhyana (meaning meditation in Sanskrit). Many Taoists, who discovered similarities between Ch'an and their own views, became interested and proceeded to influence the development of that religious sect's beliefs. Not only were ideas from Taoism incorporated in Ch'an, but also some Confucian tenets. (Wsetgeest, Zen 11)

The most enduring -- and for many, the most appealing -- of the indigenous Chinese sects was Ch'an (Dhyana), better known in the West by its Japanese name, Zen. Much of Ch'an's appeal lies in the legends it produced, graphic depictions of sudden Awakening gained through dramatic encounters between master and student. Recent scholarship, based on manuscripts found at Tun-huang, has shown that many of the legends are myths, and that the actual history of the Ch'an school is much complex than the school's own records indicate. The dust raised by this modern revisionism has yet to settle, but a general outline of the doctrinal and social forces that shaped the school's distinctive literature has begun to emerge.

The tendency for Buddhist monasticism to split into two specialized vocations : scholarly and meditative. Ch'an is a classic case of a specialized meditative tradition, and it left by far the most extensive records of any such tradition. Before detailed knowledge of the meditative traditions in India and Southeast Asia become available to the West in the past few decades, Ch'an was widely assumed to be the only instance of a strictly meditative Buddhist tradition. As result, many scholars, Eastern and western, like to speculate on the distinctive differences between the Indian and Chinese national character that brought about such an unprecedented tradition on Chinese soil. Now that we have more extensive knowledge of such traditions in other

Buddhist countries, especially the Kammatthana tradition in Thailand, we can see that what makes Ch'an distinctive is not that its masters rejected textual authority in favor of immediate meditative experience, or that they used unusual and outrageous methods to spark intuitive realization in their students' minds. Rather, Ch'an is distinctive in that it systematized records of such teachings and methods into a course of study for later generations so as to prevent the practice from ossifying as it became established in the social mainstream.

We have noted that there is a tendency among Buddhist meditative traditions to become domesticated as the attainments of their teachers become widely known. In most cases, the traditions then die out within a few generations as material prosperity smothers the authenticity of the practice. Most extant early Ch'an writings date from the two main periods during which the tradition became domesticated: the period from the mid-eighth to the mid-ninth century, and then again from the late tenth to the early twelfth. This may simply be a historical accident, in that writings from other periods may have been destroyed, but comparison with the Kammatthana tradition suggests that this may not be an accident after all. As a meditative tradition would tend not to leave written records until it became so famous that it felt compelled to propagate and defend its teachings beyond the immediate circle of person-to-person contact.

Further comparison with the Kammatthana tradition reveals another point in common: an ambivalent attitude toward established scholarly traditions. Meditative traditions must use the terminology established by the scholarly tradition to discuss their teachings, but they may find that fashions of scholarship are inimical to their approach. Scholars may champion spurious texts or mistaken interpretations of legitimate texts. On a more subtle level, even when scholarly theories are essentially correct, the tendency to focus on theory may obscure the direct experience of what the theory purports to describe. These two concerns - to defend the school's doctrines and practices from outside attack, and to prevent later generations from focusing on theory to the exclusion of seeing into their own minds - account for much of the form and content of Ch'an literature.

The literature produced during the two periods of the school's domestication exhibits two approaches to these concerns. In the long run, the literature produced during the second period was far more successful than that produced during the first. In fact, not until the second period did Ch'an actually become a unified school with an established body of doctrine and legendary tradition. Prior to that, the "school" was more loose family of lineages, each with its own fluid amalgam of teachings and traditions, scattered through mountainous

regions in central and southwestern China. Even after its establishment as a distinct school, Ch'an continued to split over several recurrent issues, the most prominent of them being the question of whether Ch'an practice was in harmony with traditional scriptural doctrines or was something entirely separate and unique.

Ch'an in the Tang Dynasty. The first Ch'an masters to gain widespread popular attention were members of the East Mountain School of Hupeh province, Hung-jen and his student Shen-hsiu. Hung-jen attracted a large following of monks, but not until 700, when Empress Wu invited Shen-hsiu to teach in the imperial palace, did the school attain national prominence. Shen-hsiu seems to have been a member of the royal family, and he wrote a number of texts describing the doctrines and practices of his school. Other student of Hung-jen also wrote texts, recording Hung-jen's teachings and those of his predecessors, establishing a lineage that went back several generations.

Some of them claimed that this lineage was connected with Bodhi-harma, a fifth-century central Asian monk famous for his meditative prowess. In an attempt to compensate for the school's lack of any clear basis in a particular Buddhist text, they also connected Bodhidharma with the Lankavatara Sutra. Although modern scholarship indicates that the school's connections with Bodhidharma, and his with

the Lankavatara, were tenuous at best, later legends surrounding Bodhidharma claiming him as the First Patriarch of the school played a central role in the developing Ch'an mythology. According to the reckoning of the East Mountain School, Hung-jen was the Fifth Patriarch of the school, and Shen-hsiu the Sixth.

Shen-hsiu and his contemporaries adopted much of the meditative terminology used by Chih-i, the great T'ien-tai systematizer, but gave new meanings to many of the terms. The most important doctrine for the school was the teaching of the Buddha-nature immanent in all things. Different members of the school dealt in different ways with the practical implications of this teaching, and in particular with the question of how to regard the defilements of the mind in light of the Buddha-nature's supposedly being intrinsically pure. Shen-hsiu approached the problem from two angles. When describing the practice from the outside, he stated that pure mind and the defiled mind, though conjoined, were essentially separate, each with its own intrinsic reality. Neither generated the other. Thus the goal of the practice was to rid the mirrorlike pure mind of any impurities. When describing the techniques used to rid of the mind of its impurities, however, he recommended that the meditators regard the impurities as essentially unreal. Some of the practices he taught implied a sudden approach to Awakening; others, a more gradual approach.

Shen-hsiu's school remained popular in the capital for several generations, but its popularity attracted controversy. In 730, a monk named Shen-hui(684-758)- a former student of Shen-hsiu and of Hui-neng, another student of Hung-jen- mounted a campaign in the capital, attacking Shen-hsiu and his followers for teaching a limited gradualistic and dualistic approach to the practice. Shen-hui insisted that the doctrine of the essential purity of the Buddha-nature meant that mental impurities were nonexistent, and that Awakening all-or-nothing proposition that could not be approached in stepwise fashion. Shen-hui produced new and more dramatic stories of Budhidharma to support his campaign insisted that Hui-neng, about whom almost nothing is known, was Ch'an's actual Sixth Patriarch.

There seems to be general agreement, both in later Ch'an schools and among modern scholars, that Shen-hui's unfair campaign against what he called the Northern School of Shen-hsiu was essentially self-serving. Active during the period when documents permitting ordination were easily bought, he seemed to be more interested in attracting new ordinands to his cause than in training meditators. Although the emperor in 796 posthumously declared him the true Seventh Patriarch, he maintained this title only in the Hostes school he found, which did not last beyond the persecutions of 845.

Shen-hui's attack on gradualism, however, had a lasting effect on Ch'an rhetoric. No Ch'an school after his time gave expression to any doctrines or practices that might be labeled "gradual." The term Southern School came to stand for any Ch'an lineage that taught sudden Awakening, although records from Tun-huang show that the Northern School taught sudden Awakening as well. All the schools that lasted into the Sung dynasty claimed to be southern, accepting Hui-neng - who was provided with an attractive mythology in a later work called the Platform Sutra- as the Sixth Patriarch, and passing over Shen-hui in almost total silence. As for the Northern School, it continued until the tenth century, when it died out with the end of the T'ang.

The Platform Sutra, despite its shaky historical foundations, became one of the most influential texts in the development of southern Ch'an. It gave Chinese flavor to a teaching from the Nirvana Sūtra concerning the identity of concentration and wisdom, defining concentration as the essence of wisdom, and wisdom as the function of concentration. This identity is reflected in its definition of *tso-ch'an* (sitting meditation). Sitting (corresponding to concentration) means not a physical posture, but a state of not activating thought in any and all circumstances; meditation (corresponding to wisdom) is the state of

seeing one's original nature without confusion. This definition is reminiscent of Chih-I's sudden method of practice, but the Sutra offers no details as to whether, as in Chi-I's teachings, this approach was to be combined with formal meditation techniques, or if it implied a rejection of such techniques altogether. Various southern schools took up different sides on this question, but the mainstream position retained formal techniques as the backbone of the practice, using the sudden perspective as a corrective to the pitfalls that formalism might entail.

The early sectarian Ch'an battles continued until the persecutions of 845. Although a number of newly ascendant Ch'an lineages joined in the fray, other lineages did their best to stay in the mountains and avoid the controversy. Realizing that elaborate doctrinal explanations could only deliver a meditator into the hands of his scholarly opponents, they developed a new teaching style that made heavy use of paradox, cryptic statement, shouts, and beatings to jolt their students out of the verbalizing mind-set that led to doctrinal controversies in the first place. Although these methods were borrowed from the methods of old Taoist sages, they were also bolstered by the teaching in the Vimalakirti-nirde'sa Sutra concerning the inability of language to express nonduality. Prominent among this new style of teacher were Ma-tsu (709-88), Huang-po(d.850), Lin-chi (d. 866), and Tung-shan(807-69). Four of the later Five Houses of Ch'an in the Sung

dynasty traced their lineage back to Ma-tsu; the most prominent among them descended from Lin-chi, one of Ma-tsu's Dharma descendants, whose predilection for shouts and beatings became their house style. The remaining house, Ts'ao-tung, traced itself back to Tung-shan, whose methods though unorthodox as well-placed more of an emphasis on quiet sitting. During the Sung dynasty, the Five Houses eventually became institutionally quite distinct from one another, but historical records indicate that during the late T'ang they were fairly fluid, with students from one lineage often studying under masters from other lineages and going off into the mountains to meditate alone.

Because these schools avoided the capital, they were best positioned to survive the persecutions of 845. Few contemporary documents survive from this period, so it is difficult to tell what role the unorthodox methods of these lineages played in the schools' meditative and communal life as a whole. The suspicion is that many of the stories attributed to them are later creations as these figures became literary types that took on a life of their own in the following centuries as new stories accreted around them in response to issues that developed within the various Ch'an lineages.

Ch'an during the Five Dynasties. The T'ang-Sung interregnum, called the Five Dynasties period (907-60), marked an

important watershed in the history of Ch'an. To escaped the turmoil that was engulfing most of the empire, thousands of monks from the southern Cn'an lineages took refuge in present-day Fukien, a relatively peaceful enclave in southern Chian. Forced into close proximity, they began to view themselves as a unified school. Threatened with the potential for total political chaos, they began writing down their oral traditions as a way of preserving them for future generations. Their writings focused on tales exemplifying unorthodox teaching methods: unusual discourses and tales of encounters between masters and students, showing how Awakening could be sparked in a variety of way and later expressed in a variety of forms. Although their initial impetus may have been simply to preserve these teachings, they soon put the encounter dialogues to other uses as well. One was to flesh out the Ch'an lineage accounts, called lamp records, to demonstrate in detail the various ways in which the light of Awakening had been passed from generation to generation. In doing so, these writers succeeded in turning the entire lineage-from the time of the Buddha through the Tang dynasty- into a "sudden" lineage. The earliest extant example of this style of lamp record was *The Collection of the Patriarchal Hall*, compiled in 952 by Ching-hsiu Wen-teng.

Another use of encounter dialogues, pioneered by Yun-men Wen-yen(d. 949), was to assign the dialogues as *K'ung-an* to meditators as

central topics of meditation. Dialogues for this purpose were chosen for their ability to baffle the ordinary rational and verbal processes of the mind, using language for its ability not to inform, but to perform; to shake up the mind and point to the principle, the Buddha-nature, that could shine through only when the mind was in a spontaneous, nonverbal state. This practice was to help counteract the tendency of adhering to the words of the texts or to the methods of formal sitting meditation as ends in themselves. To continue a metaphor we have used frequently in this text—that Buddhist teachings are to be regarded primarily as a form of therapy—K'ung-an meditation takes as its means of therapy case records of successful cures.

A typical example of a K'ung-an is this : A monk asked Tung-shan, "Where can we go to escape hot and cold?" Tung-shan answered, "Why not go where there is neither hot nor cold?" "What sort of place is neither hot nor cold?" "When cold, let it freeze you to death. When hot, let it burn you to death." The apparent message here is that the suffering caused by hot and cold come from the mental labels of "hot" and "cold" applied to sensations. If one were simply to allow the sensation to take place without the label, one would touch a principle freed from any suffering related to the sensation. To know this message, however, was not to solve the riddle of the k'ung-an. The solution lay in actually being able to attain that ability in one's meditation.

The encounter with the K'ung-an, however, did not end there. One was expected to convey one's realization to one's teacher in live words or actions, liberated from context, that were supposed to embody one's new perspective. This use of the "rhetoric of embodiment" was a new solution to the dilemma that many Chinese Buddhist schools had found themselves in when they adopted tenets of the proponents of "nonbeing". Buddhist texts taught that there was such a thing was wrong release; thus there was the need to validate any spontaneous realizations attained in meditation. The proponents of 'nonbeing', however, taught that ultimate principles lay beyond words; thus there should be no verbal content to any ultimate realizations by which they could be validated. The k'ung-an masters thus looked to the rhetoric of embodiment-in which the style of one's words and actions was supposed to express the nonverbal level of mind from which they sprang- as the new way of gauging the authenticity of one's realizations. In other words, one's level of attainment was judged not by what one said, but by how one said it. The assumption behind this faith in the rhetoric of embodiment was that if the immediacy of Awakening in the present moment was the same as that experienced by the great masters of the past, it should find its expression in a similarly live style of communication. Thus, although K'ung-an practice placed a high

value on the present moment, it did so by establishing present moments of the past, together with their rhetorical expressions, as its paradigms.

Ch'an in the Early Sung. The founding of the Sung dynasty brought renewed official support for Buddhist monasticism. The Sung rulers took an interest in regulating monastic life, and Ch'an advocates campaigned to have Ch'an masters appointed as abbots of the large monasteries under imperial sponsorship. New lamp records—far more extensive in content than those of the interregnum, and written in a far more literary style—were composed to promote the school's good reputation in the eyes of the court. The first of the new lamp records was *The Transmission of the Lamp*

(1004), compiled by Yung-an Tao-yuan for the edification of the Ching-te emperor. This codified the Ch'an lineage in a form that was to become standard throughout the remaining history of the school, tracing the transmission back not only to Buddhidharma, but through Mahākāśyapa all the way to the Buddha.

The campaign was successful, but success had its price. The communities over which Ch'an Masters were placed were highly regulated, with elaborate ritual cycles and rigid daily schedules for study, work, and meditation. There is no way of knowing the extent to which the descendants of the uncouth Ch'an meditators of the ninth

century had already become domesticated by the end of the T'ang, but within the first few generations of the Sung the process of domestication was complete.

To deal with this situation, Ch'an writers took the records made during the Five Dynasties period and adapted them into tools for keeping the practice from being stifled out of existence. They coined a slogan to define what was distinctive about the Ch'an school, making a virtue out of the fact that they did not give pride of place to any one Sutra: "A special transmission outside the [written] teachings; not setting up the scriptures; pointing directly at a person's mind; seeing into its nature and attaining Buddhahood." The first extensive compilation of K'ung-ans to demonstrate this principle in action was the Record of Fen-yang Shan-chao (947-1024), who appended explanatory verses and commentaries to two hundred old cases and one hundred new cases of his own invention. This was the format later followed by the great compilations, such as the *Blue Cliff Record*, compiled by Yuan-wu K'o-ch'in (1063-1135), and the *Gateless Barrier*, by Wu-men Hui-K'ai (1183-1260), which superseded Fen-yang's *Record* as the school's classic texts.

It will come as something of a surprise to readers familiar with the spontaneous and iconoclastic side of Ch'an encounter dialogues to

learn that the lamp records were political documents designed to win imperial patronage, and that most of the dialogues were composed as ritual texts for use in formal meetings when the abbot would ascend the high sermon seat to address the assembled residents of the monastery in full regalia. In this context, the dialogues served as reminder that although discipline and etiquette were the rule in the monastery, they were not an end in themselves. Furthermore, they served as notice that the Ch'an tradition comprehended both the realm of ritual and the realm beyond. Thus, although the lamp records had used the old stories as a means for the school to gain institutional power, the K'ung-an records served both to counterbalance and to give spiritual legitimacy to the institutionalization once that power was gained. Used together, these two forms of Ch'an literature helped secure the school in its position as the dominant form of Chinese Buddhism.

Some have argued that the early Sung dynasty was Ch'an's true golden age, in terms of literary activity, popular support, and social prestige, but such things historically have been the death knell of meditation lineages. Ch'an has gone through many fallow periods since the early Sung. For instance, Dogen, a Japanese monk who studied in China in the early thirteenth century, reported that most Ch'an monks at that time were interested in formulating doctrinal syntheses between Ch'an, Confucianism, and Taoism than they were in the pursuit of

Awakening. An inherent weakness in the rhetoric of embodiment was that the style could be mistaken for the substance, fostering the view that Awakening was simply a cheeky rhetorical stance, or the sectarian belief that one style of embodiment was more Awakened than another.

Even Ch'an practitioners complained that many of their fellows misunderstood the intent of the encounter dialogues, using them as an excuse for the arrogant flouting of social conventions and moral norms.

But the existence of the dialogues as graphic case histories of successful goads to Awakening has laid the seeds for the school's periodic revival throughout the millennium since they were written down. This in itself entitles Ch'an to a distinctive place in Buddhist history.

Ch'an and the Arts. Another distinctive feature of the school has been its relationship to Chinese aesthetics. Here again, however, there is a tendency to overrate Ch'an's uniqueness. Many Ch'an monks, especially in the Sung, composed poetry using a Taoist aesthetic that valued spontaneity and concrete visual imagery. Like the doctrine of the Tao, the doctrine of the Buddha-nature inherent in all things-to be realized by direct intuition-made metaphor an ideal mode for expressing Ch'an messages. For instance, Han Shan, a seventh-century Ch'an hermit, described the experience of Awakening to one's already-Awakened nature in these terms: "At noon, I sit in my hut / And realized: The sun is already up."

Gradually, writers who discussed aesthetics in general began noticing parallels between their topic and Ch'an meditation in two important areas: (1) the relationship between study and originality in artistic expression, and (2) the nature of the creative process itself. It is difficult to determine, however, whether this tendency should be regarded as a Ch'an influence on Chinese aesthetic theory, or as simply the use of Ch'an analogies to make preexisting aesthetic ideas respectable in terms of new intellectual fashions. Many of the theories justified by analogy to Ch'an were also justified by analogy to Taoist practice, often by the same writers. For instance, some writers in the Sung dynasty used Ch'an parallels to justify complete spontaneity in poetic expression. Others made reference to the Ch'an concept of standardized K'ung-an practice and orthodox lineages to maintain that one should develop one's aesthetic sensibilities by heavily reading only the best models (patriarchs) of T'ang poetry until their style become one's own second nature. One's spontaneous expressions would then effortlessly embody the formal rules of poetry. This they called the "live method," analogous to the "live utterances" of Ch'an masters. In earlier centuries, however, these same ideas had been taken from analogy to a practice in Taoist alchemy whereby one took elixirs, gradually changing the chemistry of one's body until one's bones were suddenly transformed.

The same uncertainty as their ultimate provenance surrounds these writers' views of the creative process. The creative moment, they said, was akin to Ch'an meditation in that by stilling and emptying the mind, one was able to "enter the spirit," that is, intuitively apprehend the inner nature of the things about which one was painting or writing, at the same time attaining an inner mental realm of surpassing freedom that charged one's work with special meaning. This experience was called a "marvelous Awakening" and was said to parallel the marvelous Awakening of Ch'an. Still, similar ideas were also being advanced with analogies to Taoist practice; it is interesting to note that many of the poets and painters who were held up as ideal models of marvelous Awakening had little if any connection to Buddhism, much less to Ch'an. Also, their artistic style were often ^{quite elaborate, unlike the style of} spontaneous force and cultivated simplicity that has since become associated chiefly through the example of Japanese art with Ch'an and Zen in the West.

Not all Chinese writers on aesthetics accepted the analogy between Ch'an and artistic or poetic creativity. One late Sung Poet, Liu K'o chuang (1187-1269), pointed out that Ch'an is essentially a message that transcends words, whereas poetry is nothing if not verbal expression. Also, he said, using Ch'an meditation to explain the creative process is like using something subtle and far away to describe concrete

and near at hand. Writers after Liu fell into two camps, defending and attacking the validity of the analogy between Ch'an and the creative process, but only in their most effusive moments did proponents of the theory forget that creative expression was merely an analogue for Ch'an Awakening and was in no way identical to it. Han Shan had made the point centuries earlier:

No one knows I sit here alone.

A solitary moon glimmers in the spring.

That's not the moon in the spring,

The moon's in the sky where it always is.

This little song that I sing:

There is no Ch'an in the song.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note how Ch'an gradually replaced Taoism as the model used by poets and artists to make the point that artistic inspiration is analogous to religious inspiration and can lead to truths of similar profundity. In later centuries, neo-Confucianism gradually took over this role from Ch'an. Only when Ch'an spread to Japan- a culture that from early times had blurred the line between aesthetic and religious experience- was the Ch'an /art analogy seriously treated as an equation, giving rise to a spare, forceful artistic style that was considered quintessentially Zen.

Chinese Philosophy

The Chinese have always been masters of society, and the Chinese approach to philosophy is primarily concerned with the theory of society rather than metaphysics or epistemology. The non-human portion of the universe may be all right in its place, but it is the source of too many floods, famines and earthquakes to be entirely trustworthy. God may be all right in His place (Confucius was not much more religious than Chairman Mao), but He is less a source of happiness than a woman, and an emperor is more to be feared than God.

For a time, China was corrupted by Buddhism, according to Confucian scholars, but her polite revenge was achieved when Buddhism was changed to fit the Chinese image. The sacred scriptures were translated with fewer sexual images than in their Indian form. Further, in the translations, the Chinese displayed their tendency to express abstract ideas in concrete images. The exegesis of Chinese classics has produced an immense variety of interpretations, many directly opposite to each other. This is because the Chinese language is grammatically ambiguous, allowing, for example, one character (jen) to denote "a man," "men," "some men," or "mankind."

Immanuel Kant attacked whatever interest in metaphysics Chinese thinkers displayed, presumably Taoism's interest in mysteries, by observing:

Thence arises Lao-Kiun's monstrosity of the highest good which is supposed to consist in nihility, that is, in the consciousness of feeling oneself swallowed up in the abyss of the Godhead through fusion with it, and therefore, through the destruction of one's personality. To have the presentiment of this condition, Chinese philosophers strive in their dark rooms with their eyes closed to experience and contemplate their nihility..... This is really a concept in company with which their understanding disintegrates and all thinking itself comes to an end.

Despite this opinion, thinking did not come to an end in China, nor did understanding disintegrate. The major forms of philosophy in China were Confucianism, Taoism, Moism, Legalism, and Buddhism. The impact of the West upon China brought the philosophies of Pragmatism and Marxism. We shall look at each of these in turn.

One striking feature about Eastern thought in general and Chinese thought in particular was the pronounced lack of a rapid influx of new

ideas. When Buddhism was imported into China, for example, the next thousand years were spent assimilating it. Only one Marco Polo made the long trip east, and he learned more than he taught. When western powers appeared off the coast in warships, convulsions in Chinese society were caused whose effects are still being assimilated today.

The West, on the other hand, was used to dealing with new ideas more rapidly. The West accepted and sought change. The East remained stable, unable to absorb new ideas quite as effectively as the West. The first priority to the East was social stability, and this worked against intellectual change. The strength of this approach, perhaps, is that the East is able to offer more human stability even in the most unstable of times.

Confucianism

Confucianism is a philosophy which strongly emphasizes the individual's place in society, and is interested only minimally in metaphysical questions. Confucius was interested in reforming social life, to rid government of its repressive tendencies. Metaphysical questions were viewed as distractions. Talk of gods and demons, heavens and hells, leaves society as unredeemed as before. Therefore, they should not claim the attention of intelligent human beings.

Later developments in Confucianism attempted to broaden somewhat the scope of this system of philosophy, but the prime interest still remained political and social. Bad social institutions, it was held, are the main corrupters of mankind, and his main salvation will be better institutions.

Confucius followed a middle course between Taoism on the one hand, and Mo Tzu, the vigorous defender of the ancient faith, on the other, with a leaning toward the latter. Confucius taught the importance of moral perfection (*chin shān*) for the individual, and of social order (*li*) for the group. The way to attain these virtues is not by reliance upon some miraculous power from heaven or the spirits, but by entirely natural means:

- (1) being true to one's nature (*chung*), and
- (2) applying those principles in relationships with others (*shu*).

Chung and shu may be said to form a continuous thread through all Confucian teaching. The objective is Central Harmony or the Golden Mean, *chung yung*, the central basis of moral being, harmony with the universe. According to Confucius, the most important features of social life were those in which respect was paid to superiors, and protection was supplied by them to their inferiors.

Confucius supplied Chinese philosophy with its humanistic foundation. However, because of his reluctance to discuss metaphysical questions, he left the door open to Taoism in later centuries, to complete the concerns of the people. The subsequent development of Confucianism began with attempts to answer the question how attainment of moral perfection is possible. According to Mencius, Human nature is originally good, so of necessity we must develop our good nature, exercising our minds to the fullest. According to Hsun Tzu, human nature is originally evil, so we must discipline our tendencies to do evil, by means of moral discipline, education, and the rules of social conduct.

Chu His, called by Wing-tsit Chan "the greatest of the Neo-Confucianists," emphasized the continuity between humanity and the universe by saying: "The great Ultimate is nothing but the Reason of ultimate goodness, "If we try to understand hard enough, we will realize our nature and fulfill our destiny. We will then know that: "all humans are brothers and sisters, and all things are my companions."

Wang Yang-ming argued that desire is an impediment to the mind. Only the disinterested can truly understand anything. Only the bored can appreciate the truth. Opposed to this theory that we must yawn our way to knowledge was Tai Tung-yuan, who maintained that desire has a rightful place in human life, since it is part of our human nature.

Confucianism was the basis of the old educational system in China. The Confucian Classics were required texts.

All government officials were selected through passing examinations on the classics. Since the advent of the Intellectual Renaissance in 1917, Confucianism has been condemned as the chief cause of China's weaknesses in the face of hostile international pressures. The slogan was: "Destroy the old curiosity shop of Confucius." Communism has developed and extended this theme. However, such Confucian saying as: "The world is a great commonwealth," which have been quoted favorably by Sun Yat-sen, do not necessarily seem antithetical to Marxism.

Taoism

Taoism is a philosophy which strongly emphasizes man's place in nature. Unlike Confucianism, it is not concerned with society, except as something to escape from. While not dealing with metaphysical questions directly, at least not in a manner familiar to Western thinkers (the Tao Te Ching rarely refers to heaven, and only once, in passing, to God), Taoism does leave the subject open, with the result that many supernatural theories have been developed as time went on.

Taoism has occupied several diverse positions in Chinese culture. Initially, it commanded the respect of the powerful, until Confucianism replaced it as the guardian of official values. It then appealed to those interested in religious themes, who wanted to deepen their spiritual life, until Buddhism displaced it from this position. Finally, it functioned as a system of magic, with incantations for healing disease, avoiding death, and warding off vengeful spirits from the other world.

Lao Tzu taught that the Tao (the way) is most fully revealed, not through righteous living, nor through action, but through tranquility. Virtue is not achieved by a lifetime of strenuous effort, but quiet submission to the power of the Tao. The image is used of water coursing over a stone. By going around obstructions, the water finds its own way, and, in the end, wears down the boulders. What is the Tao? The Tao cannot be defined. As the first lines from the *Tao-Te Ching* say: "The way (Tao) that can be walked is not the true and unchanging way. The name that can be named is not the true and unchanging name."

Chuang Tzu emphasized in a memorable manner the superiority of conforming to the Tao and of avoiding all strife.

In later years, Taoist priests specialized in various occult practices, locating lucky sites for graves, telling fortunes, and purifying houses

where demons were said to lurk. The so-called "Taoist Pope," chosen by the family and descendants of Chang Tao-ling, led a small Taoist sect located in a stronghold in the Szechuan Shensi area. Almost every aspect of Taoism makes its appeal to the contemporary reader.

Moism, The School of Names, Legalism, and The School of Yin-Yang

When the Feudal society of the latter years of the Chou period disintegrated, many individuals lost their hereditary positions in the various states. And were forced by circumstances to become itinerant teachers, free-lance military experts, or political consultants, offering their skills to anyone who would support them. This led to much freer thinking than before, and to the spread of education, which previously had been confined to a privileged few.

Mo Tzŭ

Mo Tzŭ was the founder of Moism, the school of universal love. Those most attracted to Moism were disillusioned veterans who, having seen enough of senseless wars, were willing to do no more than defend their cities from attacking armies. Political leaders were not impressed. Loving land more than men, they rejected a philosophy which would encourage soldiers to defend their own families rather than extend the boundaries of an emperor's empire.

The five marks of Moist philosophy are:

- (1) universal love,
- (2) agreement with the Superior,
- (3) belief in spirits,
- (4) simplicity in living, and
- (5) opposition to ceremonials and music (Which, of course, were greatly loved by Confucianists).

Later Moists developed an interest in mathematics and physics, an extension of the art of protecting cities from siege. Still later, Chinese secret societies preserved some of the beliefs of Moism, although its influence disappeared from society at large.

The School of Names

The School of Names may be characterized as the philosophy of lawyers who used sophistic tricks on behalf of their clients to make wrong seem right, and right seem wrong.

Difficult to study because all the works of the school except part of the works of the school except parts of the *Kung-sun Lung-tzu* have been lost, the doctrines of Hui SHih, Teng His, Kung-sun Lung and others in the school are known chiefly through hostile quotations in the *Chuang-tzu*, where they are called "Dialecticians." Ssu-ma T'an says of them that they:

made minute examinations of trifling points in complicated and elaborate statements, which make it impossible for others to refute their ideas. They specialized in the definition of names , but lost sight of human feelings.

Hui Shih is known for ten "Paradoxes:"

(1) The greatest has nothing beyond itself, and is called the Great Unit (ta I, Universal Class). The smallest has nothing within itself, and is called the Little Unit (hsiao I, Null Class). The infinitely small has no form, and the infinitely great is beyond all measurement;

(2) That which has no thickness cannot be increased in thickness, yet in extent it may cover a thousand miles;

(3) The sky is as low as the earth; mountains are on the same level as the marshes;

(4) The sun at noon is the sunsting; the creature born is the creature dying;

(5) In one way, all things are similar, in another way, all different;

(6) The South has no boundary and has a boundary;

(7) I go to the state of Yueh today and arrived there yesterday.

Suppose I go to Yueh today and arrive there tomorrow. Tomorrow, today will be yesterday;

(8) Connected rings can be separated. Separation is the same as construction, and construction is the same as destruction;

(9) I know where the center of the world is: it is north of north and south of south;

(10) Love all things equally, because the universe is one.

Hui Shih argued that because the greatest has nothing beyond itself, all things are limited and relative. "The universe was created when I was born, and with me all things are one."

Chuang Tzu dismisses Hui Shih by saying:

Weak in virtue, strong in dealing with things, his way was dark and narrow.

Yet, on Fung Yu-Lan's interpretation, Chuang Tzu's philosophy is Hui Shih's advanced one step further, skepticism made into mysticism, intellectual paradox transformed into life experience.

Legalism

Legalism was a school of thought dedicated to the development of a strong, centralized, totalitarian state. There were three schools of Legalist thought, each emphasizing what it considered the most important feature of politics, first, *shih*, second, *shu*, and third, *fa*. *Shih*(power, or authority) was the choice of Shen Tao, a contemporary of Mencius. *Shu*(managerial ability) was stressed by Shen Pu-hai. *Fa* (law, or regulations) was promoted by Shang Yang.

Han Fei Tzŭ, the greatest of the Legalists, unified these theories by arguing that all there are indispensable to the well-functioning state. Han Fei Tzu, like his teacher, Hsün Tzŭ, contended that human nature is originally evil. Han Fei Tzu went even further, holding that since humanity is evil, no time need be wasted attempting to improve human behavior. Totalitarian government is exactly what man deserves, and is unquestionably the most practical form of state organization:

The intelligent ruler..... handles men as if he were God. Being like Heaven, he commits no wrong. Being like a divine being, he falls into no difficulties. His power enforces his strict orders, and nothing he encounters resists him.... Only when this is so can his laws be carried out. (-Han-Fei-tzu, 48)

The Yin-yang school was initially a school of wizards (*fāng shih*) specializing in astrology, divination, and almanacs. The milfoil plant, tortoise shells or shoulder bones from oxen were used as main methods for divination. First a hole was bored in the shell or bone. Then it was heated. The cracks which radiated from the hole were then read to answer the question asked of the bone.

As time went by, reliance upon supernatural influences began to decline, and a more naturalistic explanation of phenomena began to predominate in the Yin-Yang school. The stage was thus set for the school to combine with Confucianism.

Introduced into China initially as an occult science, Buddhism then became a refuge for refugees in the Period of Disunity during which many short-lived dynasties were competing for power. During the Sui (590-617) and T'ang (618-960) dynasties, Chinese Buddhism reached its highest point. Striving to become intellectually respectable, the Buddhist schools (Seven School, Seng-chao, Three Treatise, Consciousness-only, *T'ien-t'ai* and *Hua-yen*) did so well at splitting hairs and debating subtle points that the calculated nonsense of Ch'an seemed to be the only reasonable development for those who still cared about the great question. As written in the Recorded Conversations of Ch'an Master I-HSUAN: "After all, there is not much in Huang-po's Buddhism," to which was added, in another version of story: "There is not much in Buddhism itself!" Ch'an was a way of teaching someone to get out of the way of understanding himself, as if he were blocking the view of himself in a mirror.

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